Gender Attitudes in Times of Economic Uncertainty

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Abstract

Despite general consensus about the relevance of gender norms for economic decisions, our understanding about how norms respond to changing economic conditions is limited. In this paper, we analyze the impact of gender-specific regional unemployment shocks on gender attitudes of men and women. To this end, we harmonize and combine multiple individual-level surveys on gender attitudes for 32 countries in Europe and the US during 1995-2022, and match regional labor market indicators by the respondent's place of residence. Our preliminary results show a significant relationship between regional unemployment rates and gender attitudes, which differs by gender: while an increase in regional unemployment reinforces conservative gender attitudes among men, women's response goes in the opposite direction. These findings are robust to using a shift-share measure of unemployment and to alternative measures of uncertainty. This study provides novel insights on how economic uncertainty might foster male backlash and amplify the divergence in gender attitudes between men and women, potentially contributing to heightened conflict within households during uncertain times.

Keywords: gender norms, economic uncertainty, regional unemployment, shift-share, backlash, gender inequality

JEL Codes: J16, J14, R2, D83, J20

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1 Introduction

Gender norms—beliefs, attitudes, and socially prescribed behaviors about men and women are a fundamental aspect of culture and influence many of our decisions. An influential body of literature has sought to understand the long-term determinants of gender norms, emphasizing its persistence over time (Giuliano, 2017). However, despite their sticky nature, gender attitudes are not static and can change as a response to major events and shocks, such as the introduction of the contraceptive pill (Goldin and Katz, 2002), advancements in home production technologies (Greenwood et al., 2005), or the establishment of political systems like state socialism (Campa and Serafinelli, 2019). Building on this foundation, a natural question to ask is, do gender norms respond also to *localized* and *transitory* shocks?

In this paper, we investigate the impact of regional economic uncertainty on gender attitudes of men and women. To do so, we harmonize individual-level survey data on gender attitudes from the *European Social Survey*, *European Values Study*, *World Values Survey*, and *Generations and Gender Survey*, spanning 32 European countries and the United States from 1995 to 2022. Gender attitudes are measured based on respondent's agreement with the statement: "When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women".

We merge this data with regional unemployment rates disaggregated by age group and gender, sourced from the *EU-Labor Force Survey* and the *Current Population Survey*. In our baseline specification, we estimate the effect of unemployment rates—defined by gender, age group, region and year—on our measure of gender attitudes, allowing for a different effect by gender while controlling for individual socio-demographic controls and including an extensive set of fixed effects, such as region-year fixed effects, among others.

We interpret a higher likelihood of job loss as an increase in uncertainty, which can fundamentally influence an individual's gender attitudes toward paid work in two key ways. First, heightened economic uncertainty may lead to financial stress, potentially intensifying job competition between genders, particularly in contexts where labor-market participation has historically been gender-specific (e.g., men as breadwinners and women as homemakers). Conversely, in societies where both men and women have traditionally participated in the labor market more equally, such competition might be less pronounced or salient.

Second, the risk of job loss may present an additional threat to men with a breadwinner mentality, potentially prompting them to adopt more conservative gender attitudes as a coping mechanism (Rosenfeld and Tomiyama, 2021; Wilson, 1973). Based on this, our hypothesis posits that under conditions of heightened uncertainty: (i) men will adopt more male-dominant gender attitudes toward work, and (ii) women will adopt more egalitarian gender attitudes toward work. We anticipate that these effects will be most pronounced among individuals who strongly adhere to male-breadwinner norms, which assign men the role of labor force contributors and women the role of household caretakers.

Consistent with our conceptual framework, our results reveal a pattern of diverging gender attitudes during periods of higher economic uncertainty: men shift toward more maledominant views, while women adopt more egalitarian attitudes. This reaction is driven by individuals who strongly adhere to male-breadwinner norms, a point we elaborate on further. Our findings are robust across various specifications, including alternative measures of unemployment rates, the inclusion of additional individual controls, and different fixed effects.

To address the potential endogeneity of unemployment rates, we construct a shift-share measure of unemployment. Changes in regional unemployment rates could reflect shifts in unobservable worker characteristics that may be correlated with changes in gender attitudes. For instance, individuals with less male-dominant views may be more likely to migrate to regions with lower unemployment rates or to industries offering better prospects. To mitigate these compositional effects, we construct gender-, age-group-, and industry-specific unemployment rates, drawing on the seminal work of Bartik, 1991 and later applications by Bertrand et al., 2015 and Tur-Prats, 2021, among others. Our results with the shift-share measure of unemployment closely align with our original findings, strengthening the case for a causal interpretation. Next, we explore alternative measures of uncertainty. Drawing on Blanchflower and Bryson, 2024, we measure uncertainty using individual-level data from the *Eurobarometer*, covering 31 countries for our period of analysis (1995-2022). Individuals are asked about their expectations for the year to come regarding their life in general, the financial situation of their household, and their personal job situation. We average the individual expectations for each age-, gender-, region- and year-group, and match these averages to our attitudinal data. We then substitute in our baseline specification the unemployment rates by these measures of uncertainty and find a remarkably similar set of results. This consistency reinforces our interpretation of unemployment rates as proxies for uncertainty shocks.

We conduct a comprehensive set of robustness checks, including the use of alternative regional levels (NUTS1 instead of NUTS2), different weighting schemes, variations in shiftshare baseline years, and alternative clusters for standard errors. Across these specifications, we find consistent results, further reinforcing the robustness of our findings.

In the last part of the paper we explore heterogeneous responses, focusing on the underlying gender norms towards paid work. So far, our analysis considers two levels of heterogeneity: country and individual. We firstly classify countries based on whether they experienced a history of state socialism. Second, we identify whether respondents had a working mother during their upbringing. These two factors—a legacy of state socialism and a working mother—share a common characteristic: higher female labor force participation and hence more egalitarian attitudes toward paid work between men and women. Consistent with our hypothesis, this analysis reveals that our results are driven by those respondents with deeply rooted male-dominant gender norms.

We contribute to several strands of the literature on gender norms and economic shocks, summarized in Section 2. While the economics literature on gender norms is extensive, there is limited understanding on how economic shocks shape gender norms. A relatively small but growing body of research has explored the impact of gender-specific unemployment rates on intimate-partner violence (IPV), which can be viewed as an extreme manifestation of gender norms. These studies have found mixed results, highlighting relevant regional heterogeneity (Aizer, 2010; Anderberg et al., 2016; Bergvall, 2024; Bhalotra et al., 2021; Tur-Prats, 2021.

To our knowledge, there is only one paper that analyzes the effects of economic shocks on gender norms. Using attitudinal data for 103 countries between 1995-2021, Berniell et al. (2024) find that an increase in national unemployment is associated with more conservative gender attitudes. While our paper addresses a similar research question, we extend the analysis in several important ways. First, we exploit *regional* variation in unemployment rates, which is gender and age-group specific. Second, building on the work by Bartik (1991), we construct a shift-share measure of unemployment that takes into account the selective sorting of workers across regions and industries, thus bringing us closer to a causal interpretation. Third, we introduce alternative measures of economic uncertainty such as prospects of personal and household finances uncertainty. Fourth, we explore heterogeneity based on historical factors, which helps to clarify the potential mechanisms behind our results. As a result of this analysis, we uncover heterogeneous responses of men and women, as a function of their deep-rooted gender norms.

Our main contribution is to provide the first evidence on how transitory and localized economic uncertainty shocks might spur male backlash in gender norms and amplify polarization of gender norms between men women. This finding uncovers a previously overlooked channel through which household conflict may intensify during times of economic uncertainty.

The next Section 2 reviews the strands of literature we derive from and contribute in. Section 3 presents our multiple sources of data and the descriptive statistics for our main variables. The empirical design is explained in Section 4, and Section 5 shows our results, including our heterogeneity analysis. Section 6 discusses and concludes.

2 Literature Review

Individual decisions, preferences, and behaviors are shaped and influenced by gender norms. We define conservative or male-dominant gender norms as those that prescribe men to the role of a breadwinner and women to the role of a homemaker. As Akerlof and Kranton (2000) show, deviations from the prescribed gender norms are costly and generate loss of identity utility, thus imposing constraints on our behavior.

Gender norms are key to understanding gender gaps in the labor market, educational attainment and division of labor in the household. Fortin (2005) shows that conservative gender norms are associated with lower female employment rates and larger gender pay gaps in OECD countries. Bertrand et al. (2015) document a discontinuity in the distribution of the relative earnings of wives vs husbands at 50%, which can only be explained by applying a gender-identity perspective. Huber and Paule-Paludkiewicz (2024) show that gender norms influence educational attainment, which might lead to efficiency losses given that education opportunities might not go to the most talented pool of individuals. Hence, gender norms not only play an important role in hindering progress to gender equality but also contribute to allocation inefficiencies by influencing occupational preferences and skills (Hsieh et al., 2019).

A growing literature is trying to understand the determinants of gender norms focusing on its historical origins (Giuliano, 2017). These studies emphasize the deep-rooted and persistent aspects of culture, and gender norms in particular. However, culture and gender norms also evolve and change over time. In the US, for example, there has been a dramatic change in attitudes toward women's work outside the home over the last few decades (Fernández, 2013). The introduction of medical innovations such as the contraceptive pill (Bailey, 2006; Goldin and Katz, 2002) and new household technologies (Greenwood et al., 2005) can explain this transformation in gender norms.

Additionally, gender norms show a shift in response to political-economic systems such as state socialism, where women and men had a similar labor market attachment (Campa and Serafinelli, 2019; Lippmann et al., 2020). Shocks to women's labor force participation such as the one experienced during World War II have also fostered more gender-equal norms through increasing the proportion of men who were brought up by a working mother and subsequently supported their wives' contribution to the labor market (Fernández et al., 2004). Lastly, gender norms also shifted as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic which heightened economic uncertainty and impacted men and women differently. Boring and Moroni (2023) note that men are more likely than women to adopt traditional gender roles under household production constraints. Huebener et al. (2024) find that during the COVID-19 pandemic, fathers, facing increased work-family conflict, shifted towards traditional attitudes to resolve cognitive dissonance. In contrast, mothers' gender role attitudes remained stable, suggesting they upheld egalitarian views on maternal employment, despite the added conflict.

If gender norms respond to these major economic shocks, a natural question to ask is whether they also respond to more localized labor-market shocks such as changes in the unemployment rates. The literature on this topic is less developed. A number of studies analyze the relationship between gender-specific unemployment and intimate-partner violence (IPV), which can be viewed as an extreme manifestation of conservative gender attitudes. Some papers find evidence of male backlash as a response to economic uncertainty (Bergvall, 2024; Bhalotra et al., 2021; Guarnieri and Rainer, 2021). When economic uncertainty challenges the traditional male breadwinner role, some men might retaliate to IPV as a response to what they perceive as a threat to their identity. This has been rationalized through the sociological model of male backlash (Macmillan and Gartner, 1999) and the identity framework advanced by Akerlof and Kranton (2000) (Tur-Prats, 2021). Other papers find results in the opposite direction, consistent with a standard household bargaining model in which when women's economic opportunities improve relative to their husband's, their risk of IPV decreases (Aizer, 2010; Anderberg et al., 2016). Both sets of results can be found within a country as a function of their traditional gender norms, highlighting important regional heterogeneity (Tur-Prats, 2021).

3 Data

Attitudinal Data. Data on gender role attitudes is derived from four major international attitudinal surveys which we harmonize for our analysis: the European Social Survey (ESS), the European Values Study (EVS), the World Values Survey (WVS), and the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS). These surveys collectively span 13 waves conducted from 1995 to 2022, encompassing responses from 290,366 individuals in 32 European countries and the United States.¹ To ensure consistency, we use regions at the same disaggregation level (NUTS1), covering a total of 118 regional units.²

We measure gender role attitudes using the agreement to the statement: "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce". This measure of gender role attitudes has been previously used by Fortin (2005), Carlana, 2019 and Alesina et al., 2013. Specifically, we construct a variable which takes the value of one, if the respondent agrees with this statement and zero if they disagree or are indifferent to it. Across the sample, the mean value of this variable is 0.178, with a standard deviation of 0.382. As shown in Figure 1, gender attitudes vary significantly between European regions, with Southern and Central-Eastern European Countries showcasing a higher agreement rate to the previously described norm.

There is a notable gender difference in attitudes: over 20% of men agree with the statement "when jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women," compared to around 15% of women. Figure 2 reveals a consistent gender gap, with men reporting higher levels of agreement compared to women across all age groups. Among younger cohorts (under 30), agreement remains relatively low, at around 20% for men and 10–15% for women. However, agreement steadily increases with age, particularly after age 50, reaching over 35% for both

¹Tables A11, A12, and A13 in the Appendix show summary statistics on the different surveys and an overview of countries and year coverage, respectively.

²We harmonize the regional identifier of each respondent according to the geocode standard set by the European Union, known as the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS). This hierarchical system consists of three levels of disaggregation to which we match our attitudinal data. For the United States, we match the regional identifier with the Census Regions.



Figure 1: Gender Attitudes Towards Paid Work in Europe

Note: Own calculations from pooled averages for the period 1995-2022 across NUTS 1-3 regions, 32 European countries.

genders among those aged 80 and older. While the gender difference converges between genders across generations, the overall trend suggests that older individuals exhibit more traditional gender role attitudes, as reflected in their greater support for the statement. In the Appendix we show how these agreement rates vary by employment status (Figure A1), educational level (Figure A2), and birth cohort (Figure A3). We also show summary statistics for the covariates that we include in our regressions in Appendix Table A1.

Unemployment Data. We obtain official regional unemployment rates from *Eurostat*, supplementing any missing data by calculating unemployment rates based on confidential microdata from the *EU Labour Force Surveys* spanning 1995 to 2022. Unemployment rates are defined as the ratio of unemployed individuals to the total labor force, which includes both employed and unemployed individuals. Our focus is on gender- and age-specific annual unemployment rates at the NUTS1 level for individuals aged 15 to 64. Five distinct age groups are considered: 15–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, and 55–64. For a limited number of cases, missing regional data is complemented with country-level unemployment rates.³ For

³This affects a small subset of 14,571 observations for female unemployment rates and 9,347 for male



Figure 2: Gender Differences in Attitudes

Note: The agreement rate the statement "When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women" is calculated by gender using the pooled sample and survey weights. It includes 32 European countries and the US for the period 1995-2022.

the US, we construct analogous unemployment rates using publicly available microdata from the *Current Population Survey* (CPS).

Figure 3 illustrates male and female unemployment rates from 1995 to 2023 in Europe. Female unemployment consistently exceeded male unemployment until 2007. The 2008 financial crisis triggered a sharp spike in unemployment, with men experiencing a more pronounced impact, peaking around 2013. Subsequently, unemployment rates steadily fell, reaching historic lows by 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 temporarily disrupted this downward trend, causing a spike, but rates began to stabilize again after 2022, with the gender gap in unemployment narrowing visibly. Appendix Figure A4 shows the unemployment rate over time, by age-groups and gender. Appendix Table A2 reports the summary statistics for unemployment and for the shift-share unemployment in our sample.

Uncertainty Measures. As an alternative measure for economic uncertainty, we construct measures of perceived economic uncertainty at the regional level using open-access microdata from the *Eurobarometer* for the period 1995-2022. We focus on responses to three questions concerning personal expectations for the year to come with respect to (1) life in

unemployment rates.



Figure 3: Unemployment Rates by Gender over Time

Note: Own calculations using Eurostat country-level data for the working-age population (15-64).

general, (2) the financial situation of the household, and (3) the personal job situation. We follow the approach by Blanchflower and Bryson (2024) and first categorize the responses to each question into a binary variable, taking the value of one if the respondents anticipate a worsening situation and zero otherwise (better or the same). While Blanchflower and Bryson (2024) focus on the national level, we derive regional indices. To this end, we first harmonize crucial socio-demographic variables and regional classifications at both NUTS-1 and NUTS-2 levels across years. Next, for regional representativeness, we compute weighted regional averages at the NUTS-1 level for each of our age-and-gender-specific subcategories using the weights provided by Eurobarometer. This approach mirrors the methodology employed in calculating unemployment rates, ensuring consistency in our analytical framework. Appendix Figure A5 shows the evolution of uncertainty measures together with unemployment rates over time. These series are highly correlated and suggest that higher uncertainty precedes recessions by several periods.

4 Empirical Design

Baseline Specification. Our empirical analysis begins by estimating a linear probability model (LPM) to examine the relationship between regional unemployment rates and gender attitudes. The dependent variable, Scarce_{igarys} , is a binary indicator that takes the value of 1 if respondent *i* agrees with the statement that men should have more rights to a job than women when jobs are scarce, and 0 otherwise. The model is specified as follows:

 $Scarce_{igarys} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 Unemp_{gary} + \beta_2 Unemp_{gary} \times Male_i + \beta_3 Male_i + \phi X_{igarys} + \delta_{ry} + \theta_s + \epsilon_{igarys} + \delta_{ry} + \theta_s + \epsilon_{igarys} + \delta_{ry} + \theta_s + \delta_{ry} +$

In this specification, $\operatorname{Unemp}_{gary}$ represents the unemployment rate specific to a given gender g, age group a, region r, and year y, while Male_i is a binary variable indicating the respondent's i gender. The interaction term, $\operatorname{Unemp}_{gary} \times \operatorname{Male}_i$, captures how the effect of unemployment varies between men and women. The vector X_{igarys} includes a set of individual-level controls such as age groups, the presence of children, educational attainment, religiosity, and marital status.

To account for unobserved heterogeneity, the model incorporates region and year, or region-year fixed effects δ_{ry} , as well as survey fixed effects θ_s . By including region-year fixed effects we capture regional differences that may vary over time and potentially correlate with both unemployment rates and the outcome variable. For instance, shifts in regional economic policies or localized cultural changes could influence labor market dynamics by gender and respondents' adherence to traditional gender role attitudes. Additionally, a region-year fixed effects fully captures the total unemployment rate at the regional level, relying for identification in within-region within-year variation in unemployment rates across gender and age groups. Survey fixed effects control for unobserved heterogeneity in the survey design, including for instance the implementation of the gender role attitudes question, ensuring that differences across survey waves do not bias the estimates. Shift-Share Unemployment Rates. One relevant concern is that changes in regional unemployment rates may reflect shifts in unobservable worker characteristics correlated with changes in gender attitudes. For instance, selective migration of conservative individuals could drive a correlation between unemployment rates and gender attitudes. To address potential endogeneity concerns, we construct a shift-share measure of regional unemployment rates that relies on exogenous variation in national industry-level trends (Bartik, 1991). Changes in the national unemployment rate are plausibly unrelated to the underlying worker characteristics of a given region.

To construct our shift-share measure of unemployment, we rely on confidential microdata from the EU Labour Force Surveys from 1995 to 2022. We compute region-specific unemployment rates by gender and across five age groups within six industry sectors by interacting each region's baseline industry employment composition with national industryspecific unemployment rates over time.⁴ The constructed measure is expressed as follows:

$$\widehat{\text{Unemp}_{gary}} = \sum_{j} \psi_{jgar} \operatorname{Unemp}_{jgay,-r}$$

Here, ψ_{jgar} represents the share of workers in industry j at baseline, disaggregated by gender g, age group a, and region r. The term $\text{Unemp}_{jgay,-r}$ denotes the industry- and age-group-specific unemployment rate, adjusted for gender g, in year y, calculated for all regions in a country excluding region r. By construction, this shift-share measure mitigates potential bias arising from selective migration or local economic shocks that may confound the relationship between regional unemployment rates and gender attitudes. For this measure to be valid, the baseline industry shares of each region must be uncorrelated with changes in gender attitudes over time. This strategy provides a more robust identification of the causal

⁴We consider 6 industry groups: Agriculture; Manufacturing; Construction; Mining and quarrying, electricity, gas and water supply; Services; Not elsewhere classified sectors. We define these sectors in line with the broad sector concordance with the UN International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC). As the baseline year, we take the earliest year in which the region is reported in our harmonized attitudinal dataset and the EU Labour Force Survey. However, as a robustness check, we also construct a shift-share unemployment meausre where we set the baseline year at 1999 and 2004 for all regions.

effects of economic uncertainty on individual-level gender attitudes.

5 Results

5.1 Baseline Results

We begin our empirical analysis with a preliminary analysis of the relationship between local unemployment rates, disaggregated at various levels, and the likelihood of agreeing with the statement "When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women". Table 1 shows these results.

Table 1: Relationship Between Agreement to "Scarce Jobs Should go to Men" and Unemployment Rates at Different Disaggregation Levels.

Dep. Var.: Agreement to Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	$(1) \\ \mathrm{UR}_{ry}$	$(2) \\ \mathrm{UR}_{ry}$	$(3) \\ \mathrm{UR}_{ryg}$	$(4) \\ \mathrm{UR}_{ryg}$	$(5) \\ \mathrm{UR}_{rya}$	$(6) \\ \mathrm{UR}_{rya}$	$(7) \\ \mathrm{UR}_{ryga}$	$(8) \\ \mathrm{UR}_{ryga}$
Unemployment Rate	-0.021 (0.092)	-0.184 (0.101)	-0.001 (0.075)	-0.128 (0.081)	-0.089^{**} (0.036)	-0.214^{***} (0.039)	-0.079^{***} (0.032)	-0.185^{***} (0.033)
Unemployment Rate x Male		0.003^{***} (0.001)		0.003^{***} (0.001)		0.260^{***} (0.043)		$\begin{array}{c} 0.267^{***} \\ (0.042) \end{array}$
Male	0.060^{***} (0.006)	0.033^{***} (0.010)	0.060^{***} (0.005)	0.035^{***} (0.009)	0.060^{***} (0.003)	0.038^{***} (0.004)	0.060^{***} (0.003)	0.037^{***} (0.005)
Constant	0.162^{***} (0.005)	0.175^{***} (0.005)	0.161^{***} (0.004)	0.171^{***} (0.005)	0.168^{***} (0.004)	0.179^{***} (0.004)	0.168^{***} (0.004)	0.177^{***} (0.004)
Year FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	287,931	287,931	287,513	287,513	290,366	290,366	290,366	290,366
R-squared	0.081	0.082	0.081	0.082	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.081
Mean Dep Var	0.177	0.177	0.178	0.178	0.177	0.177	0.177	0.177

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05. * p<0.1. Standard errors are in parentheses and clustered at the respective treatment level. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iteland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, US.

In columns 1 and 2 we use overall unemployment rates disaggregated at the year and regional levels (UR_{ry}). Columns 3 and 4 incorporate unemployment rates disaggregated further by gender within each year and region (UR_{ryg}). Columns 5 and 6 add age group disaggregation (UR_{rya}), while Columns 7 and 8 include the most granular level of disaggreggation, accounting for year, region, gender, and age group (UR_{ryga}) . Odd-numbered columns report the average effects of the respective unemployment rate on the likelihood of agreement for the overall population, whereas even-numbered columns introduce an interaction term between the gender dummy and the corresponding unemployment rate. The interaction term reveals heterogeneous responses by men and women: while women decrease their agreement with the statement when unemployment rates increase, men react significantly differently by increasing their agreement with the statement. This pattern is consistent across most definitions of unemployment, although it becomes more salient when we consider unemployment rates that are more closely linked to the respondent's gender and age-group.

In Table 2 we show results using different combinations of fixed effects and the inclusion of individual controls using the most disaggregated unemployment rate from Table 1, columns 7 and 8 (UR_{ryga}). In columns 1-3 we keep the year and region fixed effect and subsequently add the individual controls and a dummy taking value 1 if the respondent is currently unemployed. From columns 4 to 6 we use year by region fixed effects and repeat the inclusion of individual controls. Our results remain qualitatively unchanged in all specifications. From now on, we will use the specification from column 5 as our preferred one.

To gauge the magnitude of these coefficients and visualize the diverging response by gender, in Figure 4 we plot the marginal effects by gender for our preferred specification, using as a benchmark percentile 10 and 90 of unemployment rate. We observe a widening gap in gender attitudes between men and women in response to increasing regional unemployment.

5.2 Shift-Share Approach

Even though the regular unemployment rate may serve as a reasonable proxy for uncertainty, it does not account for the potential endogeneity between unemployment and gender-role attitudes. As we explained above, regional unemployment rates may be influenced by unobservable worker characteristics that correlate with shifts in gender-role attitudes.

Table 3 replicates the results of Table 2, using our shift-share measure of unemployment.

Dep. Var.: Agreement to						
Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Unemployment Rate	-0.185***	-0.123***	-0.133***	-0.232***	-0.146***	-0.143***
	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.033)	(0.033)
Unemployemnt Rate x Male	0.267^{***}	0.245^{***}	0.228^{***}	0.270^{***}	0.253^{***}	0.238^{***}
	(0.042)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.035)
Male	0 037***	0 0/0***	0 0/17***	0 038***	0 0/1***	0.047***
mate	(0.057)	(0.040)	(0.047)	(0.000)	(0.041)	(0.047)
Currently Unemployed	(0.000)	(0.004)	0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	0.056***
Currently Chemployed			(0.004)			(0.030)
Constant	0 177***	0 171***	(0.004) 0.156***	0 180***	0 179***	0.157***
Constant	(0.004)	(0.0171)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.0172)	(0.107)
	(0.004)	(0.000)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.000)	(0.004)
Year FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark			
NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark			
Year x NUTS1 FE				\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Individual Controls		\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	290,366	290,366	290,366	290,366	290,366	290,366
R-squared	0.081	0.102	0.105	0.095	0.115	0.118
Mean Dep Var	0.177	0.177	0.177	0.177	0.177	0.177

Table 2: Relationship Between Agreement to "Scarce Jobs Should go to Men" and Unemployment Rates at the Year, Region, Age Group and Gender level.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05. * p<0.1. S.E. in parentheses and clustered at the Year x NUTS1 x Age Group x Sex level. Individual controls include an indicator for having children, the educational level of the respondent, being religious and being married. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, and US.

Across all different specifications, with alternative fixed effects and individual-level controls, our results remain robust to this alternative measure of unemployment. While the estimated coefficients using the shift-share measure are somewhat smaller in magnitude relative to those using actual unemployment rates in Table 2, they remain strongly statistiscally significant. Finally, Figure 5 graphically illustrates the gender divergence in attitudes across equivalent levels of unemployment exposure, which further underscores the robustness of our findings. Figure 4: Marginsplot of Unemployment Rate and Agreement to "Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men"



Figure 5: Marginsplot of Shift-Share Unemployment Rate and Agreement to "Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men"



5.3 Alternative Uncertainty Measures

So far, we have shown that actual and shift-share unemployment rates significantly relate to individual gender-role attitudes. In this section we explore wether our measures of unemployment rate capture broader uncertainty at the regional level. To this end and following

Table 3: Effect of Bartik-Type Unemployment Exposure on the Agreement to "When Jobs are Scarce, Men Should Have More Right to a Job than Women"

Dep. Var.: Agreement to						
Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
SS-Unemployment Rate	-0.091**	-0.081**	-0.086**	-0.098**	-0.089**	-0.084**
	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.038)
SS-Unemployment Rate x Male	0.169^{***}	0.192***	0.195^{***}	0.159^{***}	0.184***	0.190***
	(0.045)	(0.044)	(0.043)	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.038)
Male	0.048***	0.048***	0.053***	0.050***	0.050***	0.054***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Constant	0.168***	0.166***	0.151***	0.167***	0.166***	0.150***
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Currently Unemployed			0.056***			0.058***
· _ ·			(0.004)			(0.004)
Year FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark			
NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark			
Year x NUTS1 FE				\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Individual Controls		\checkmark	\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	231,675	231,675	$231,\!675$	231,675	231,675	231,675
R-squared	0.082	0.102	0.105	0.097	0.117	0.120
Mean Dep Var	0.173	0.173	0.173	0.173	0.173	0.173

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05. * p<0.1. S.E. in parentheses and clustered at the Year x NUTS1 x Age Group x Sex level. Individual controls include an indicator for having children, the educational level of the respondent, being religious and being married. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia ,Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK.

Blanchflower and Bryson, 2024, we make use of the *Eurobarometer* surveys from 1995 to 2022 and focus on three measures of uncertainty regarding one's employment, household finances and general life uncertainty. Specifically, the *Eurobarometer* asks respondents how they expect, e.g., their personal job situation to be the next year choosing from "better", "worse", "same" and "do not know" as possible answers. We construct a dummy variable taking value 1, if the response is "worse" and 0 otherwise. We compute weighted averages for every year, region, gender and age-group cell and match those to our attitudinal data. Appendix Figure A5 shows the time-series of the unemployment rate and the uncertainty measures by gender. In both cases one can see that stated uncertainties follow the cyclicality

of unemployment rates, and that women's uncertainties are usually higher than men's.

We repeat the exercise from Table 3 and regress the individual attitudinal response on the cell-average stated uncertainty. In Table 4 we show that similarly to using actual or shift-share unemployment rates, increasing stated uncertainty relates to a higher likelihood of a male backlash response, while for women we observe the opposite.

Dep. Var.: Agreement to		(1)	(2)	(3)
Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	Baseline	Personal	Household's	General
	SS-UR	Employment	Financial	Life Uncertainty
		Uncertainty	Uncertainty	
Uncertainty	-0.089**	-0.094***	-0.047***	-0.044**
	(0.039)	(0.019)	(0.016)	(0.018)
Uncertainty x Male	0.184^{***}	0.122^{***}	0.097^{***}	0.096***
	(0.038)	(0.021)	(0.018)	(0.020)
Male	0.050***	0.055***	0.052***	0.056***
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.004)
Constant	0.166***	0.178***	0.176^{***}	0.173^{***}
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.003)
Year x NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Individual Controls	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	231,675	217,018	217,018	217,018
R-squared	0.082	0.109	0.109	0.109
Mean Dep Var	0.173	0.186	0.186	0.186

Table 4: Effect of Stated Uncertainty on the Agreement to "When Jobs are Scarce, Men Should Have More Right to a Job than Women"

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. S.E.s are in parentheses and clustered at the Year x NUTS1 x Age Group x Sex level. Standardized betas under the S.Es. Individual controls include an indicator for having children, the educational level of the respondent, being religious and being married. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, UK.

5.4 Robustness Checks

We run different robustness checks to validate the sensitivity of our results. Throughout most of our robustness checks we use the specification from column 5 of Table 3. First, we check the sensitivity of our results to different clusters of the standard errors; specifically, we cluster additionally either at the year, region and survey level or at the regional level alone. Table A3 in the Appendix shows that our results remain statistically significant once we change the clustering approach.

We use unemployment rates at the NUTS2 level to ensure a more strict definition of a local labor market and, thus, a more precise approximation of uncertainty for the respondent. Additionally we use original survey weights and weights constructed to correct for the lack of representativeness at the regional level of the attitudinal data. In Table A4 we show the respective results; using a different regional disaggregation or weights, our results remain qualitatively unchanged.⁵

In Table A5 we test whether changing the baseline year to 1999 and 2004 to compute the baseline shares affects our results, but the interpretation remains unaffected. These years are chosen because of the high number of observations in our attitudinal data centered around these two time benchmarks. However, this comes at a loss in observation size. The lower number of observations in the two different baseline years are due to the fact that fewer regions are observed continuously since 1999 or 2004.

Agreement to "when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women" implicates agreement to an attitude regarding labor market behavior of women and men. To check whether our uncertainty measure relates to other such attitudes, we use disagreement to "both women and men should contribute to household's income" and agreement to "being a housewife is as fulfilling as working for pay" as dependent variables. Additionally, we compute a composite index taking value 1 if the respondent gives a gender-traditional answer to our preferred attitude or any of the latter two. Table A6 shows that we replicate our baseline findings for the composite measure and "being a housewife is as fulfilling as working for pay". The effects when using "both women and men should contribute to household's income" go in the same direction, although they are not statistically significant. We also note that this sample size is substantially smaller for this measure.

⁵We construct unique survey weights to ensure consistency and regional representation utilizing population statistics on the regional age and gender composition from Eurostat and the Current Population Survey (CPS). We closely replicate the weight construction of WVS and EVS, to create a regional-level panel data set.

5.5 Heterogeneity Analysis

By socio-economic groups. Our analysis reveals substantial heterogeneity in how men and women respond to regional economic uncertainty, shaped by demographic, educational, and cultural factors. The negative effect of rising unemployment on women's likelihood of agreement is particularly pronounced among those aged 25–44, whereas the positive effect for men is most evident in the 35–64 age group (Table A7). Notably, individuals aged 35–44 may experience the greatest work-family conflict, often arising from the demands associated with the birth and care of children. Additionally, the strongest and most stable results occur among individuals actively participating in the labor force, particularly those who are currently employed (Table A8). This group perceives rising unemployment as a realistic signal of economic uncertainty. In contrast, we do not observe significant effects for other groups, such as students or retirees. Furthermore, the negative effect for women is particularly strong among those with the lowest levels of education, while the positive effect for men is strongest among those with middle or higher levels of education (Table A9).

By the type of unemployment shock. To explore potential asymmetries in unemployment shocks, we start by identifying periods in which male unemployment is higher than female unemployment, or viceversa. That is, we generate a new variable that takes the value of male (female) unemployment if it is higher than female (male) unemployment, and zero otherwise, relative to its same age-group, region and year. As Appendix Table A10 shows, women do not respond differently to gender gaps in the unemployment rate. However, men do, and their reaction is asymmetric: their conservative shift is partially offset when female unemployment is higher, and it is more pronounced if their own unemployment is higher, reinforcing our backlash interpretation.

By deep-rooted gender norms. Finally, we analyze heterogeneous effects as a function of underlying gender norms. We focus on deep-rooted norms, defined at the country and individual level.

- 1. The legacy of state socialism. In former socialist countries, men and women historically exhibited similar levels of labor market attachment (Campa and Serafinelli, 2019; Lippmann et al., 2020). We argue that this shared labor-market involvement diminishes the likelihood of significant gendered reactions to uncertainty shocks, as gender identity in these contexts was not strongly constructed around differing labormarket roles. Supporting this argument, Fortin (2005) finds that gender attitudes in former socialist countries, such as the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia, are largely unrelated to labor-market outcomes. Furthermore, exploiting the setting of German reunification, Boelmann et al. (2021) demonstrates that East German gender norms, shaped by the state-socialist legacy, exhibit more persistence compared to the norms observed in West Germany. By contrast, in countries without historical state-socialist influence, men have traditionally exhibited significantly higher rates of labor-market participation than women. This pronounced gender differentiation in labor-market attachment would lead to stronger gendered reactions to economic uncertainty. In line with this logic, we find that rising unemployment provokes greater shifts in gender attitudes in countries without a state-socialist past, particularly as these norms are more directly tied to men's historically dominant role in the labor market (Table 5).
- 2. The influence of working mothers plays a critical role in shaping gender attitudes of their children through vertical cultural transmission. Specifically, men raised by mothers who held a paid job are more likely to marry women who also participate in the labor force (Fernández et al., 2004). As a result, individuals raised by a working mother are more likely to internalize egalitarian gender attitudes. These individuals exhibit weaker and non-statistically significant reactions to economic uncertainty shocks, as their attitudes towards gender roles and labor-market attachment are less contingent on external economic fluctuations. The effect is driven by individuals whose mother did not work while growing up (Table 5).

Dependent Variable: Agreement to Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)			
	Not		Mother	Mother			
	Post-Socialist	Post-Socialist	Not Worked	Worked			
Unemployment Rate	-0.099***	-0.050	-0.225***	-0.080			
(Bartik)	(0.033)	(0.079)	(0.062)	(0.054)			
Unemployment Rate x Male	0.217^{***}	0.168	0.283***	0.091			
	(0.031)	(0.107)	(0.059)	(0.052)			
Male	0.021***	0.084***	0.027***	0.038***			
	(0.003)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.005)			
Constant	0.122***	0.223***	0.188***	0.134***			
	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.004)			
Year x NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark			
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark			
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark			
Individual Controls	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark			
Observations	129,060	101,924	36,527	63,535			
R-squared	0.116	0.078	0.155	0.148			
Mean Dep Var	0.135	0.257	0.181	0.131			

Table 5: Heterogeneity by Deep-Rooted Gender Norms

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05. * p<0.1. S.E.s are in parentheses and clustered at the treatment level. Individual controls include an indicator for having children, the educational level of the respondent, being religious and being married. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia ,Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom. Each specification controls for NUTS1 by Year FE, Survey FE, Age Group and Individual Controls.

6 Discussion and Conclusions

Gender norms influence economic decisions of women and men, including occupational sorting, the allocation of time between paid work and household tasks, and educational choices. Yet there is limited understanding on how changing economic conditions alter these norms or attitudes. Using multiple attitudinal surveys covering 32 countries in Europe and the United States during 1995-2022, we find a significant relationship between regional unemployment rates and gender attitudes, which differs by gender: while men shift toward more conservative gender norms, women support more egalitarian views. Our findings are robust to using a shift-share measure of unemployment and alternative specifications. Uncertainty shocks stemming from other sources like personal employment, household financial uncertainty and general life uncertainty show similar results.

Our findings indicate that economic uncertainty amplifies the divergence in gender attitudes between women and men and enhances male backlash. Potential mechanisms underlying these results include financial distress and a threat to identity. Financial distress might lead to increased competition for limited job opportunities between genders, particularly in contexts where labor-market attachment has historically been gender-specific. Risk from job loss can pose an additional threat to men with a breadwinner identity. Deviating from the behavior prescribed for the social category they belong to can cause a decrease in their identity utility. Hence they might lean toward more conservative gender attitudes as a coping mechanism. In line with this argument, we find that the behavioral pattern is more pronounced for individuals with conservative deep-rooted gender norms, which assign the role of contributing in the labor market to men and household production to women. To further investigate the role of deep rooted norms, we are currently classifying regions based on their historical prevalence of nuclear (parents and children) or stem families (intergenerational cohabitation) following Tur-Prats (2019), who shows that these historical family patterns are strongly correlated to current-day more traditional or more egalitarian gender roles, respectively (work in progress).

These results provide a novel contribution to the literature, offering new theoretical avenues for exploring the interplay between economic conditions, identity and social dynamics. Our study contributes to the broader understanding of how economic shocks influence social attitudes. Our main finding that uncertainty increases polarization in gender attitudes between men and women highlights a previously unexplored channel through which household conflict and domestic violence may escalate during periods of economic uncertainty. This underscores the need for targeted policies that mitigate the social consequences of economic uncertainty, particularly its role in deepening gender divides and fueling household tensions.

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A Appendix

Variable	Ν	Mean	SD
Male	290,366	0.4843	0.4998
Age Group:			
15-24	290,366	0.1422	0.3492
25-34	290,366	0.2083	0.4061
35-44	290,366	0.2336	0.4231
45-54	290,366	0.2182	0.4130
55-64	290,366	0.1978	0.3983
Has Children	290,366	0.55	0.49
Employment Status			
Paid Work	290,366	0.6192	0.4856
Unemployed	290,366	0.0755	0.2642
Student	290,366	0.0850	0.2789
Retired	290,366	0.0754	0.2641
Other	290,366	0.1449	0.3520
Education:			
Low	290,366	0.1364	0.3432
Middle	290,366	0.5977	0.4904
High	290,366	0.2659	0.4418
Religious	290,366	0.6993	0.4586
Currently Married	290,366	0.5428	0.4982

Table A1: Summary Statistics Covariates

Table A2: Summary Statistics Shift-Share Unemployment Rates.

Variable	Ν	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Unemployment $Rate_{ryga}$	290366	0.0854	0.0682	0.0000	0.6790
Female Unemployment $Rate_{rya}$	290354	0.0876	0.0709	0.0000	0.6790
Male Unemployment $Rate_{rya}$	290366	0.0831	0.0652	0.0072	0.5470
SS-UR	232522	0.0684	0.0644	0.0000	0.6080
SS-UR (female)	232522	0.0641	0.0650	0.0000	0.5180
SS-UR (male)	232522	0.0733	0.0635	0.0000	0.6080

Statistics calculated using survey weights using the pooled sample 1995-2022. Employed-Other includes those in the armed forces, civil service, and homemakers.

Figure A1: Average Agreement Rate to "When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women", by Gender and Employment Status



Notes: Agreement rate using the pooled sample and survey weights. It includes 32 European countries and the US for the period 1995-2022. Employed-Other includes those in the armed forces, civil service, and homemakers.

Figure A2: Average Agreement Rate to "When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women", by Gender over Educational Level



Notes: Agreement rate using the pooled sample and survey weights. It includes 32 European countries and the US for the period 1995-2022. Low education includes less than primary and lower secondary education. Middle includes upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education. High includes short cycle tertiary education, bachelor, master and doctoral studies.

Figure A3: Average Agreement Rate to "When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women", by Gender over Birth Cohort



Notes: Agreement rate using the pooled sample and survey weights. It includes 32 European countries and the US for the period 1995-2022.

Figure A4: Unemployment Rates over Time, by Age Group and Gender



Notes: Own calculations using Eurostat country-level data.





Notes: Own calculations using Eurostat country-level data and Eurobarometer microdata collapsed at the yearly level (weighted). Both series refer to the prime-age population (15-64).

Table A3: Robustness to Different Clustering

Dep. Var.: Agreement to	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	UR_ryag	UR_ryag	UR_ryag	SS-UR_ryag	SS-UR_ryag	Empl. Unc.	Empl. Unc.	Fin. Unc.	Fin. Unc.	Life Unc.	Life Unc.
Uncertainty	-0.146^{***}	-0.146^{***}	-0.146**	-0.089**	-0.089*	-0.094***	-0.094***	-0.047**	-0.047**	-0.045**	-0.045**
	(0.033)	(0.039)	(0.062)	(0.043)	(0.050)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.020)	(0.022)	(0.020)	(0.017)
Uncertainty x Male	0.253^{***}	0.253^{***}	0.253^{***}	0.184^{***}	0.184^{**}	0.120^{***}	0.120^{***}	0.096^{***}	0.096^{**}	0.096^{***}	0.096^{**}
	(0.036)	(0.058)	(0.068)	(0.066)	(0.074)	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.033)	(0.028)	(0.029)
Male	0.041***	0.041***	0.041***	0.050***	0.050***	0.055***	0.055***	0.052***	0.052***	0.056***	0.056***
	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.008)	(0.012)
Constant	0.172***	0.172***	0.172***	0.166^{***}	0.166^{***}	0.178***	0.178***	0.176***	0.176^{***}	0.172***	0.172***
	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Year x NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	✓	✓	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group & Individual Controls	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	√	√	√	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Cluster	yrga	yrs	r	yrs	r	yrs	r	yrs	r	yrs	r
Observations	290,366	290,366	290,366	231,675	231,675	216,106	216,106	216,125	216,125	216, 115	216,115
R-squared	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.117	0.117	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.109	0.109
Mean Dep Var	0.177	0.177	0.177	0.173	0.173	0.186	0.186	0.186	0.186	0.186	0.186

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Included countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America. The USA are excluded from (5) to (10). The Baseline reports the results using the regular unemployment rate as comparison to column (1) and (2)

Dep. Var.: Agreement to	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	UR_{ryga}	UR_{ryga}	survey weights	own weights
Uncertainty	-0.146***	-0.152***	-0.044	-0.124***
	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.043)	(0.033)
Uncertainty x Male	0.253^{***}	0.220^{***}	0.210^{***}	0.264^{***}
	(0.036)	(0.029)	(0.041)	(0.037)
Male	0.041^{***}	0.048^{***}	0.038^{***}	0.036^{***}
	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.004)
Constant	0.172^{***}	0.179^{***}	0.154^{***}	0.164^{***}
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.004)
Year x NUTS1 FE	\checkmark		\checkmark	\checkmark
Year x NUTS2 FE		\checkmark		
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group & Individual controls	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	290,366	240,791	247,609	257,041
R-squared	0.115	0.129	0.119	0.116
Mean Dep Var	0.177	0.194	0.177	0.17

Table A4: Robustness to Different Specifications

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Standard errors are in parentheses and clustered at the treatment level. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lituania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, US. Column (1) reports the baseline regression using the unemployment rate and serves as comparison. Column (3) uses survey weights provided by the respective survey. In column (4) we construct weights accounting for the regional age group-gender distribution aiming at, e.g., correcting for the oversampling of individuals through different surveys in the same year in a given region.

Dep. Var.: Agreement to Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	(1) baseline	(2) base 1999	(3) base 2004
Unemplyoment Rate	-0.089**	-0.110***	-0.095**
(Bartik)	(0.039)	(0.035)	(0.045)
Unemplyoment Rate x Male	0.184^{***}	0.071**	0.202***
	(0.038)	(0.036)	(0.041)
Male	0.050***	0.052***	0.051***
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Constant	0.166***	0.168***	0.171***
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Year x NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Individual Controls	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	231,675	140,857	202,343
R-squared	0.117	0.127	0.117
Mean Dep Var	0.173	0.167	0.173

Table A5: Robustness to Different Baseline of Shift-Share

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Standard errors are in parentheses and clustered at the treatment level. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia ,Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK. Column (1) reports the baseline SS-UR. Baseline setting in 1999 and 2004 ensures a common base year across regions, but at the cost of sample size. To maximize the number of observations we set a different base year depending on the year in which the region is formed.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Scarce Jobs	Both Contribute	Housewife	Any of the 3
	HH-Income	fulfilling job	
-0.089**	-0.041	-0.145***	-0.130****
(0.039)	(0.045)	(0.054)	(0.032)
0.185^{****}	0.102	0.143^{**}	0.181^{****}
(0.038)	(0.067)	(0.064)	(0.036)
0.050****	0.026****	0.016***	0.042****
(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.003)
0.166***	0.120***	0.478***	0.376^{***}
(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)
\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
232,522	32,786	124,308	232,522
0.117	0.065	0.081	0.251
0.173	0.138	0.519	0.353
	(1) Scarce Jobs -0.089^{**} (0.039) 0.185^{****} (0.038) 0.050^{****} (0.003) 0.166^{***} (0.003) \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark \checkmark	$\begin{array}{cccc} (1) & (2) \\ \text{Scarce Jobs} & \text{Both Contribute} \\ & \text{HH-Income} \\ \hline & -0.089^{**} & -0.041 \\ (0.039) & (0.045) \\ 0.185^{****} & 0.102 \\ (0.038) & (0.067) \\ \hline & 0.050^{****} & 0.026^{****} \\ (0.003) & (0.006) \\ 0.166^{***} & 0.120^{***} \\ (0.003) & (0.004) \\ \hline & \checkmark & \checkmark \\ (0.003) & (0.004) \\ \hline & \checkmark & \checkmark \\ \hline & \checkmark & \checkmark \\ \hline & \checkmark & \checkmark \\ \hline & 232,522 & 32,786 \\ 0.117 & 0.065 \\ 0.173 & 0.138 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{ccccccc} (1) & (2) & (3) \\ \text{Scarce Jobs Both Contribute} & Housewife \\ HH-Income & fulfilling job \\ \hline -0.089^{**} & -0.041 & -0.145^{***} \\ (0.039) & (0.045) & (0.054) \\ 0.185^{****} & 0.102 & 0.143^{**} \\ (0.038) & (0.067) & (0.064) \\ \hline 0.050^{****} & 0.026^{****} & 0.016^{***} \\ (0.003) & (0.006) & (0.006) \\ 0.166^{***} & 0.120^{***} & 0.478^{***} \\ (0.003) & (0.004) & (0.004) \\ \hline \checkmark & \checkmark & \checkmark \\ \hline \checkmark & \checkmark & \checkmark \\ \hline \checkmark & \checkmark & \checkmark \\ \hline 232,522 & 32,786 & 124,308 \\ 0.117 & 0.065 & 0.081 \\ 0.173 & 0.138 & 0.519 \\ \hline \end{array}$

Table A6: Robustness to Different Gender Attitudes

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Standard errors are in parentheses and clustered at the treatment level. The dependent variable in column (1) takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Column (2) takes value 1 if a respondent disagrees or strongly grees to "Husband and wife should contribute to household income" and 0 if they (strongly) agree or neither. Column (3) takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to "Being housewife as fulfilling as paid job" and 0 if they (strongly) disagree or neither. Column (4) takes value 1 if any of the three variables is 1 and 0 if all are 0. Included countries are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia ,Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK.

Table A7:	Heterogeneity	by Age	Groups
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Dep. Var.: Agreement to Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	(1) 15-24	(2) 25-34	(3) 35-44	(4) 45-54	(5) 55-64
Unemployment Rate	0.187*	-0.204**	-0.344***	-0.075	-0.090
(Bartik)	(0.096)	(0.079)	(0.108)	(0.073)	(0.083)
Unemployment Rate x Male	-0.077	0.127	0.412^{***}	0.186^{***}	0.177^{***}
	(0.073)	(0.083)	(0.103)	(0.056)	(0.060)
Male	0.098^{***}	0.058^{***}	0.041^{***}	0.044^{***}	0.035^{***}
Constant	(0.005) 0.096^{***} (0.009)	(0.007) 0.155^{***} (0.007)	(0.000) 0.170^{***} (0.007)	(0.000) 0.174^{***} (0.005)	(0.005) (0.222^{***}) (0.005)
Year x NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Individual Controls	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	31,136	47,841	54,311	50,843	48,301
R-squared	0.133	0.125	0.118	0.122	0.129
Mean Dep Var	0.146	0.159	0.162	0.176	0.218

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. S.E. in parentheses and clustered at the Year x NUTS1 x Age Group x Sex level. Specification from col. (5) Table 3. Individual controls include an indicator for having children, the educational level of the respondent, being religious and being married. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are:Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia ,Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK.

	(.)	(2)	(2)	(1)	()
Dep. Var.: Agreement to	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	Paid Work	Unemployed	Student	Retired	Other
Unemployment Rate	-0.162***	-0.011	0.067	-0.075	-0.099
(Bartik)	(0.048)	(0.104)	(0.068)	(0.119)	(0.063)
Unemployment Rate x Male	0.288^{***}	0.155^{*}	0.023	0.123	-0.243**
	(0.048)	(0.093)	(0.064)	(0.114)	(0.094)
Male	0.050^{***}	0.101^{***}	0.073^{***}	0.049^{***}	0.066^{***}
	(0.004)	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.010)
Constant	0.136^{***}	0.204^{***}	0.071^{***}	0.270^{***}	0.226^{***}
	(0.004)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.005)
Year x NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Individual Controls	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	134,027	18,094	18,493	20,029	40,864
R-squared	0.113	0.148	0.116	0.118	0.125
Mean Dep Var	0.152	0.252	0.105	0.271	0.211

Table A8: Heterogeneity by Employment Status

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. S.E. in parentheses and clustered at the Year x NUTS1 x Age Group x Sex level. Specification from col. (5) Table 3. Individual controls include an indicator for having children, the educational level of the respondent, being religious and being married. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK. Column (5) includes disabled individuals, homemakers, military personnel, community service personnel.

Dep. Var.: Agreement to	(1)	(2)	(3)
Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men	Low	Middle	High
SS-Unemployment Rate	-0.161***	-0.077	-0.031
	(0.062)	(0.055)	(0.039)
SS-Unemployment Rate x Male	0.043	0.195^{***}	0.163^{***}
	(0.075)	(0.050)	(0.041)
Male	0.054^{***}	0.059^{***}	0.032***
	(0.009)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Constant	0.292^{***}	0.179^{***}	0.074^{***}
	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.003)
Year x NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Individual Controls	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	27,896	143,447	61,114
R-squared	0.139	0.097	0.078
Mean Dep Var	0.275	0.194	0.079

Table A9: Heterogeneity by Educational Level

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. S.E. in parentheses and clustered at the treatment level. Specification from col. (5) Table 3. Individual controls include an indicator for having children, being religious and being married. The dependent variable takes value 1 if the respondent agrees or strongly agrees to the statement "Men should have more a right to a job when jobs are scarce" and 0 if they strongly disagree, disagree or neither. Included countries are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK

		Women			Men	
Dep. Var.: Agreement to	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Scarce Jobs Should Go to Men						
Unemployment Rate	-0.254***	-0.171***	-0.153***	-0.262***	-0.168***	-0.163***
	(0.052)	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.035)
Higher Unemployment Rate for	-0.028	-0.010	-0.021	0.021	0.007	0.016
	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.034)
Higher Unemployment Rate x Male	-0.137***	-0.100***	-0.082**	0.158^{***}	0.117^{***}	0.102^{***}
	(0.047)	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.052)	(0.050)	(0.049)
Unemployment Rate x Male	0.346^{***}	0.310^{***}	0.284^{***}	0.184^{***}	0.191^{***}	0.183^{***}
	(0.051)	(0.049)	(0.048)	(0.045)	(0.043)	(0.041)
Male	0.038^{***}	0.041^{***}	0.048^{***}	0.038^{***}	0.041^{***}	0.047^{***}
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Currently Unemployed			0.056***			0.056***
			(0.003)			(0.003)
Constant	0.184^{***}	0.175^{***}	0.159^{***}	0.182^{***}	0.174^{***}	0.158***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Year x NUTS1 FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Survey FE	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Age Group	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Individual Controls	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Observations	290,354	290,354	290,354	290,354	290,354	290,354
R-squared	0.096	0.115	0.118	0.096	0.115	0.118
Mean Dep Var	0.177	0.177	0.177	0.177	0.177	0.177

Table A10: Heterogeneity by Relative Unemployment Rate

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. S.E. in parentheses and clustered at the Year x NUTS1 x Age Group x Sex level. Individual controls include an indicator for having children, the educational level of the respondent, being religious and being married. Included countries are:Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and the USA.

Variable	Ν	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Survey:					
ESS (1/0)	290366	0.3157	0.4648	0.0000	1.0000
EVS $(1/0)$	290366	0.2469	0.4312	0.0000	1.0000
GGS(1/0)	290366	0.3083	0.4618	0.0000	1.0000
WVS $(1/0)$	290366	0.1292	0.3354	0.0000	1.0000

Table A11: Survey Waves Descriptive Statistics

Survey	Countries	Year Coverage
European Social Survey	Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland	2004-2006
	Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom	
European Social Survey	Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary	2010-2012
	Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom	
European Social Survey	Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy	2016-2017
	Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom	
European Values Study	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania	1990-1993
	Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom	
European Values Study	Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy	1999-2000
	Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, United Kingdom	
European Values Study	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary	2008-2009
	Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom	
European Values Study	Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy	2017-2018
	Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom	
Generations and Gender Programme Round 1	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania	2002-2011
Generations and Gender Programme Round 2	Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania	2006-2015
World Values Survey	Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America	1995-1998
World Values Survey	Spain, United States of America	1999-2000
World Values Survey	Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom	2005-2009
World Values Survey	Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United States of America	2011-2013
World Values Survey	Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Romania, United States of America	2017-2022

Table A12: Survey Waves Overview with Countries and Year Coverage

Table A13: Cou	untries Covered	, by	Year and	Num	iber of	ΞO	bservations
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Country	Years	Ν
Austria	1999, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2018	15,406
Belgium	1999,2004,2005,2008,2009,2010,2011,2016,2017	12,759
Bulgaria	2004, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2017	18,231
Croatia	2011, 2017	2,197
Cyprus	2006, 2008, 2011, 2019	4,123
Czech Republic	1998,1999,2004,2005,2008,2009,2011,2016,2017	20,707
Denmark	$1999,\ 2004,\ 2005,\ 2008,\ 2010,\ 2011,\ 2017$	6,681
Estonia	2004, 2005, 2011, 2016, 2017	4,131
Finland	2000, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2016, 2017	6,225
France	1999,2004,2005,2006,2008,2010,2011,2016,2017,2018	7,725
Germany	1997,2004,2005,2006,2008,2010,2011,2013,2016,2017,2018	24,064
Greece	1999, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2017	6,748
Hungary	$1999,\ 2005,\ 2008,\ 2009,\ 2010,\ 2017,\ 2018$	7,523
Ireland	$1999,\ 2005,\ 2008,\ 2011,\ 2012,\ 2016,\ 2017$	7,277
Italy	1999, 2005, 2006, 2009, 2017, 2018	7,453
Latvia	2008	1,126
Lithuania	$1999,\ 2006,\ 2008,\ 2009,\ 2011,\ 2017,\ 2018$	14,880
Luxembourg	1999, 2004, 2005, 2008	3,676
Netherlands	$1999,\ 2004,\ 2005,\ 2006,\ 2008,\ 2010,\ 2011,\ 2012,\ 2016,\ 2017,\ 2022$	9,640
Norway	2004,2005,2007,2008,2010,2011,2016,2018	$14,\!363$
Poland	$1999,\ 2004,\ 2008,\ 2010,\ 2011,\ 2012,\ 2016,\ 2017$	22,875
Portugal	$1999,\ 2004,\ 2005,\ 2008,\ 2010,\ 2011,\ 2016,\ 2017$	5,096
Romania	1999, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2018	15,609
Slovakia	$1999,\ 2004,\ 2008,\ 2010,\ 2011,\ 2017$	5,703
Slovenia	$1999,\ 2004,\ 2010,\ 2011,\ 2016,\ 2017$	5,568
Spain	1995, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2007 2008, 2011, 2017	10,566
Sweden	1996,2004,2005,2006,2009,2010,2011,2016,2017	6,240
Switzerland	1996,2004,2005,2007,2008,2010,2011,2016,2017	9,404
United Kingdom	1998,1999,2004,2005,2009,2010,2011,2016,2017,2018	8,917
United States	1995, 1999, 2011, 2017	$5,\!453$