

Patriarchy and How to Measure It

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Patriarchy

What means???

Defining patriarchy is not an easy task.

“Patriarchy and patriarchal are words used to describe gender inequality (..). While their exact definitions remain contested, they generally label social arrangements that give mature heterosexual men power over others. (..) The noun ‘patriarchy’ (like ‘capitalism’) describes an entity that stands alone or separate, like a sun circled by planets subject to its gravitational force.”
(Folbre 2021, p.21)

Patriarchy

What means???

From an economic perspective, patriarchy can be described as a central component of a dual or hybrid system. In patriarchal economies, women are disproportionately concentrated in low-paying jobs and are responsible for unpaid reproductive labor. By giving the husband greater access to earnings, this practice not only supports capitalist economies, but also patriarchal families in which the husband has economic control over his wife and children, as well as legal and ideological dominance (Matthaei, 1999)

Stereotypes on gender roles

Gender stereotypes have been identified by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as a persistent barrier to gender equality and social, economic and sustainable development.

At the international level, since 2018, UN Women tried to quantify the extent of gender stereotypes in various countries, with the aim of monitoring, on a biannual basis, how these vary over time and how they are linked to women's subordinate status in society.

Stereotypes on gender roles

The latest available data (UN Women, 2022) show that discriminatory social norms and attitudes continue to hinder the progress of women and girls, particularly in times of hardship. Precisely in contexts of crisis, gender attitudes and beliefs that guide people's decisions and behaviours seem to lead to a reversal of the hard-won gains in gender equality. For example, at the aggregate level, considering all 20 countries analysed by UN Women, 25% of respondents agree that *'in times of food shortages, priority should be given to men'*, and 31% of respondents agree that *'when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women'*.



Gender Stereotypes in the EU

Two main sources:

- **European value study**

<https://www.gesis.org/en/european-values-study>

- **Eurobarometer**

<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2974>

Over the last decade*, the general level of agreement with some **stereotypical statements regarding family life and roles** slightly decreased, but the gap among Member States widened

Total agree



All in all, **family life suffers** when the **mother has a full time job**

EU LEVEL

2024

51%

2014

60%

HIGHEST AGREEMENT

LT 

73%

PT 

79%

LOWEST AGREEMENT

FI 

16%

FI 

27%

DIFFERENCE

57pp

52pp



Overall, **men are naturally less competent** than women to perform **household tasks**

2024

49%

2014

50%

HU 

74%

HU 

71%

DK 

14%

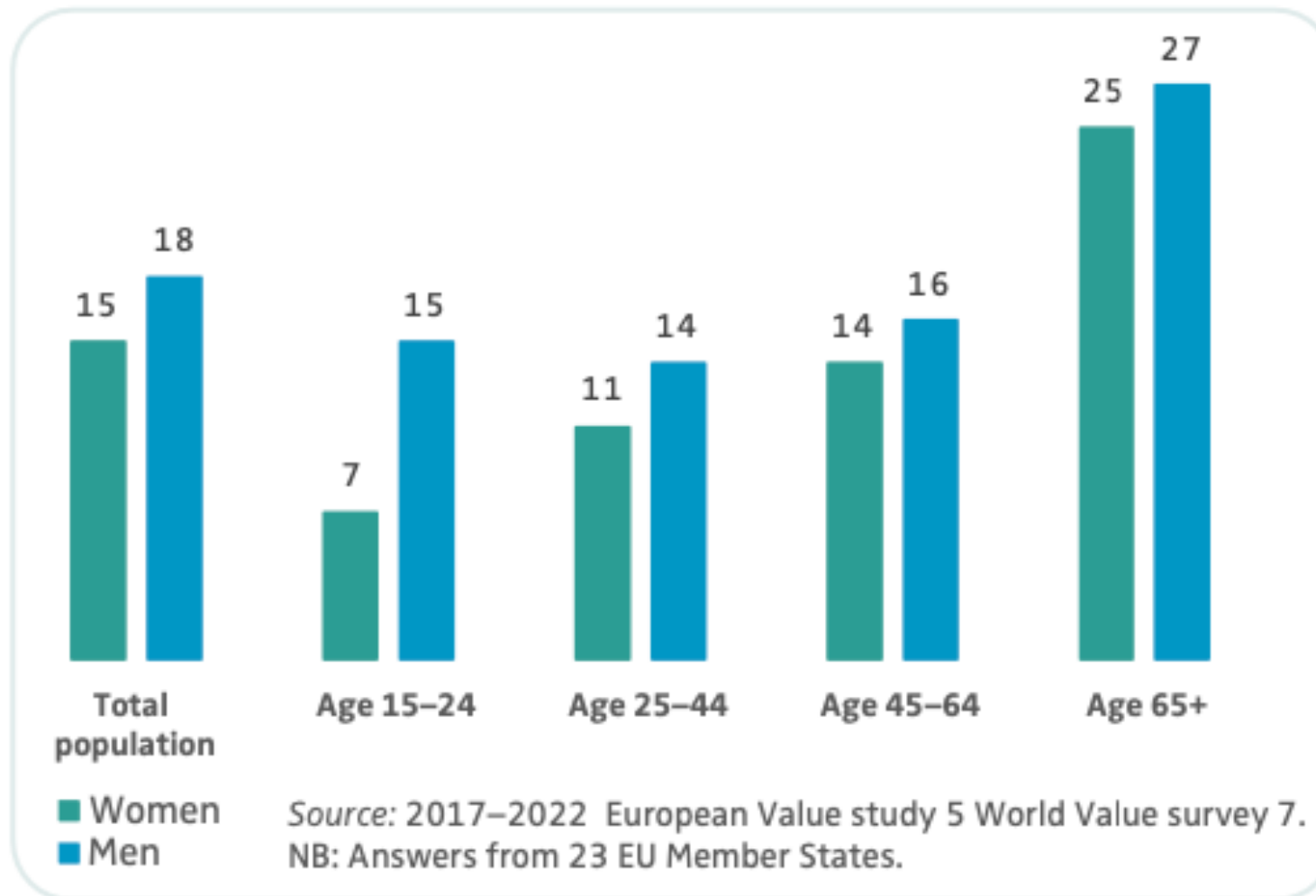
NL 

20%

60pp

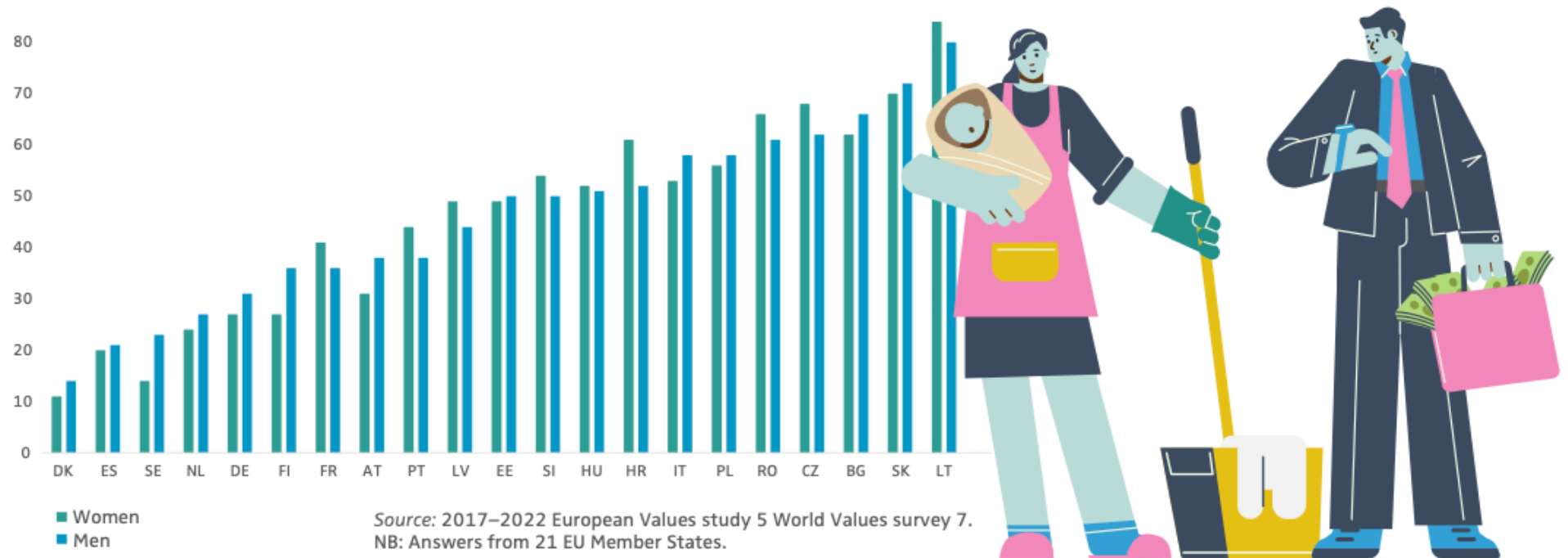
51pp

Figure 1: Women and men agreeing that 'When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women' (%)



Source: European value study

Figure 2: Women and men agreeing that 'A job is all right but what most women really want is a home and children' (% , 15+)



Source: European value study

Figure 3: Women and men agreeing that 'The most important role of a man is to earn money' (% , EU-27)

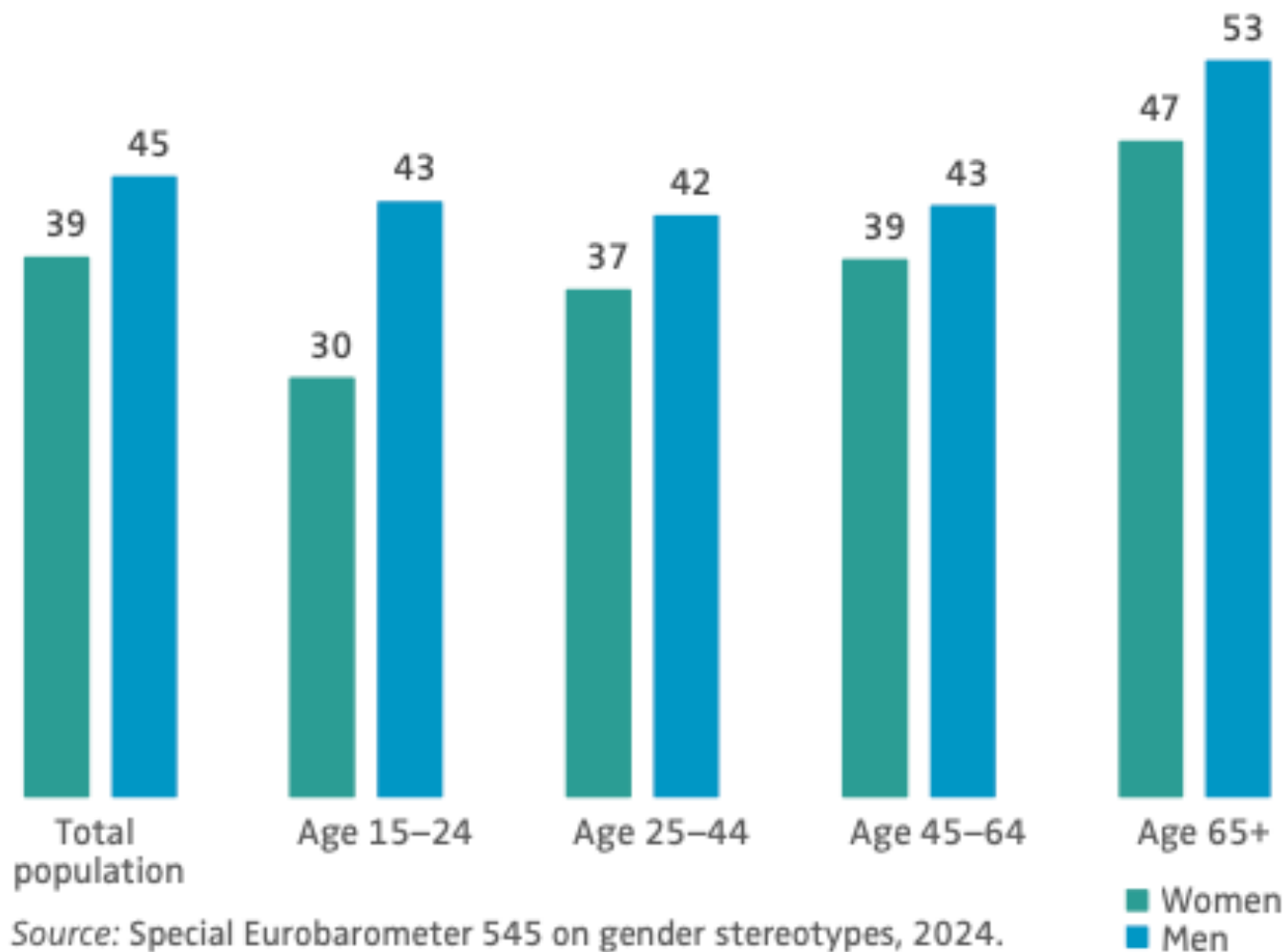
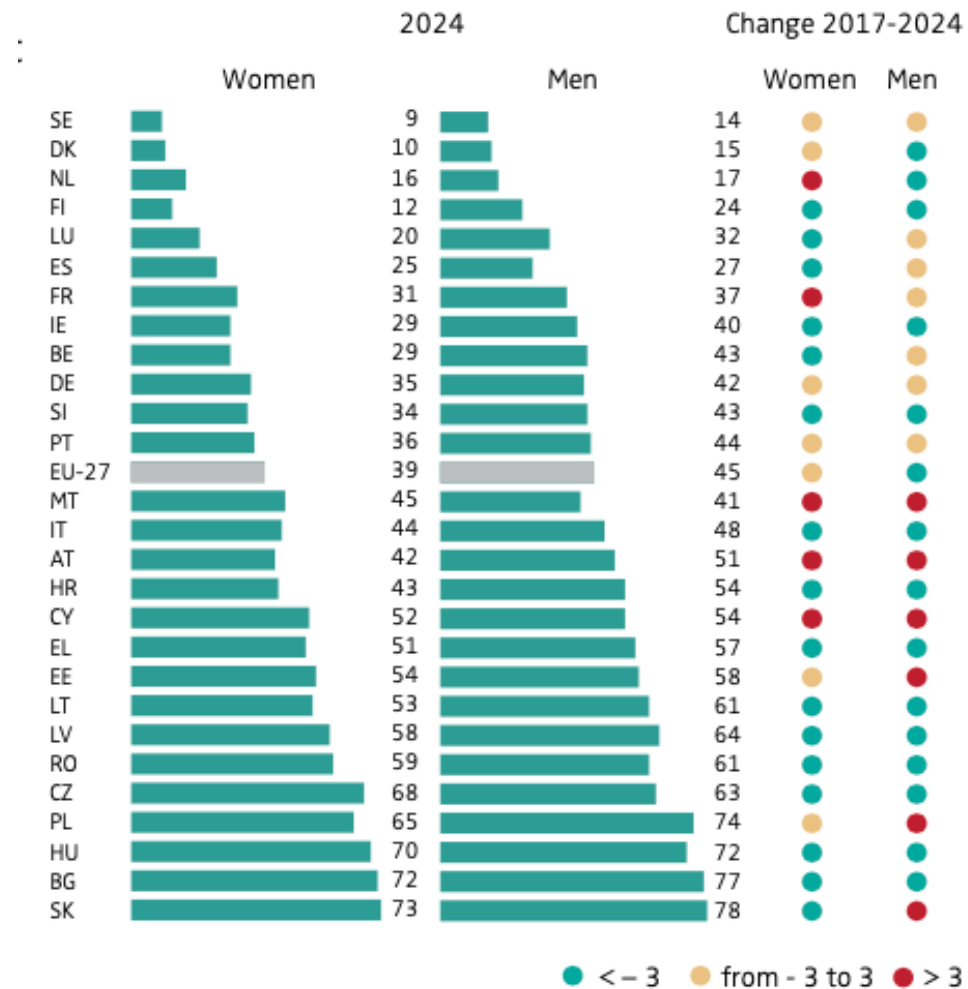
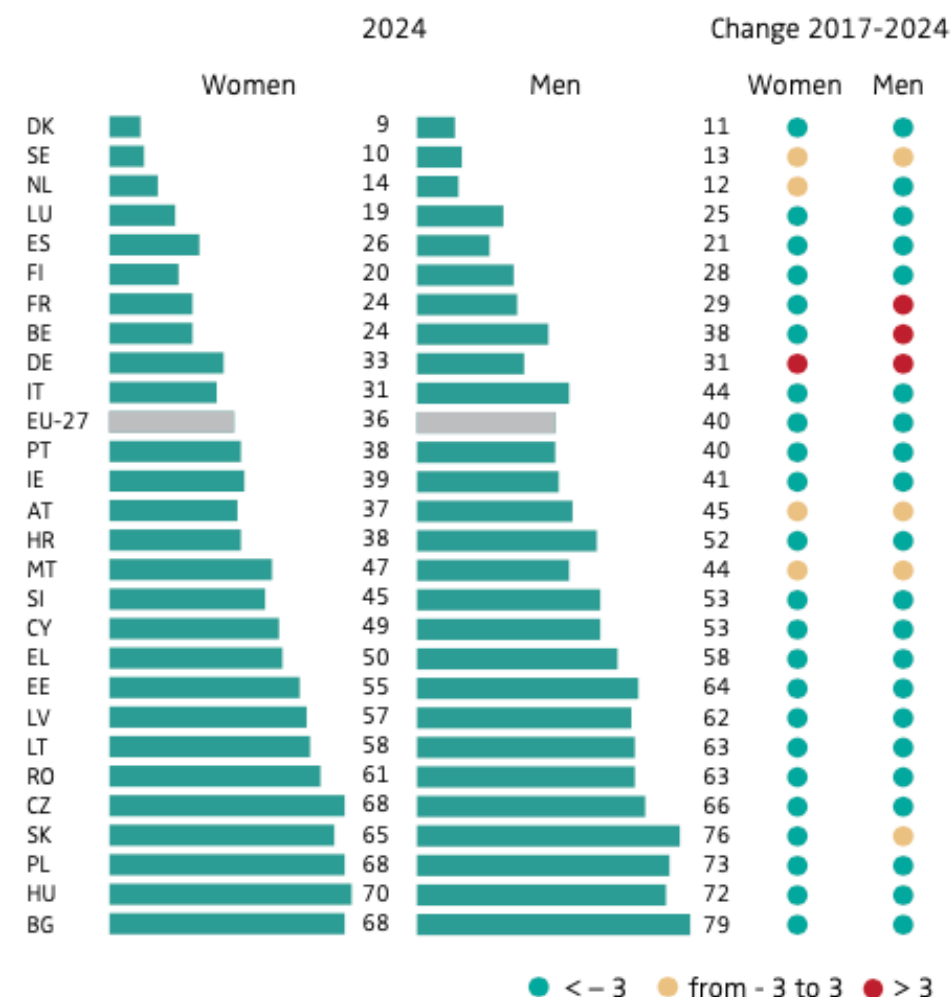


Figure 4: Women and men agreeing that 'The most important role of a man is to earn money' (% , 15+)



Sources: Special Eurobarometers 545 on gender stereotypes, 2024, and 465 on gender equality, 2017.

Figure 6: Women and men agreeing that 'The most important role of a woman is to take care of her home and family' (% , 15+)



Source: Special Eurobarometers 545 on gender stereotypes, 2024, and 465 on gender equality, 2017.

Figure 7: Women and men agreeing that 'Men taking parental leave show a lack of ambition for their career' (% , 15+)

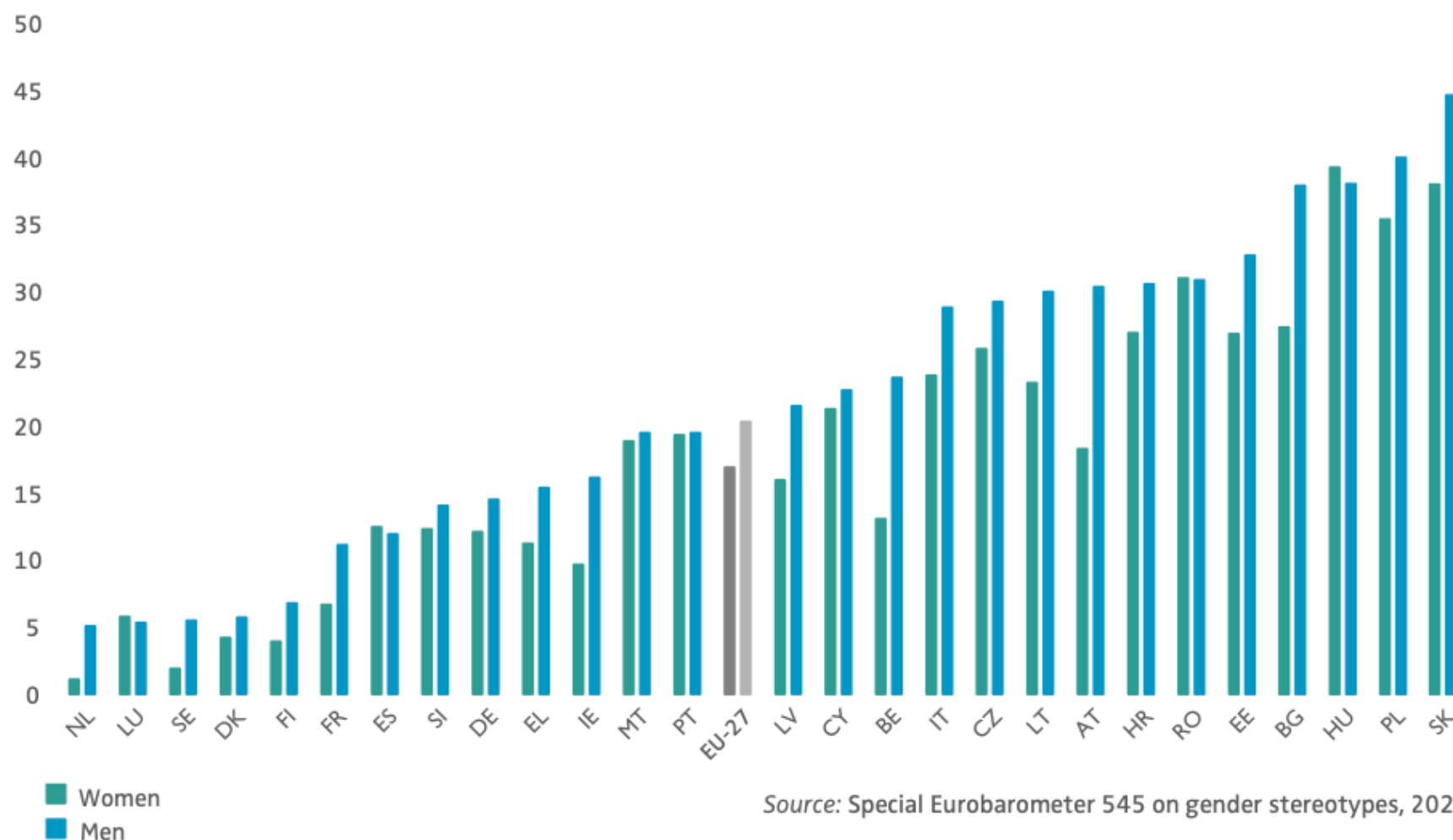


Figure 9: Women and men agreeing that 'Men make better leaders than women' (% , EU-27)

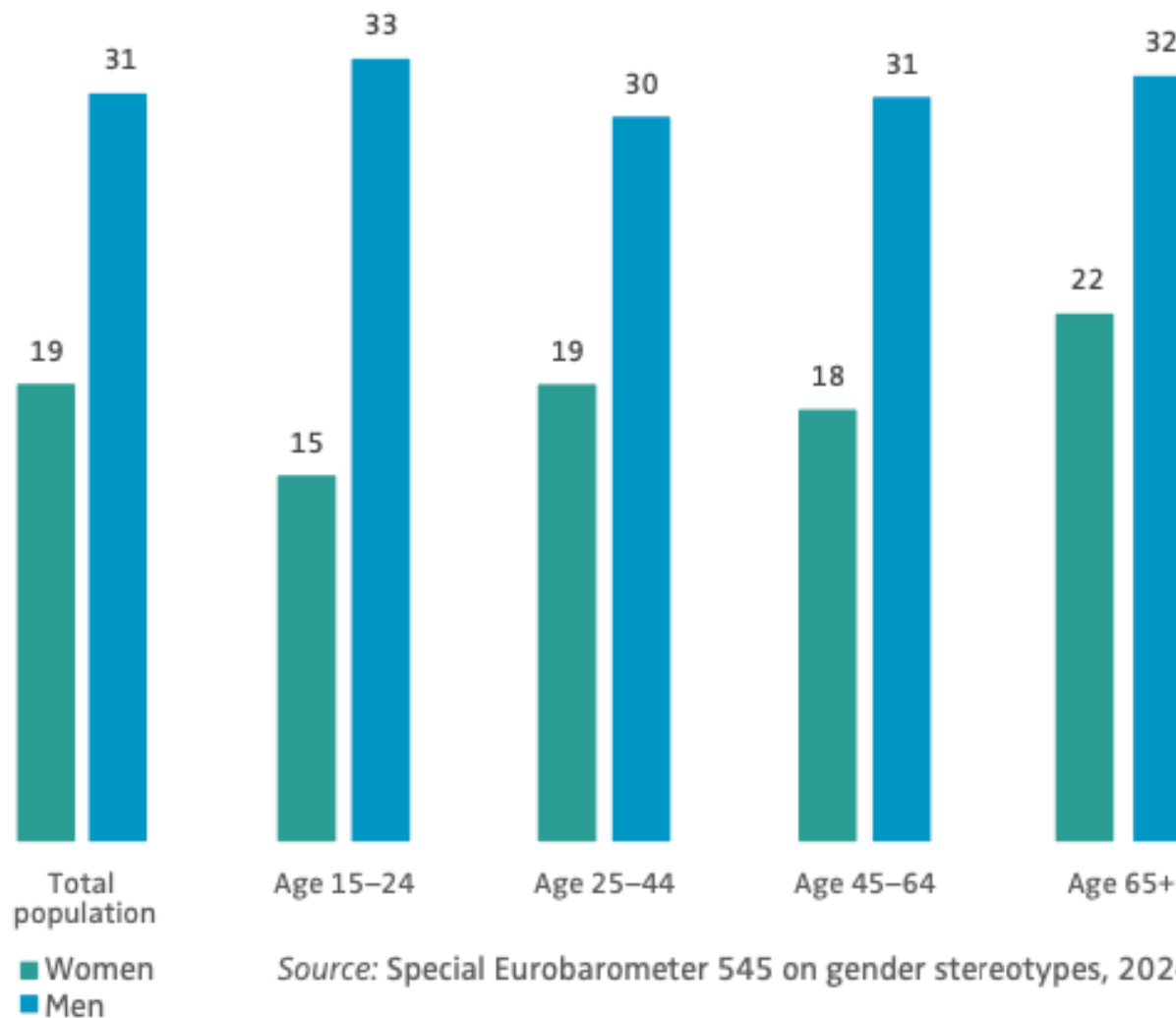
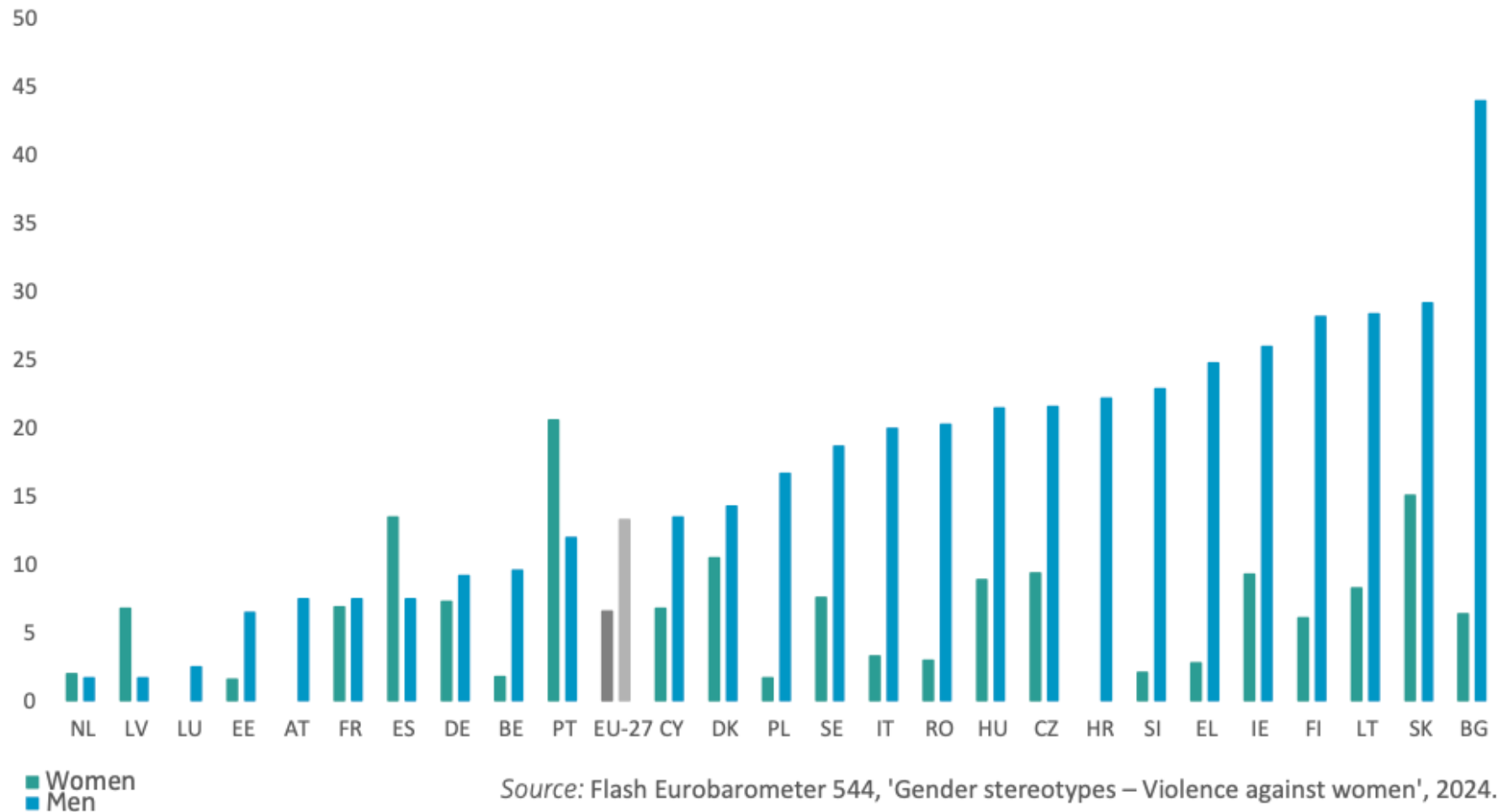


Figure 10: Women and men agreeing that 'Faced with a sexual proposal, if a woman says "no", she often means "yes" but she is playing "hard to get" (%) , 18–24)



Gender Attitudes Within and Between European Countries: Regional Variations Matter

Casella et al. (2024) reports systematic variations of people's attitudes toward gender and gendered roles between countries and regions in Europe, making regional and national comparisons simultaneously visible on the same scale over time. They operationalized the concept of “gender attitudes” by using a combination of items among those administered by the European Values Survey (in 2008 and in 2017) whose sampling strategy is statistically representative at both national and regional level.

Gender Attitudes Within and Between European Countries: Regional Variations Matter

Building on evidence that gender attitudes are socioculturally and historically situated, they hypothesize that sociocultural and historical factors affecting people's attitudes toward gender (and thus attitudes toward gender equality) can vary also geographically, that is, by country but also by region, within the same country.

Nationally aggregated data, often used to channel policy and practice, cannot capture the real tendency of social phenomena when they are characterized by high degrees of internal heterogeneity. (Casella et al., 2024)

Gender Attitudes Within and Between European Countries: Regional Variations Matter

They hypothesize that locating the exploration of gender attitudes at different (national and sub-national) levels can be helpful in identifying connections between gender attitudes and social, cultural and historical factors, and therefore more “properly” inform policy and practice.

Casella and Pampaka (2020), for instance, have recently shown high regional variability of gender attitudes in Italy where, on average, the traditional perception of women was shown to be stronger in the South than in the Center and in the North.

Measuring Patriarchy in Italy



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Measuring Patriarchy in Italy*

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Stereotypes on Gender Roles in Italy

	Very much agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Doesn't know
“Women should not work full-time if they have small children”	27	26	22	9	14	2
“Even if they work, women should have the main responsibility for caring for their families”	19	25	29	17	10	0
“Women generally make use of their physical appearance to succeed”	12	33	30	17	8	0
“Being attractive is more important for women than for men”	16	38	24	11	9	2
“Motherhood is the only experience that allows a woman to fulfil herself completely”	11	20	24	14	28	3
“All women dream of getting married”	9	18	25	21	23	4
“The economic management of the family is the man's responsibility”	5	9	34	19	32	1

Source: IPSOS

Level of Adherence to Stereotypes towards Women in the Personal/family Sphere in Italy

High (28%)	Medium (40%)	Low (32%)
Mainly: Age group (16-24) Centre and South Italy Low educational qualification	Mainly: Men Age group (25 - 55) North Italy	Mainly: Women Age group (over 55) Housewives and students Childless people Graduates and diploma holders

Stereotypes on Gender Roles in Italy

“In conditions of job shortage, employers should give priority to men over women”

	<i>Very much agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Doesn't answer</i>
North-West	2.8	7.9	12.5	75.8	1.1
North-East	3.0	9.0	12.1	74.9	1.1
Centre	3.8	10.8	11.8	73.1	0.5
South	7.1	14.7	15.5	61.4	1.3

“It is above all men who must provide for the financial needs of the family”

	<i>Very much agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Doesn't answer</i>
North-West	5.8	16.8	18.0	58.9	0.5
North-East	6.8	16.8	18.7	57.1	0.8
Centre	7.8	18.1	15.6	58.1	0.5
South	13.4	22.5	17.2	46.0	0.9

“It is the man who has to make the most important decisions concerning the family”

	<i>Very much agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Doesn't answer</i>
North-West	2.3	4.8	9.8	82.6	0.5
North-East	1.6	3.8	11.8	82.5	0.5
Centre	2.4	4.9	11.6	80.6	0.5
South	6.0	7.1	12.2	73.9	0.9

“Men are less fit to take care of household chores”

	<i>Very much agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Doesn't answer</i>
North-West	8.7	20.8	19.6	50.3	0.7
North-East	8.7	18.4	19.5	52.6	0.8
Centre	10.0	20.0	21.8	47.5	0.7
South	12.4	22.8	22.4	41.4	1.0

“For men, more than for women, it is very important to be successful at work”

	<i>Very much agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Doesn't answer</i>
North-West	7.6	22.1	16.3	52.4	1.6
North-East	7.8	19.9	18.1	52.9	1.3
Centre	6.8	23.5	14.9	53.7	1.3
South	12.0	23.1	14.4	49.0	1.6

Source: ISTAT

The Patriarchy Index for Italy

The History of the Family, 2016

Vol. 21, No. 2, 133–174, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1081602X.2014.1001769>



The patriarchy index: a comparative study of power relations across historical Europe

Siegfried Gruber^a and Mikołaj Szoltysek^{b*}

:351–377

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-021-02752-1>

ORIGINAL RESEARCH



Development of the India Patriarchy Index: Validation and Testing of Temporal and Spatial Patterning

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Measuring the Strength of Patriarchal Household Structures and Patriarchal Ideology

(Preliminary draft: Please do not quote or cite without the permission of the authors)

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The Patriarchy Index for Italy

Sources and data

Datasets:

- the most recent Italian cross-sectional element (referring to the year 2019) of EU-SILC;
- the last available wave of the Italian Time-Use Survey (IT-TUS 2013-2014);
- the data collected for the Italian BES Report (2021);
- the World Values Survey (2017-2022);
- and the IACOFI survey conducted by the Bank of Italy (2020)

Domains

1. Domination of men over women
 2. Domination of the older over the younger generation
 3. Patrilocality
 4. Socio-economic domination
- 

Domination of men over women

	Indicator	Definition
■	Proportion of female household heads	$\frac{\text{female household heads}}{\text{household heads (18–64)}}$
■	Proportion of not married couples	$\frac{\text{coresident not married couples}}{\text{coresident couples}}$
■	Proportion of women older than their male partner	$\frac{\text{women older than partner}}{\text{women living in couple}}$
■	Proportion of single women (never married) living in a mono nuclear household	$\frac{\text{single women mononuclear household}}{\text{women (> 16)}}$
■	Proportion of women single parents	$\frac{\text{women single parents}}{\text{mothers of children < 18}}$
+	Proportion of unpaid care and domestic work performed by women	$\frac{\text{women's time spent in UCDW}}{\text{total time spent in UCDW}}$
+	Proportion of not married men (35-69 years old) that live with their parents	$\frac{\text{not married men living with parents}}{\text{not married men (35 – 69)}}$

Patriarchal hypothesis

Government	Percentage
Current government	85%
Previous government	15%



Government	Percentage
Current government	85%
Previous government	15%

Patrilocality



Indicator	Definition
Time spent by elderly fathers (65+) with their adult children	average daily hours spent with adult children

Socio-economic domination

	Indicator	Definition
	Proportion of women (between 25 and 64 years old) that are in the labor market	$\frac{\text{women in labor market}}{\text{women (25 - 64)}}$
	Gender gap in involuntary part-time	w-m in involuntary part-time
	Proportion of mothers of children (<18 years old) that are in occupations that allow reconciliation	$\frac{\text{mothers in (NACE REV. 2 Q + P)}}{\text{occupied mothers of children (< 18)}}$
	Proportion of women more educated than their male partners	$\frac{\text{women more educated than male partners}}{\text{women in couple}}$
	Proportion of women elected at local level	$\frac{\text{women elected}}{\text{elected persons}}$
	Proportion of women that subscribed or own a bank account	$\frac{\text{women with a bank account}}{\text{women}}$
	Proportion of population that believe abortion is never justifiable	percentage of people that agrees or strongly agrees with the statement
	Proportion of population that believe women who do not want sexual intercourse manage to avoid it	percentage of people that agrees or strongly agrees with the statement



The Patriarchy Index for Italy

patriarchy points = $\text{RND} \left(\frac{10 * \text{proportion}}{\text{maximum proportion}} \right)$ for variables positively correlated with patriarchy

and

patriarchy points = $10 - \text{RND} \left(\frac{10 * \text{proportion}}{\text{maximum proportion}} \right)$ for variables negatively correlated with patriarchy

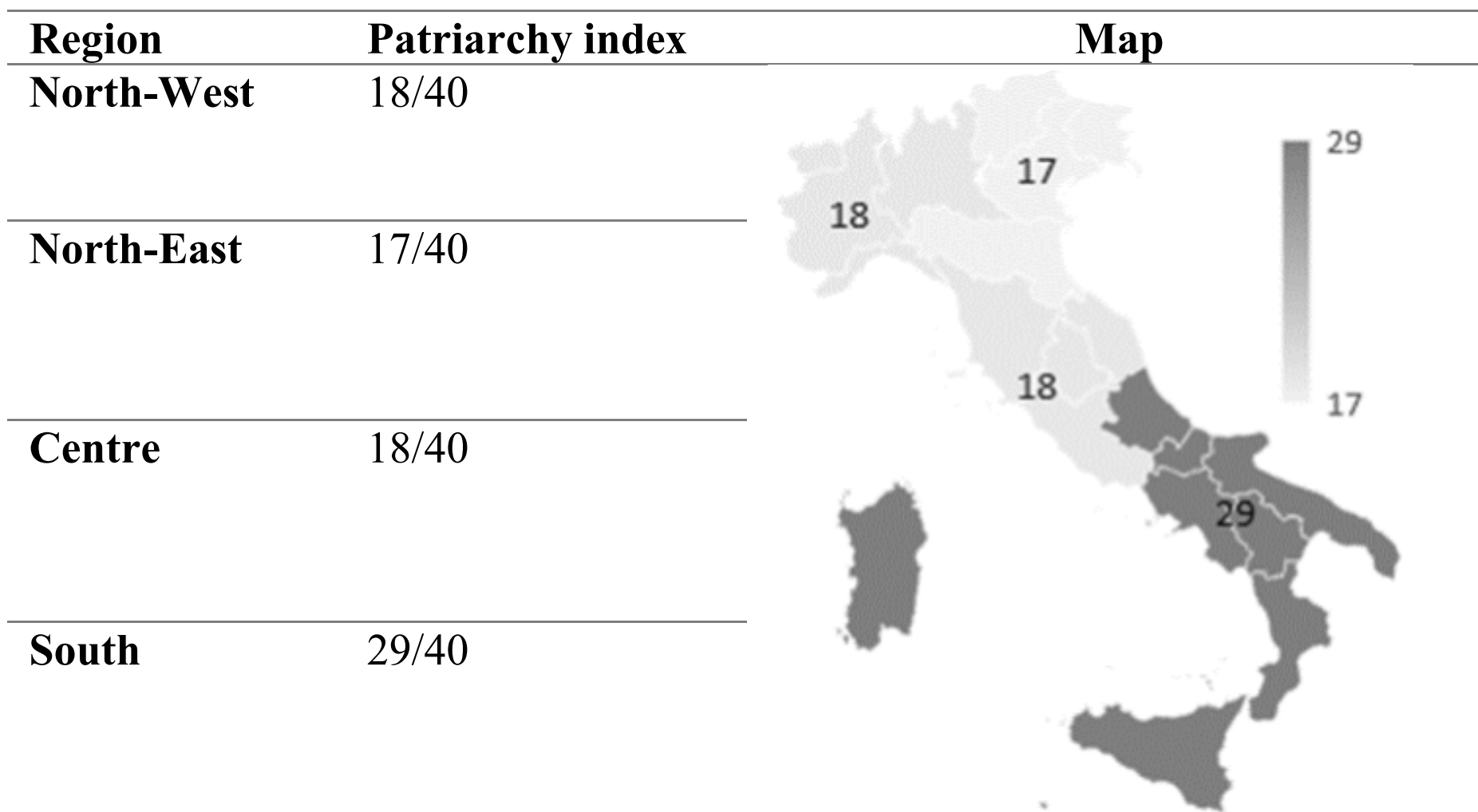
The four sub-indices are then added together to create the Patriarchy Index.

The maximum value assigned to each sub-index is equal to 10.

As a result, the Patriarchy Index (PI), that is the sum of the four sub-indices, can range from 0 to 40 patriarchy points

$$\text{PI} = \left(\frac{\text{male domination index}}{7} \right) + \left(\frac{\text{generational domination index}}{2} \right) + (\text{patrilocality index}) + \left(\frac{\text{socio-economic domination}}{8} \right)$$

The Patriarchy index for Italy



Conclusions

Our study represents a first attempt to measure patriarchy in Italy.

The patriarchy index could complement the more famous Gender Equality Index (GEI) with a measure that focuses on the “invisible” part of gender inequality.

The patriarchy index replaces the illusive notion of "patriarchy" with a comprehensive, workable, quantitative, and comparative assessment that takes into account a wide range of agency and power dynamics.



Questions????

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