

Gender Differences in Effects of Labor Market Status and Education on Subjective Well-Being across European Welfare Regimes

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In high-income countries, women report a higher level of life satisfaction than men on average, but score lower on short-term positive and negative emotions and suffer from higher levels of depression - and the picture gets complicated with age, life cycle, employment, income, family status etc. This **positive gender gap in subjective life satisfaction is a puzzle, as women would have several objective reasons to be less satisfied with their life** and their professional situation through persistent disadvantages in the labour market¹(lower wages, more part-time, glass-ceiling), access to education, access to power etc. Moreover ample evidence exist about the **strong role of institutions, norms, social context** and thus **spatial/country or region-specific differences** in terms of how objective aspects of wellbeing are perceived subjectively . E.g. OECD 2015 states that, as well as having low levels of income inequality Nordic countries tend to have much smaller differences in quality of life outcomes – including gender and age-related differences .

This research will investigate what determines **gender differences in subjective well-being across old and new EU member states** and also **across different welfare regimes**. One goal is to estimate **individual specific effects of labor market status, education level, family status/parenthood, household structure, work-life balance, household distribution of tasks** over perceptions of their own well-being as well as trying to identify differences **before and after the crisis**. However, the major focus of this research is to check **whether country-specificities in some macroeconomic factors and institutional arrangements(labor market/unemployment benefit, maternity leave, child care and social policy schemes) have any effect on gender aspects of subjective well-being** - thereby allowing a comparison of not only countries belonging to Western and Eastern Europe (**EU15 vs EU12**) but also **along different welfare state regimes in EU** (expanded Esping-Andersen typology etc.) of **Nordic, Continental EU, Southern EU, Anglo-Saxon and CEE countries**.

This research plans to use **large-n microdata from the European Social Survey** – comparing waves 3 from 2006 and Wave 6 from 2012 Special Panels and do **pooled cross-section** analysis via **econometric methods** (ordered logit, OLS, multi-level analysis) that are the state of the art in wellbeing literature.

Keywords: well-being, gender, employment, education, social cohesion, welfare states, Europe

JEL codes: I31, I24, J08, H53, C31

¹ Gender segregation in the labour market e.g. is described by Eurofound's latest report Women, men and working conditions in Europe (Eurofound, 2013).