

## Who Is Doing the Housework within Immigrant Families? Cultural vs. Socio-Economic Factors

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Migration challenges gender relations. Immigrants who come from countries where social norms support a strong separation of male and female roles, both in the professional and domestic spheres, find more egalitarian norms and a less marked division of labour in France. How does the original socialisation context influence gender practices after migration? Does this influence diminish over time and across generations of immigration?

Immigrants from countries with unequal gender relations have much less egalitarian attitudes than natives or immigrants from countries with gender norms similar to those of the country of settlement (Röder & Mühlau 2014). Similarly, the share of women in domestic work increases in couples where either the man or the woman comes from a country with more traditional cultural norms or lower levels of equity (Carriero, 2021; Hicks et al. 2015; Blau et al. 2020). These differences by migration background are mainly due to very different levels of domestic participation of women compared to natives, with much smaller differences according to origin for men (Kan & Laurie 2018; Sayer & Fine 2011). Thus, gender roles formed in source countries, deeply internalised from childhood (Cunningham 2001; Akerlof and Kranton 2000), appear to be reproduced after migration, regardless of the institutional contexts of destination countries. This effect of culture of origin decreases with the length of stay in the host country (Brini, Zamberlan & Barbieri 2022; Röder & Mühlau 2014) or when the spouse is a non-migrant (Frank & Hou 2015) and disappears for descendants of immigrants (Carriero, 2021; Blau et al. 2020; Röder & Mühlau 2014). But this effect is not systematic. In some ethnic groups, the division of domestic labour is less marked than it is in the majority population, for instance among Indians and Asians in the UK, African-Americans in the US (Kan & Laurie 2018; Sayer & Fine 2011) or indigenous people in Australia (Ting et al. 2015). Differences in cultural background can condition the symbolic meanings of daily activities (Sayer & Fine 2010) and influence how domestic work is defined, how it is organised and the types of tasks assigned to men and women.

In addition to the role of culture of origin and family transmission of gender role models, differences in domestic organisation between minority and majority groups are also due to differences in socio-economic characteristics. Migrant and immigrant populations differ in terms of labour force status, marital employment patterns, educational qualifications and income. Theoretical approaches used to explain the gender division of labour thus emphasise that domestic time is generally inversely related to working time (Presser, 1994; Blair and Lichter, 1991; South and Spitze, 1994; Bianchi et al., 2000; Gershuny, Bittman & Brice, 2005). It also depends on the relative resources of each spouse and on power relations, with the spouse with a higher level of education or income (usually the man) than the partner tending to delegate housework to him or her (Shelton & John, 1996; Blood and Wolfe 1960; Apps & Rees 1997; Chiappori, 1997; Manser & Brown 1980; Lundberg & Pollak 1994, 1996; Lommerud 1997; Behrman 1997). But the meanings attached to these resources, as well as the meanings of domestic work, can be very different for different groups. Different theoretical explanations of the division of labour are not always relevant for some minority groups (Wight et al. 2013; Kolpashnikova & Kan 2020).

In France, while there is a relatively large body of work on the positions of immigrant women and

men and descendants of immigrants in the public sphere, particularly in employment, there is less research on the private sphere (Hammouche 2008; Marcicano et al. 2011), mainly due to a lack of data. France is among the European countries where individuals are most supportive of gender equality ideals, behind Northern European countries (Lomazzi et al. 2018; Aassve et al. 2014). However, in practice, the sharing of domestic tasks remains unequal (Pailhé et al. 2021): despite the rise in female labour force participation, the increase in educational attainment and greater outsourcing of domestic production, behavioural changes are very slow and women remain the main providers of domestic work, especially the most routine tasks.

This paper analyses gender division of housework in immigrant populations according to groups of origin. How does the original socialisation context influence the GDH after migration? Is there a convergence towards native levels with the length of stay? For the second generations of immigrants? Is the GDH more unequal for groups from more traditional countries in terms of gender norms? To what extent are the observed differences related to the origin of the spouses? their relative educational level and professional situation?

### Hypotheses

H1 – We expect the most traditional GDH among migrants, followed by descendants of immigrants and native couples

H2- We expect less traditional GDH among mixed couples and greater inequality in mixed couples with female migrant compared to male migrant

H3 – Among migrants, gender inequality in the division of tasks diminishes with the duration of stay (adapatation)

H4 – The gender division of housework is more egalitarian in couples from western countries than in couples from Asia, and even more than couples from Africa

H5 - The gender division of housework of is more unequal for daily routine tasks performed inside the house than for less routine tasks performed outside the house

### Data and Method

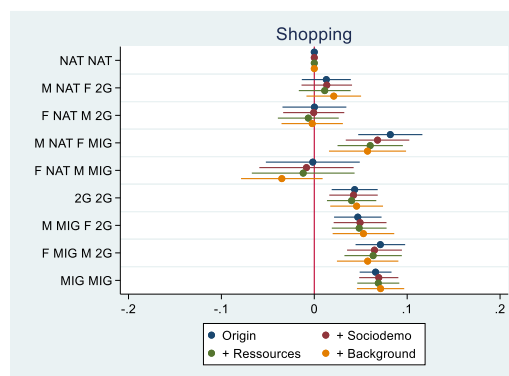
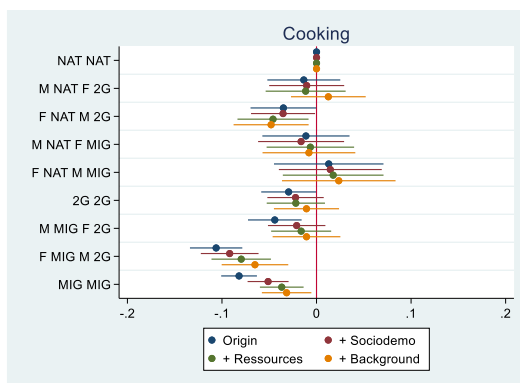
To answer these questions, we use new data from the Trajectories and Origins survey 2 (Insee and Ined 2020), that provide detailed information on immigrant background and on the distribution of three common tasks of a different nature: preparing daily meals; shopping for food; and washing and ironing clothes. The division of domestic labour can also be compared with that of the parents, insofar as the respondent is asked about the distribution of the same three tasks in the parental couple during his or her youth. We restrict the analytic sample to cohabiting heterosexual couples (N=15,710). To estimate the determinants of the division of domestic labour, we estimate linear regressions (OLS) on men's share of domestic work. Our main interest variable combines both partners' origin (native; 2G; migrant); We estimate models with stepwise inclusion of control variables. In a first model, we control for partners' origin and gender. In a second model we add demographic characteristics: age group, type of union, relationship duration and number of children in the household. In a third model we control for spouses's degree, employment status and age difference. In a fourth model we control for parents' level of education, religiosity and division of housework.

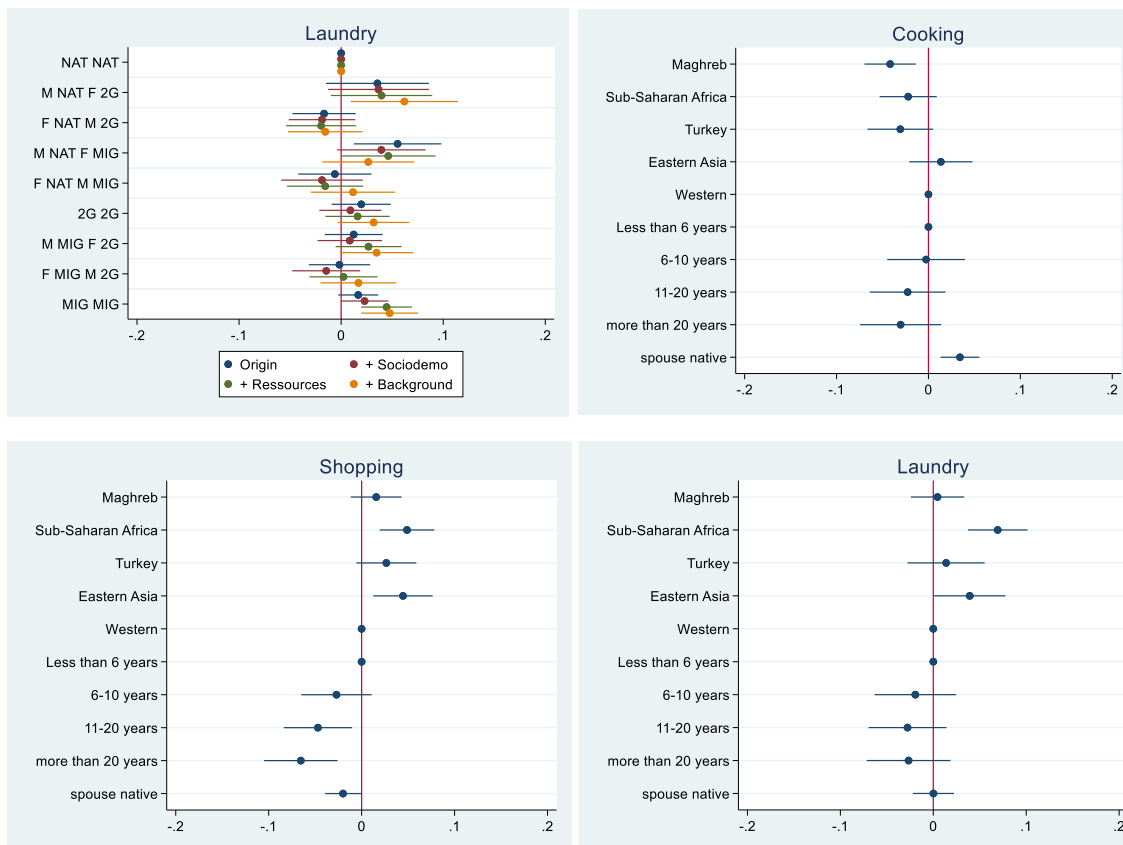
### Results

Differences between immigrants, their descendants and the majority population are observed in the distribution of two tasks: cooking and shopping. The preparation of meals is more unequal for immigrants than for the descendants of immigrants and the majority population. Shopping, on the other hand, is better shared among immigrants and descendants of immigrants than among the majority population. Laundry remains the most unequal task, slightly less so for immigrant than for the majority population. Couples with two children of immigrants share routine domestic tasks slightly better than couples with two immigrants, or with one child of an immigrant and one immigrant. On average, regardless of the link to migration, the distribution of domestic tasks becomes less unequal over the generations. However, immigrant women from the Maghreb and Turkey do not see any change in the distribution of domestic work compared to their parents.

Controlled for everything, immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, both men and women, have a significantly less unequal distribution of domestic work than men from the majority population, for both shopping and laundry for the former, for laundry only for the later. Once controlled for level of education and employment status, female immigrants from the Maghreb and Turkey appear to be more equal in all three domestic tasks than native-born women. In other words, socio economic factors (female lower education and labour market attachment) explain the gender division of housework among Maghrebi and Turkish couples. However, meal preparation remains more unequal for them than for the native-born, even after taking all the factors into account, because of cultural factors. The division of labour becomes less unequal with the length of stay.

After controlling for all factors, there is no significant difference between sons of immigrants and men from the majority population, except male descendants of Turkish immigrants who are more unequal when it comes to washing and preparing meals. The daughters of immigrants from the Maghreb, Sub-Saharan Africa countries and Europe perceive, all other things being equal, a less unequal division of labour than native-born women for shopping and laundry. Differences in qualifications, employment and family background largely explain this.





In all couple configurations, the gender division of housework is unequal, native included. Results are nuanced, depending on tasks. Regarding the generation of immigration (H1), immigrants are more unequal than natives for cooking while shopping and laundry are more equally distributed. G2 are in intermediate position: the same as native for cooking, more equal for shopping and laundry. Mixed couples share more equally domestic tasks (H2). Shopping becomes more comparable to natives (more unequal) over time. There are significant differences across countries of origin (H4). Couples from Maghreb share more unequally cooking with those from sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia share more equally shopping and laundry. There are significant differences among tasks: the GDH is more unequal for daily routine tasks performed inside the house. Shopping is more equally shared among (female) immigrant couples and endogamous G2. Laundry is more equally shared within SSA et EA immigrants. This signals that symbolic meanings of different daily activities differ in origin countries.

The gender division of housework is more unequal for daily routine tasks in migrant families, and there is no convergence over time. Gender gaps are comparable to those of natives among exogamous couples and for children of immigrants: the context of socialization matters. Resources also matter, especially partner's origin and employment situation.

Further steps consist in taking better account of gender roles in countries of origin and selection processes.