

GeNLaMO: Gender norms and labour market outcomes.

Social norms encompass a range of behavioural prescriptions which suggest what is appropriate for men and women to do. They are likely to play an important role in economic decision making. Traditionally, men were seen as those who should work outside the home and provide financially for the family, while women were seen as caretakers who stay at home with children. Despite the evolution of attitudes toward female employment, it seems that the traditional divisions are deeply rooted and persistent. Researchers are paying more and more attention to analyse how social norms affect the labour market decisions of individuals. It is a relatively new strand in the economic literature, therefore many questions remain unanswered.

The aim of this project is to analyse what is the relationship between social norms and decisions about labour market participation and childcare. We will explore when social norms can be considered as an important factor in this regard and for whom. Special attention will be paid to the household level to see whether male or female viewpoints on gender roles play a more important role for female employment. We will also take a closer look at the parental leaves and investigate how they affect the childcare decisions of spouses and labour market prospects of men and women who take them. Finally, we will study when men and women conform with self-declared social norms and when do they act at odds with them.

We will use a large dataset and various econometric techniques, including quasi-experiment and experiment, to provide evidence on this phenomenon in Poland and Germany. Both countries share a similar experience with the socialist ideology, which encouraged women to participate in the labour market. In both East Germany and Poland, the female labour force participation rate increased. Poland, similarly to several Central and East European Countries, exhibit a backlash to more traditional attitudes while in Germany traditional attitudes have liberalised. In our research, we will pay particular attention to the international comparison to see whether inconsistencies between declared gender attitudes are stronger in Central and Eastern European than in Western European countries.