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# **Gender Equality in the European Union**

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The European Union is considered one of the world's **most advanced political systems with regard to the promotion of gender equality**, with its policies aiming to combat gender inequality often being considered "exceptional."<sup>6</sup>

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# Content

- Data
- Rankings
- Differences
  - Geography
  - Religion
  - Currency
  - Politics

**DATA**

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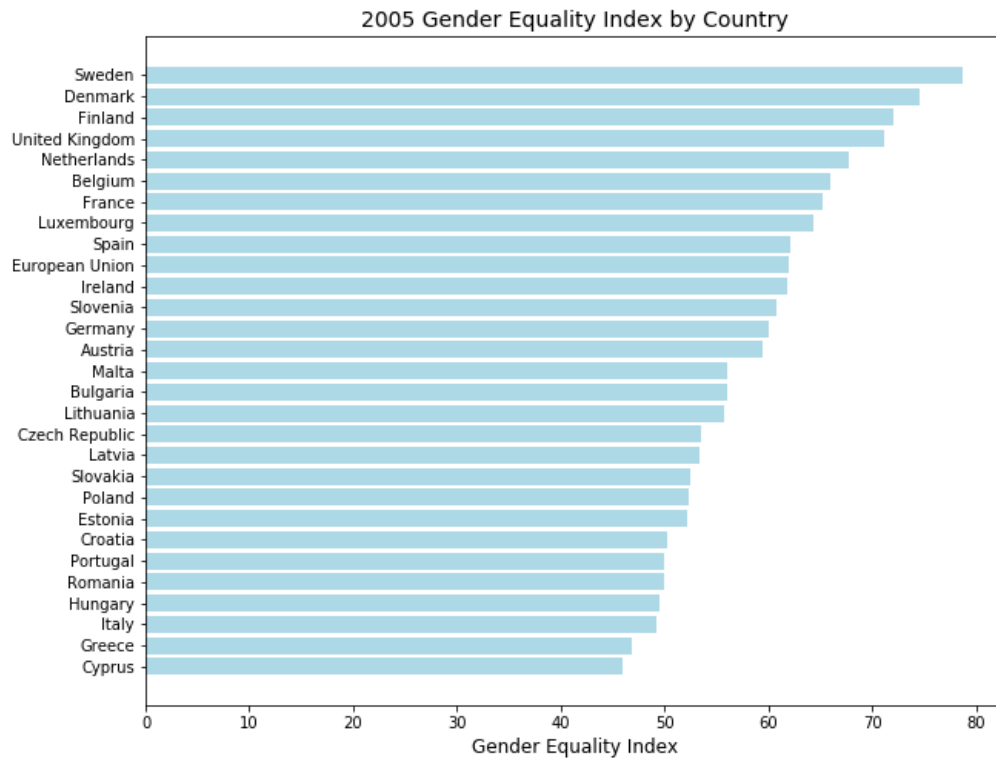
# The Gender Equality Index

- The Gender Equality Index (GEI) is produced by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). It tracks the 28 European Union nations efforts to improve gender equality.
  - The EIGE takes into account an incredible amount of factors, such as percentage of women in parliament, the duration of women's vs. men's working lives, and their reported ability to take of time from work to deal with family or personal matters.
  - The Gender Equality Index offers fascinating data. However, the EIGE doesn't currently have the bandwidth to produce high-quality accompanying visuals.
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# **RANKINGS**

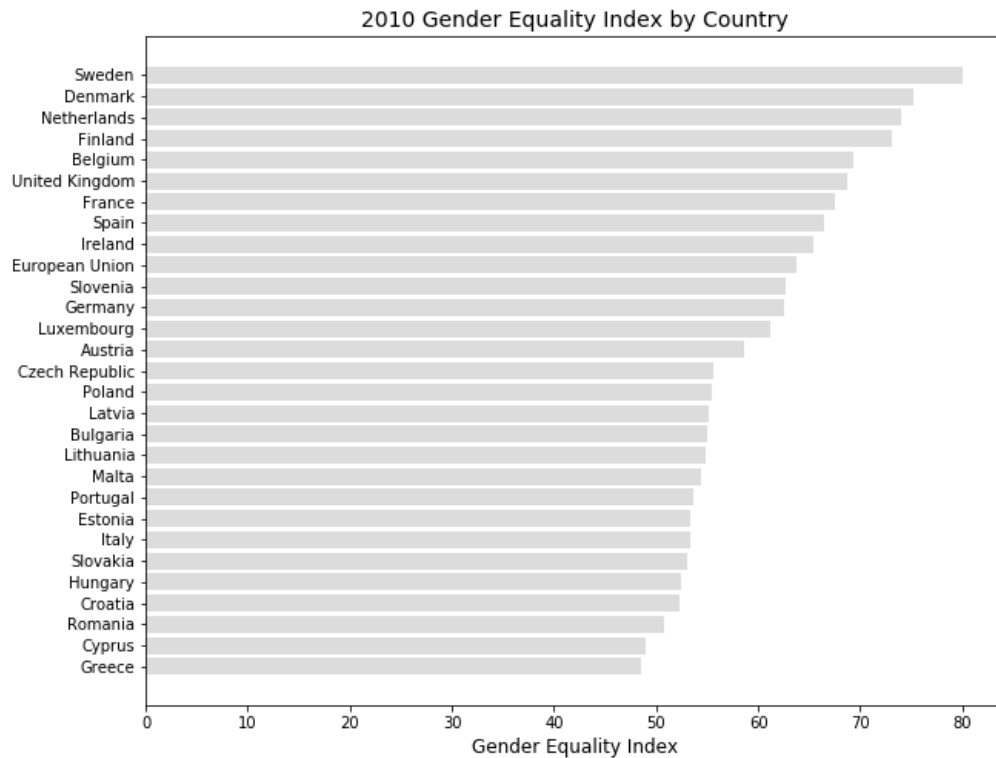
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# 2005



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# 2010





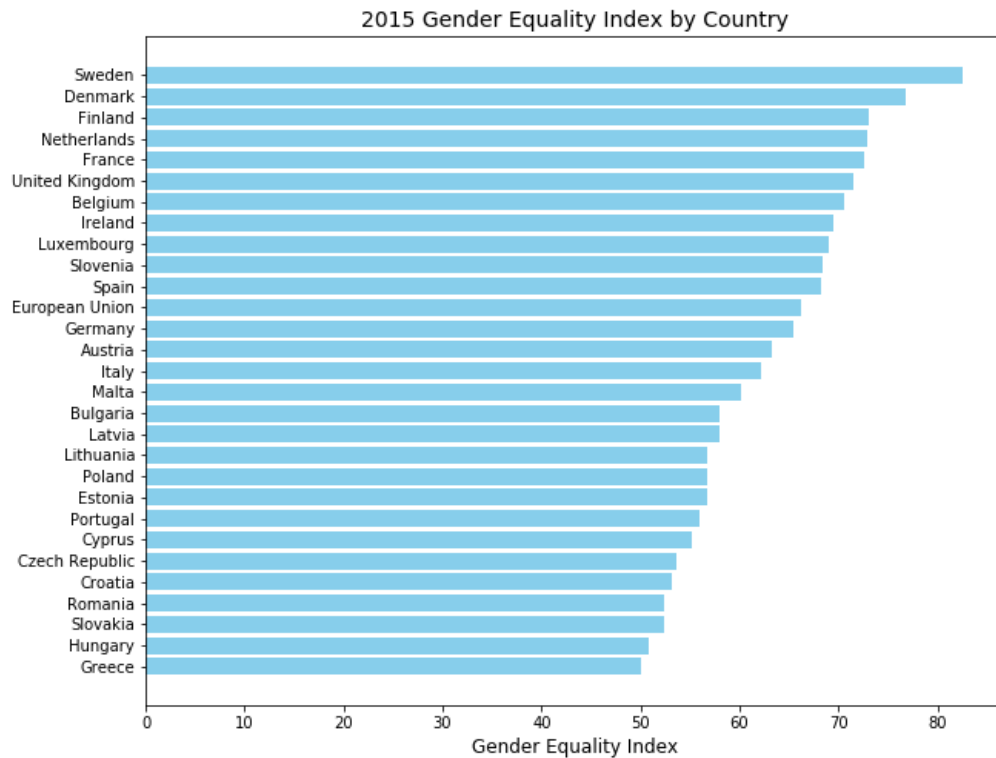
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# 2012



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# 2015



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# Key Takeaways

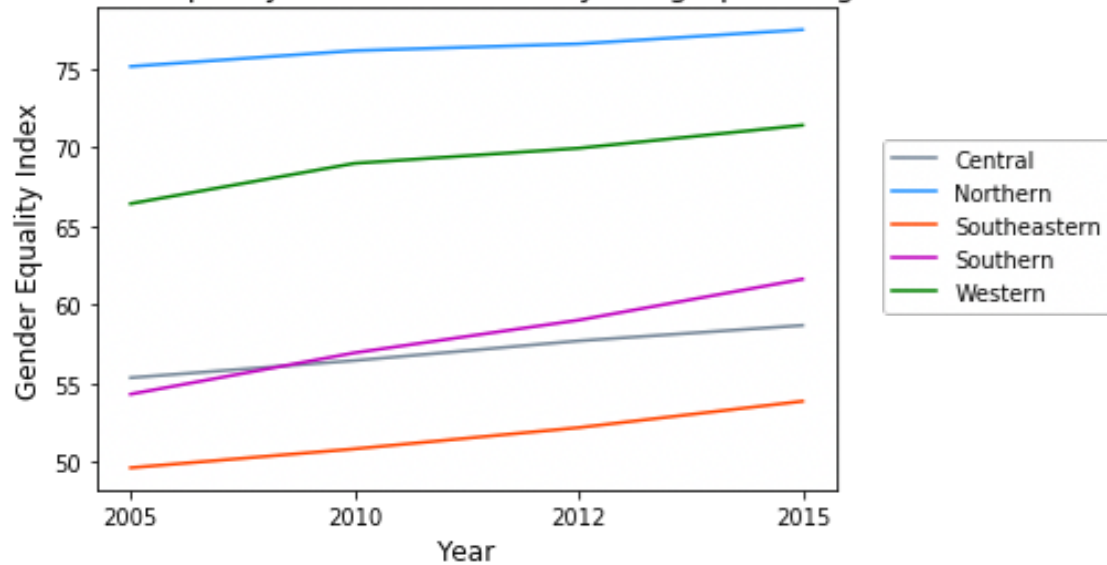
- Generally, gender equality improved in Europe in the decade between 2005 and 2015.
  - Nordic countries consistently dominate the rankings with Sweden (first) and Denmark (second).
  - While Greece remains low, Cyprus made significant improvements between 2012 and 2015.
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**DIFFERENCES**

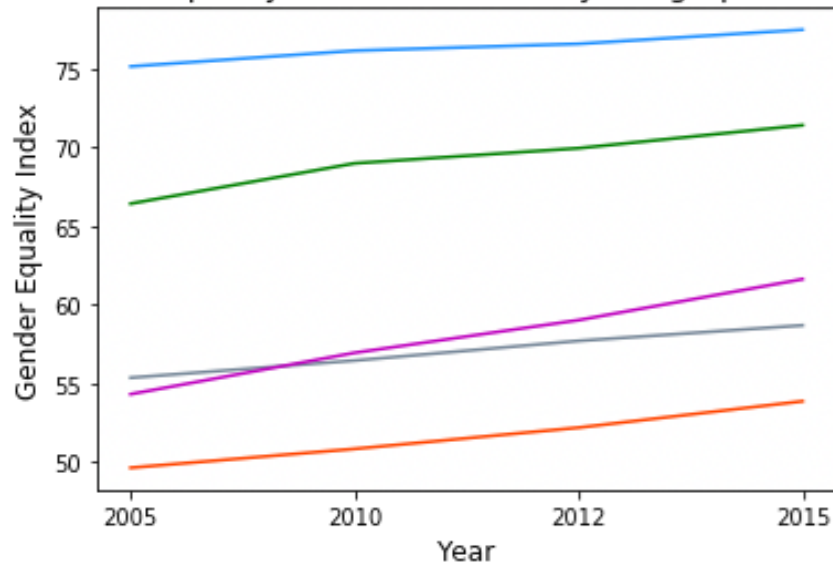
# Geography & Gender

North, South, Central,  
Southeast, and West

Gender Equality Index Over Time by Geographic Region



Gender Equality Index Over Time by Geographic Region



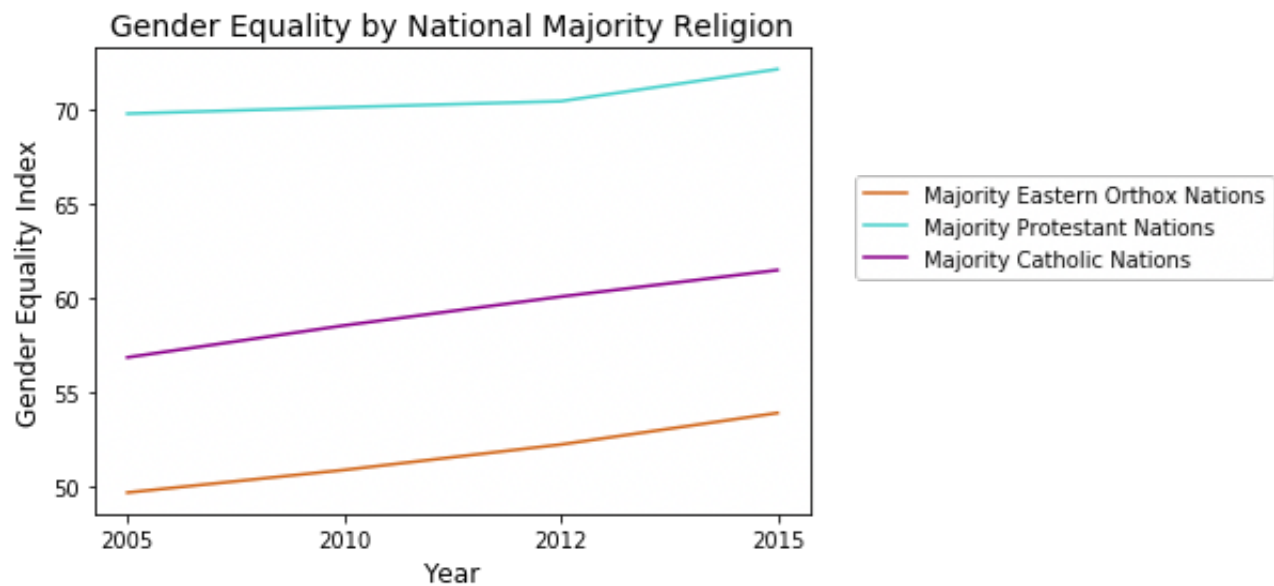
Northern Europe has the greatest levels of gender equality followed by Central

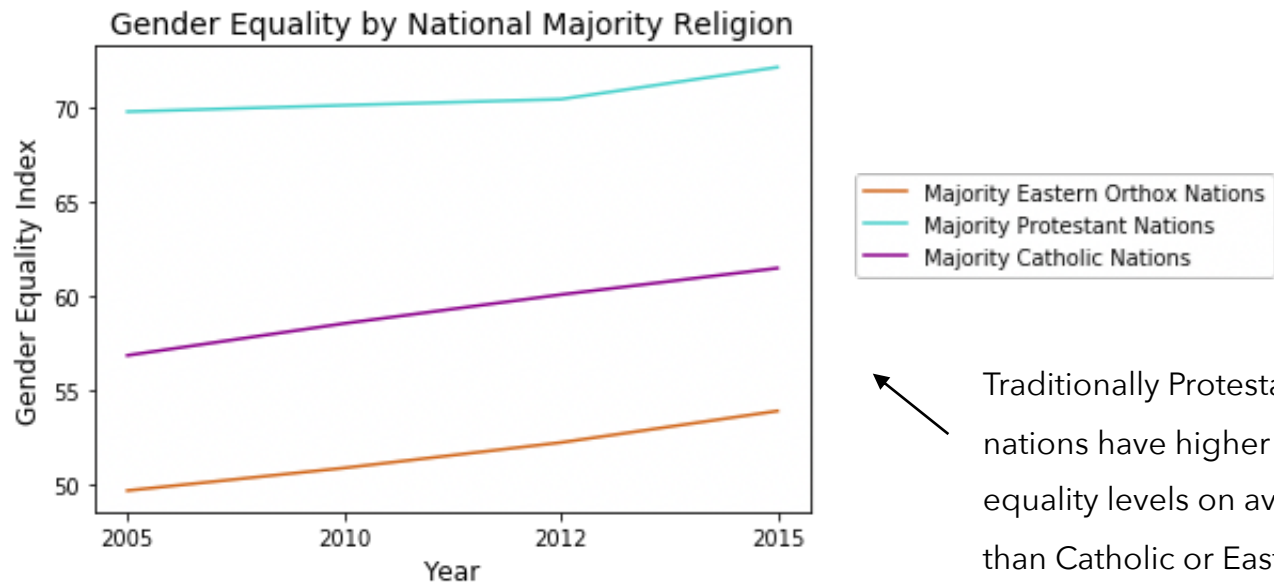
Southern Europe is improving the fastest, followed by Southeastern

# Religion & Gender

Catholicism, Protestantism,  
and Eastern Orthodoxy





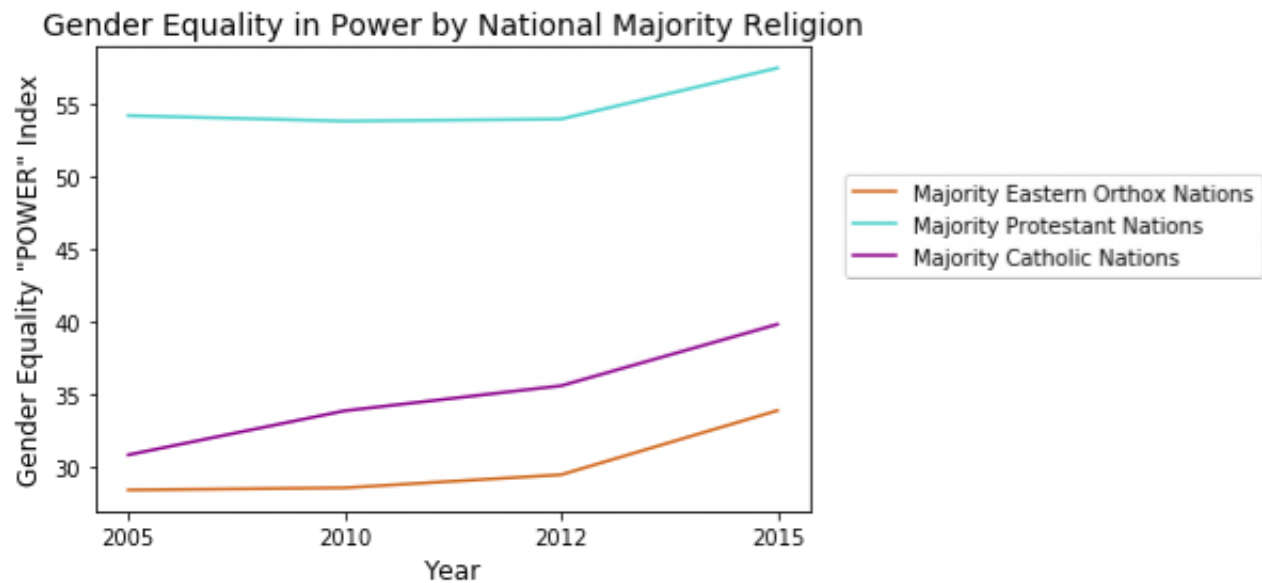


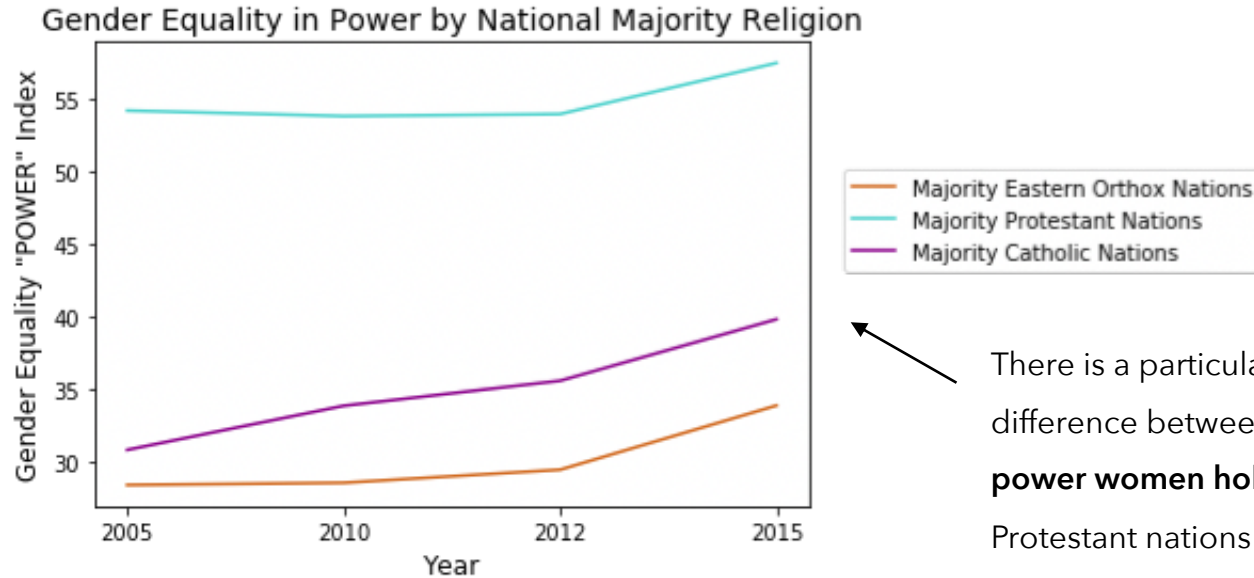
Traditionally Protestant nations have higher gender equality levels on average than Catholic or Eastern Orthodox majority nations

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# Potential Explanations

- Protestantism is traditionally more liberal than both Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy.
  - Although, there are strong patriarchal undertones in all three forms of Christianity.<sup>1</sup>
  - As one Christian website puts it: "Although women are spiritual equals with men and the ministry of women is essential to the body of Christ, women are excluded from leadership over men in the church."<sup>5</sup>
  - A study in the *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* found that "individual Catholics are less supportive of gender equality than non-Catholics."<sup>3</sup>
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There is a particularly large difference between the **amount of power women hold** in majority Protestant nations and Catholic and Eastern Orthodox ones

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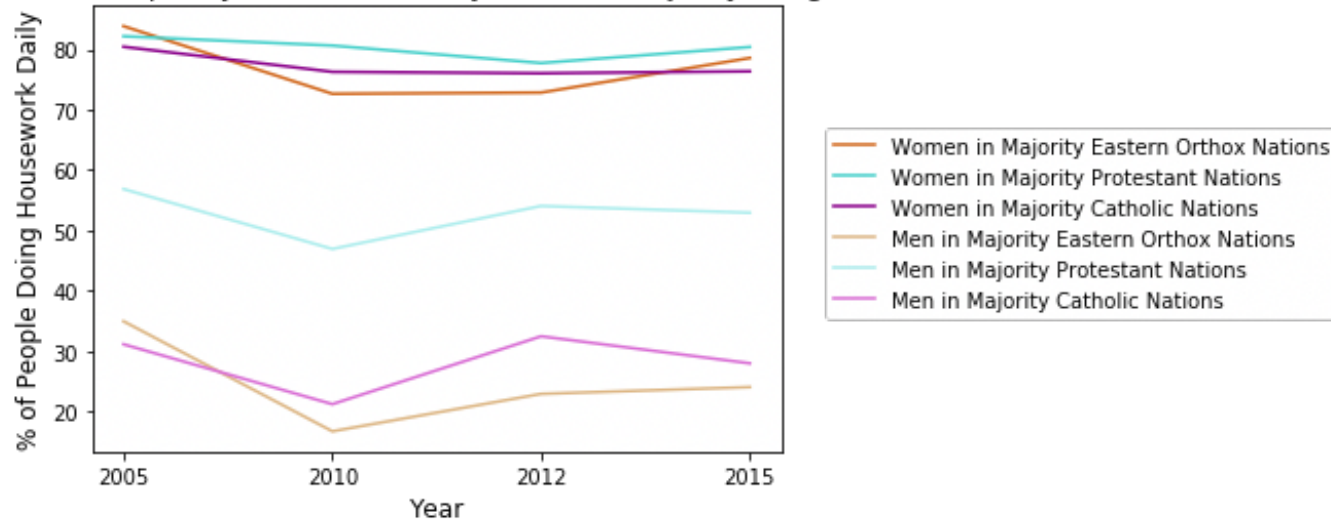
# Potential Explanations

- In the Protestant church, women are allowed to hold leadership roles in the church, such as priest. However, in the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, women's roles are restricted. Only men can serve as priests, deacons, bishops, or popes.<sup>1</sup>
- "Protestant churches in Europe tend to be quite liberal, working for the equality of women [...] Lutheran Churches in Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Denmark ordain women and have female bishops. The first to ordain women was the Church of Sweden, in 1958."<sup>2</sup>

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# Housework

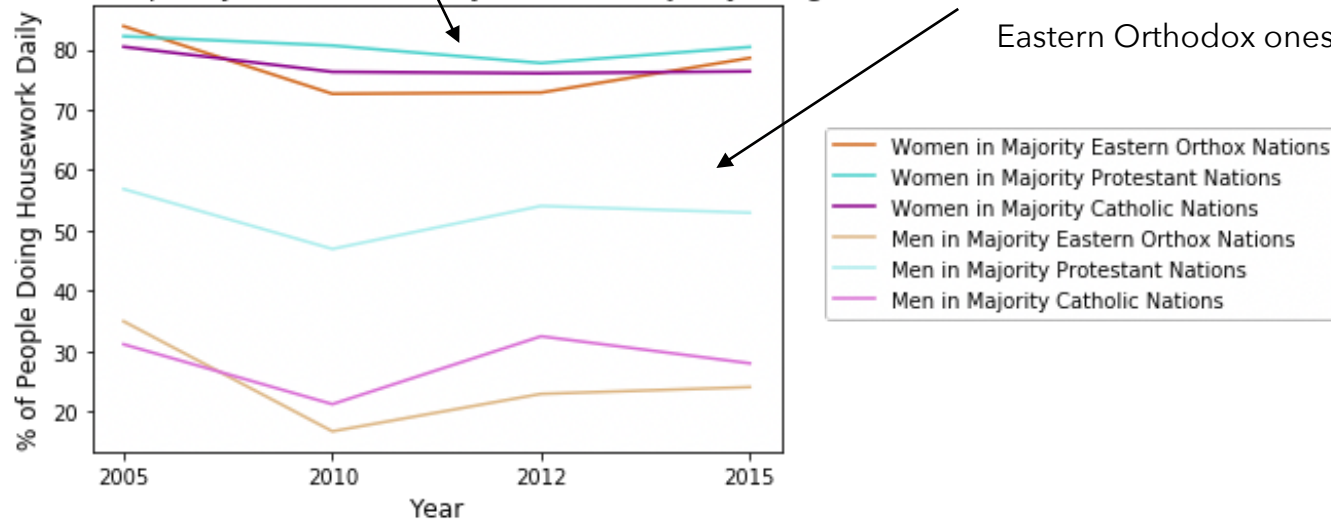
Gender Equality in Housework by National Majority Religion



Across cultures, the vast majority of women do daily housework.

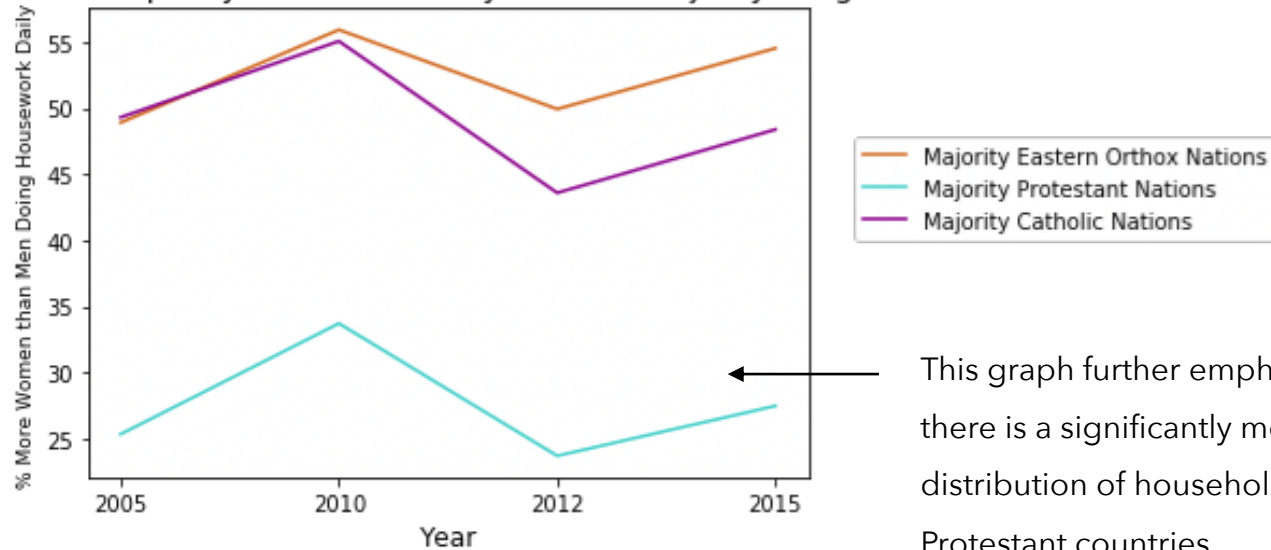
Far more men in Protestant countries do housework than in traditionally Catholic or Eastern Orthodox ones.

Gender Equality in Housework by National Majority Religion





Gender Equality in Housework by National Majority Religion

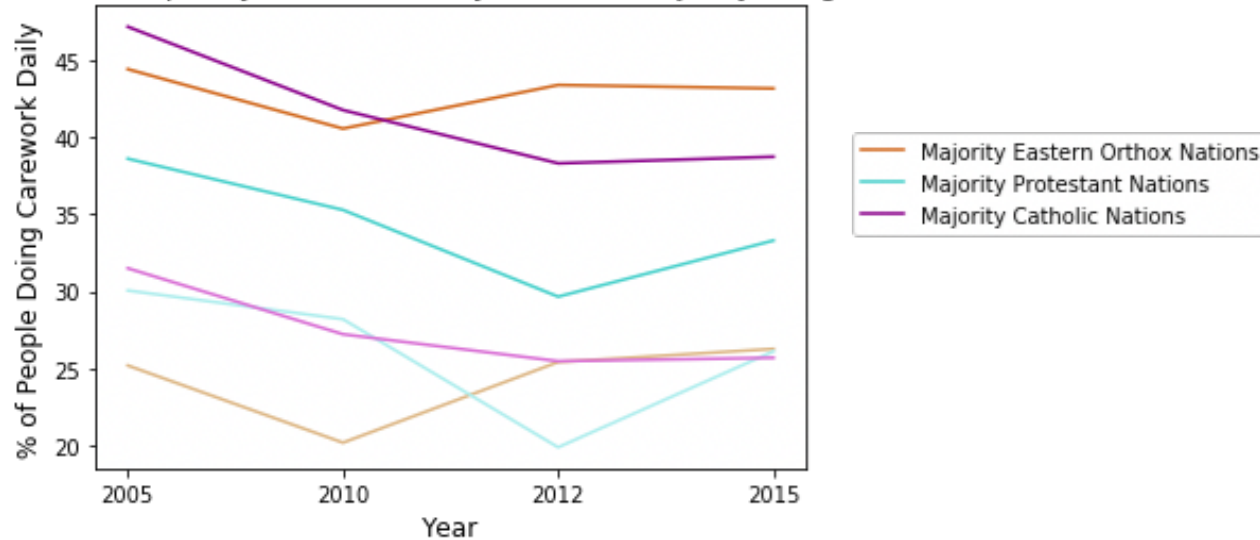


This graph further emphasizes how there is a significantly more equal distribution of household labor in Protestant countries.

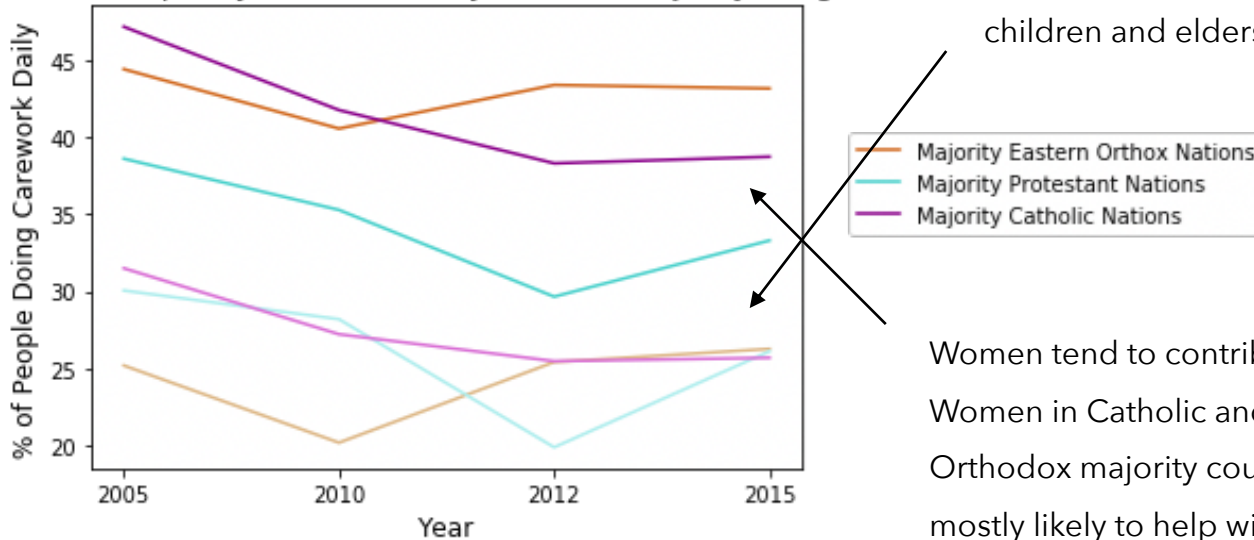
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# Carework

Gender Equality in Carework by National Majority Religion



Gender Equality in Carework by National Majority Religion

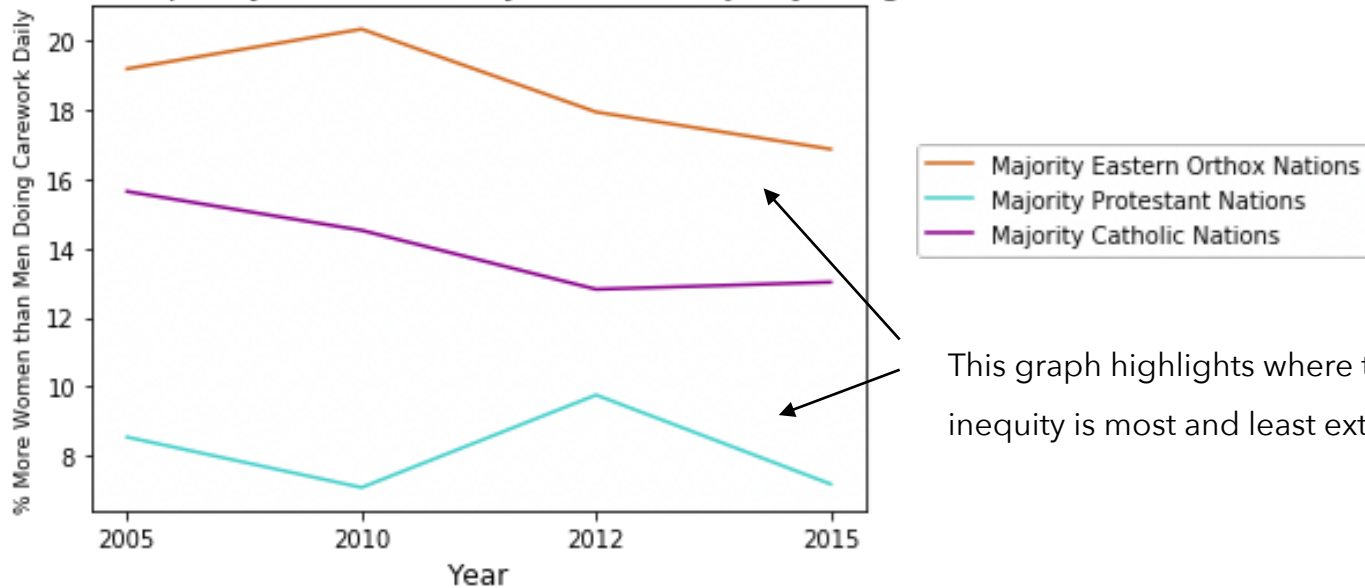


Carework is a different story.

Across cultures, similar amounts of men help care for their children and elders.

Women tend to contribute more. Women in Catholic and Eastern Orthodox majority countries are mostly likely to help with carework.

Gender Equality in Carework by National Majority Religion



This graph highlights where the inequity is most and least extreme.

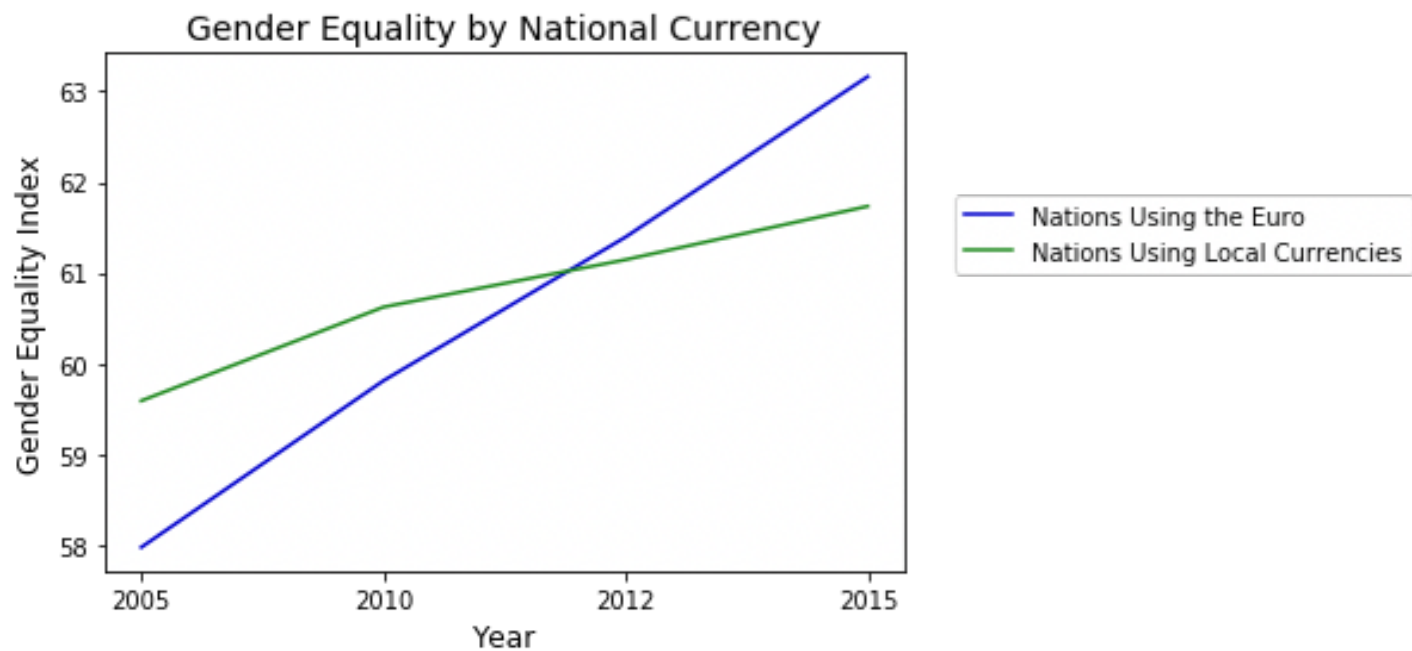
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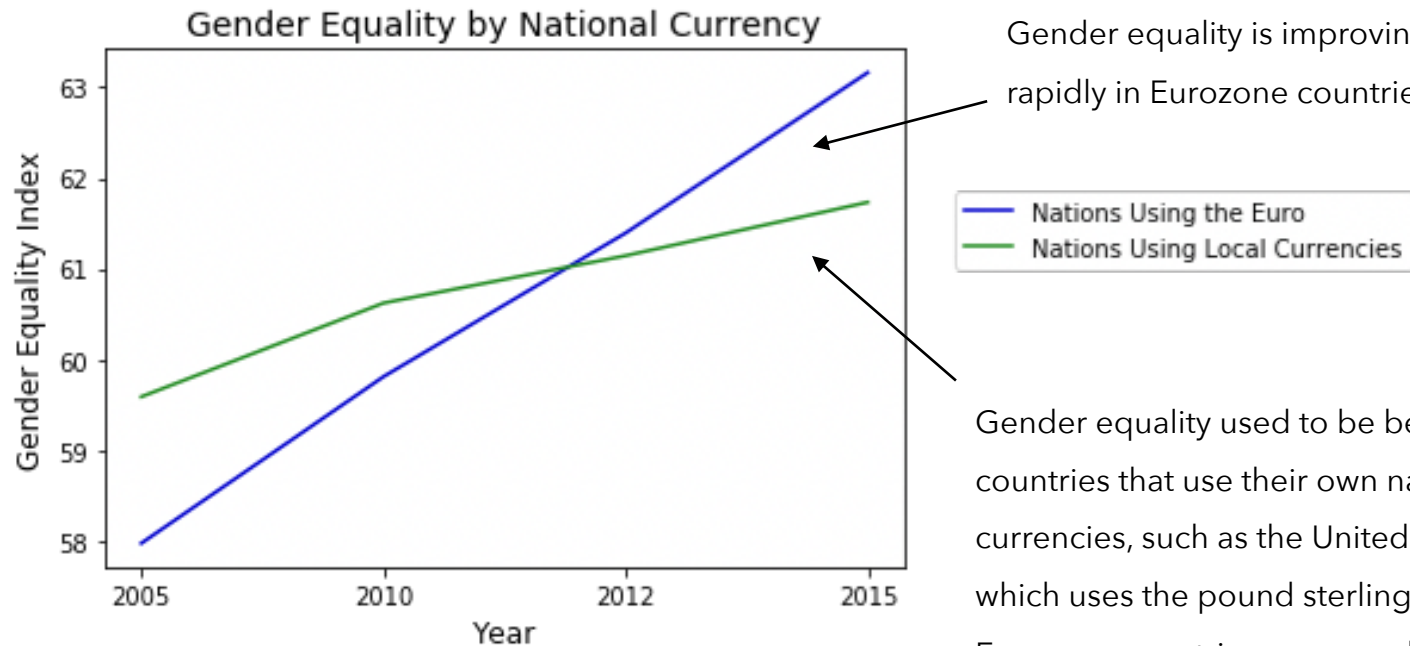
# Potential Explanations

- In the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions, it is historically considered the woman's job to raise children, cook, clean, and care for elders. While this is also true for the Protestant church, the Protestant church is generally more progressive and recognizes women's ability to make a positive impact outside the home.
  - The official website for the Eastern Orthodox church of North America says: in the Orthodox tradition, "the hands-on role in raising children and keeping the sense of family strong belongs to the wife and mother more than to the husband and father"<sup>4</sup>
  - The website goes on to identify the virtues for women as "faith, love and service."<sup>4</sup>
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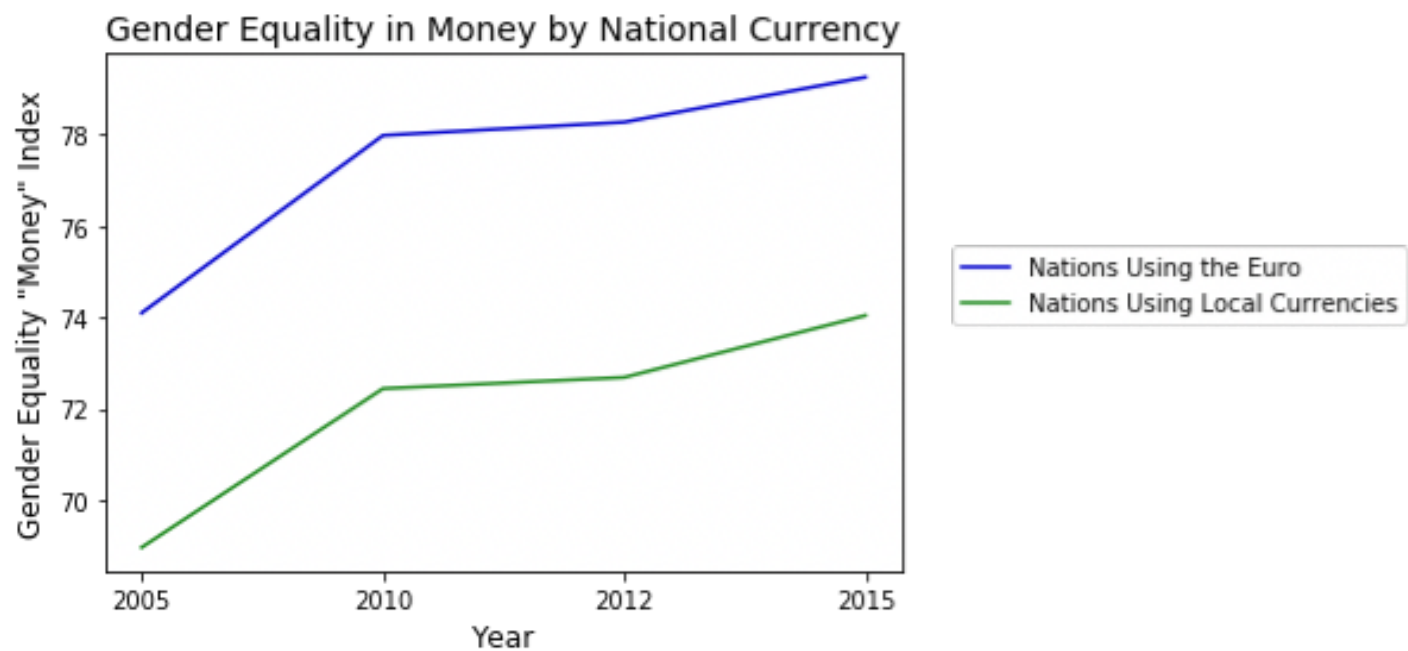
# **Currency & Gender**

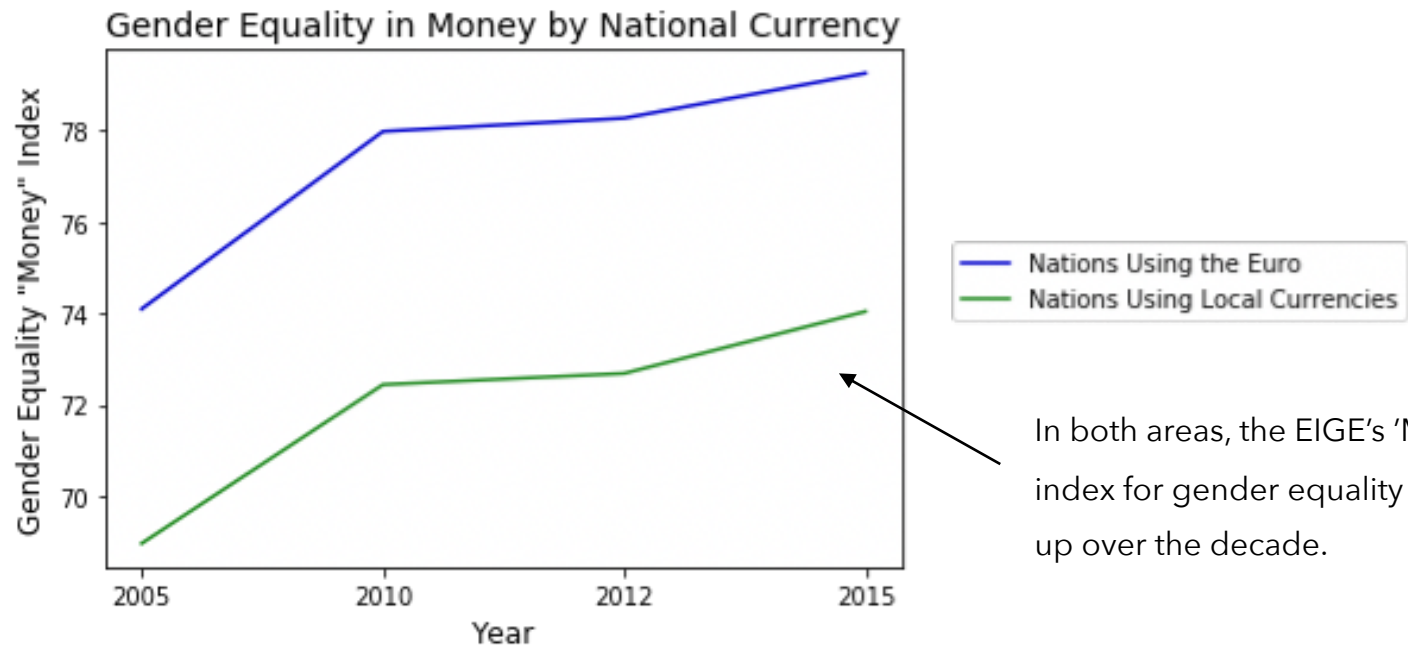
Economies In and Out of the Eurozone









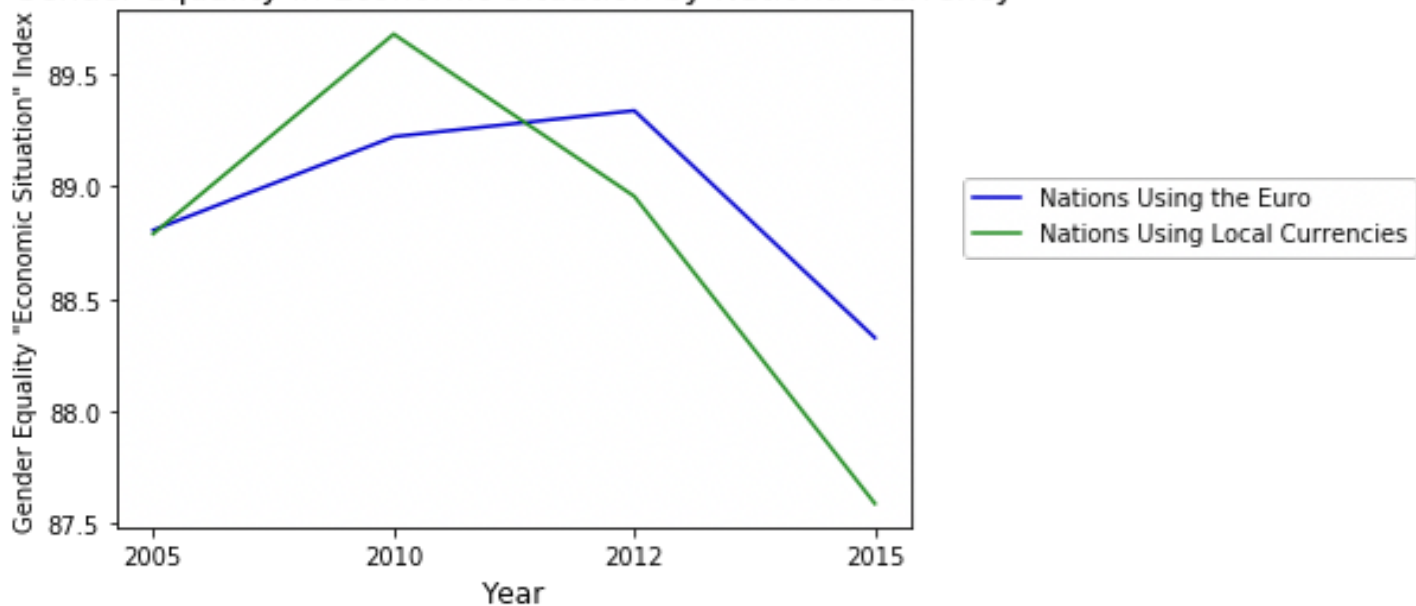


In both areas, the EIGE's 'Money' index for gender equality has gone up over the decade.

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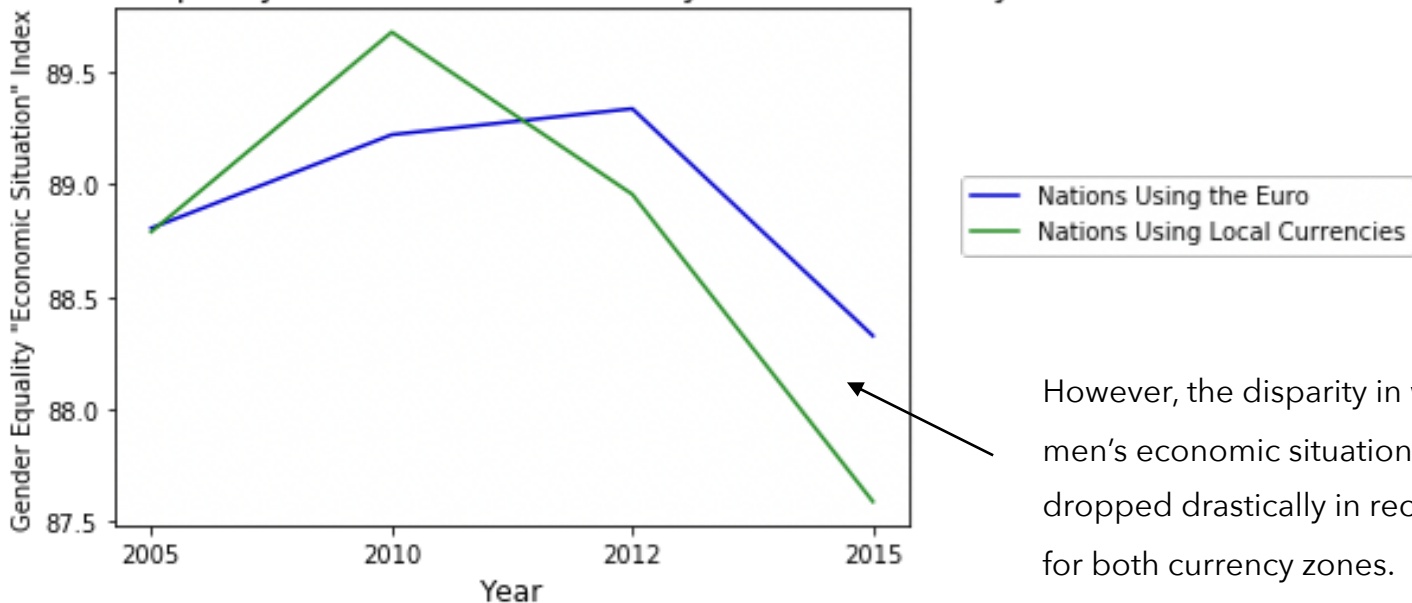
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Gender Equality in Economic Situation by National Currency



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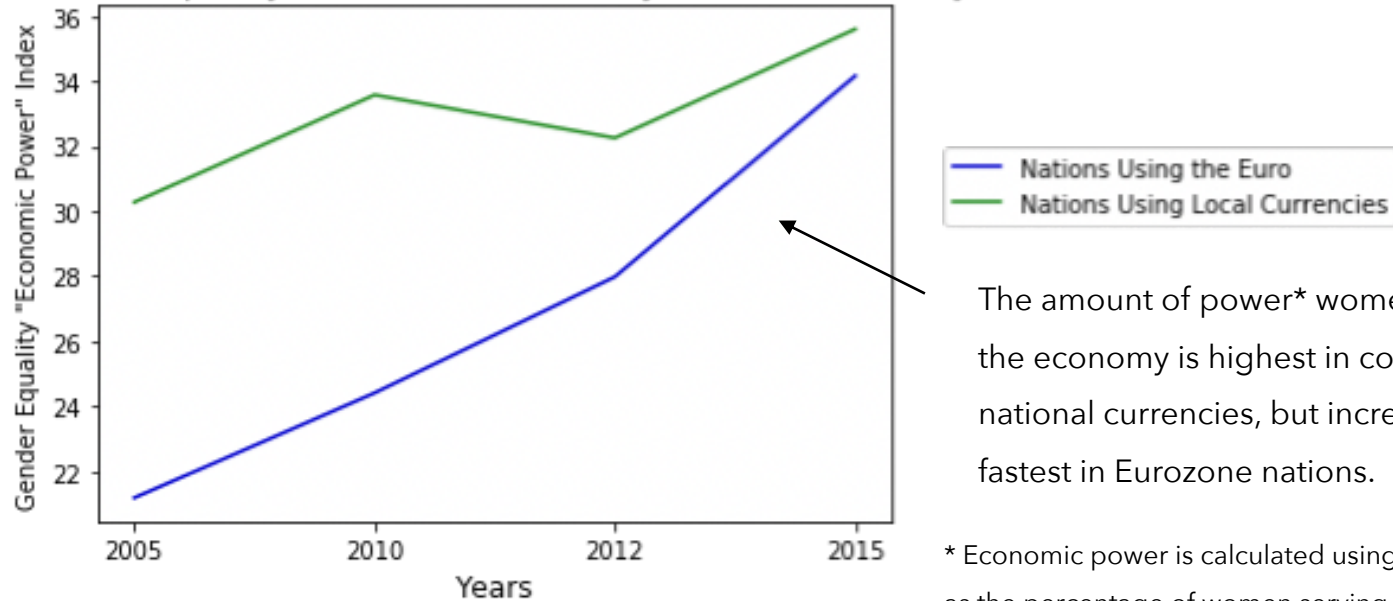
Gender Equality in Economic Situation by National Currency



However, the disparity in women and men's economic situation has dropped drastically in recent years, for both currency zones.

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Gender Equality in Economic Power by National Currency



\* Economic power is calculated using factors such as the percentage of women serving on the boards of the central bank or the largest companies

# **Politics & Gender**

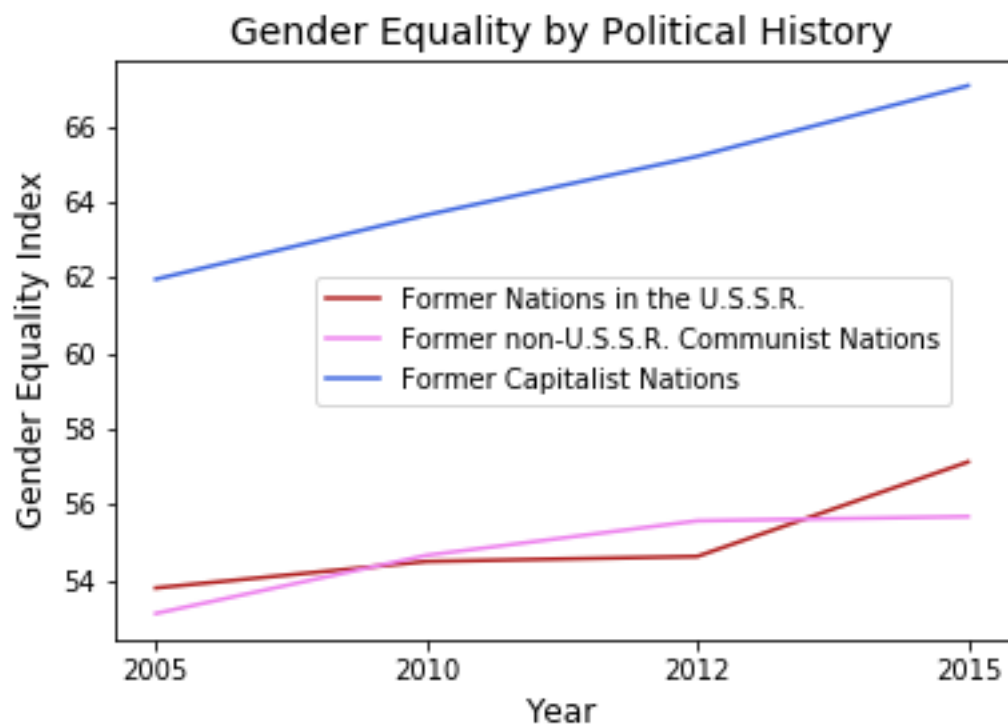
Communist and Capitalist Histories

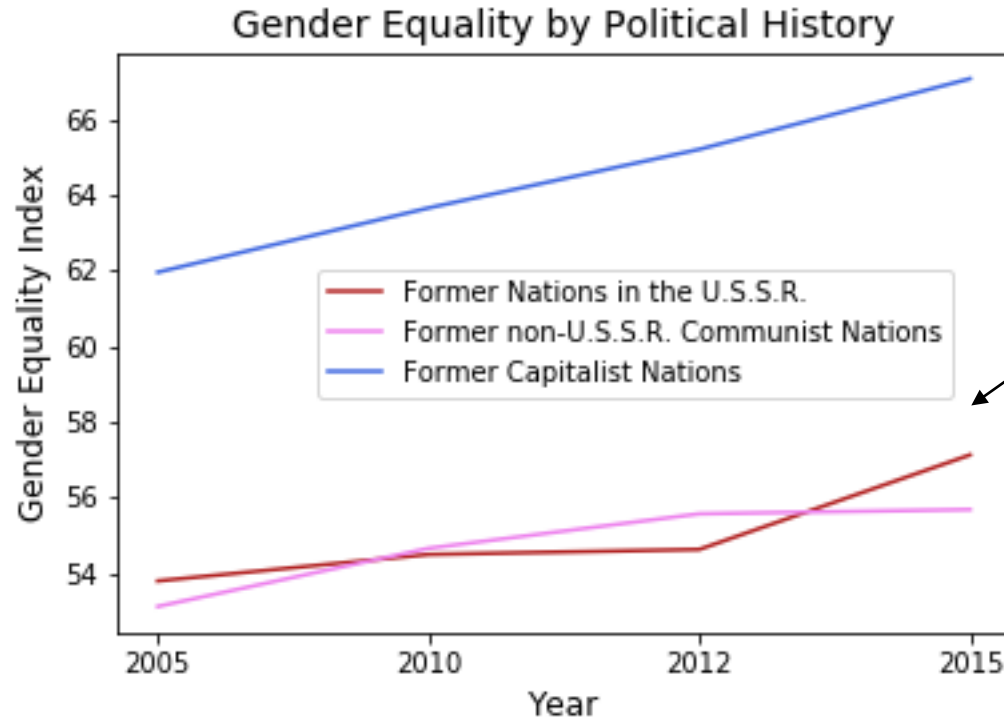




Historically capitalist nations boast significantly higher levels of gender equality than historically communist ones, despite communism's emphasis on equality.

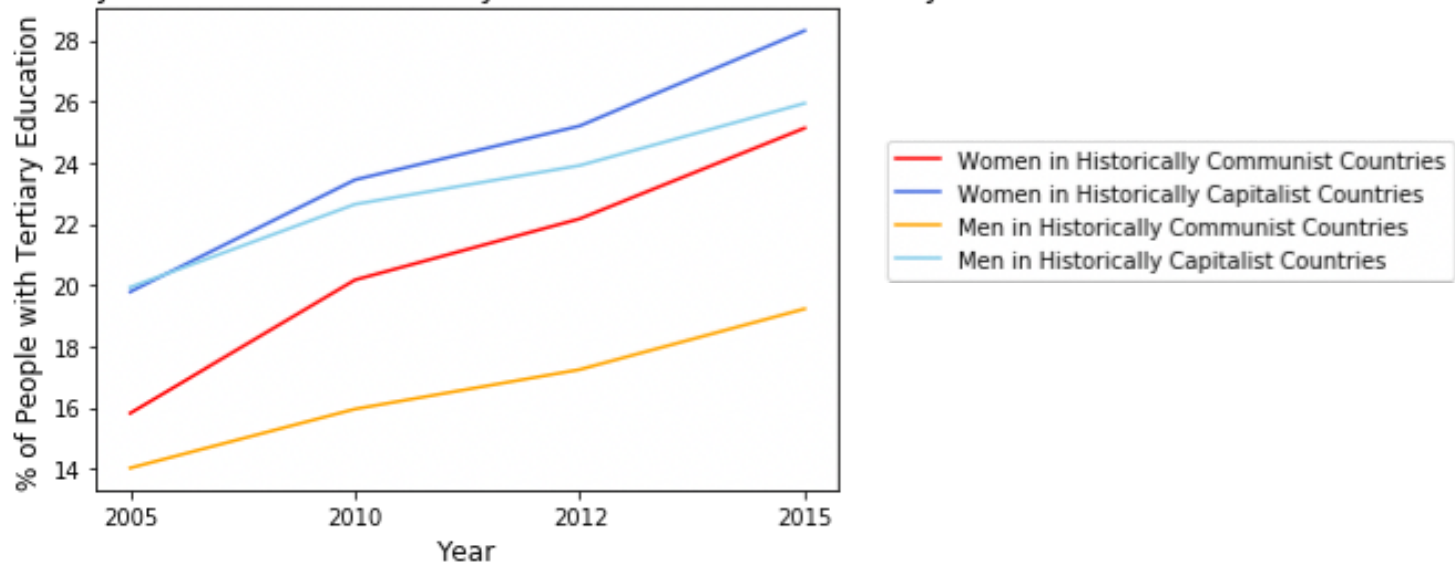




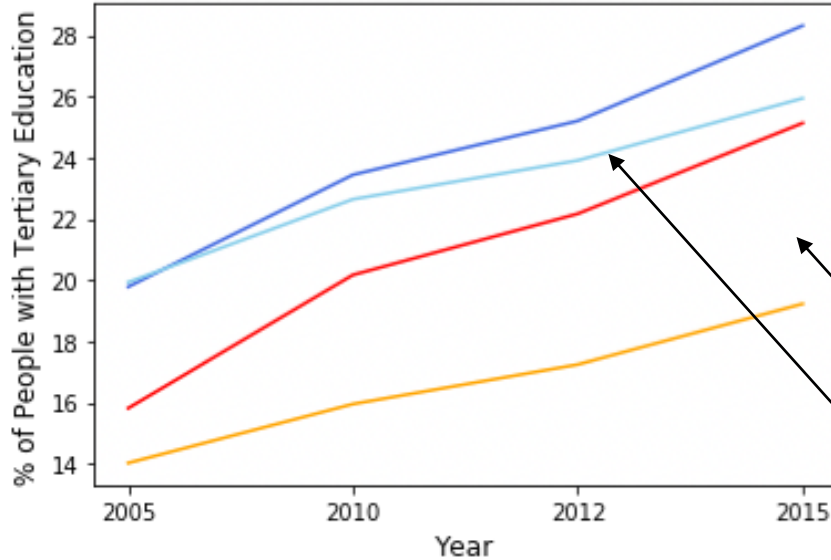


There isn't a significant difference in this between former U.S.S.R. states, such as Lithuania, and former Soviet satellite states, such as the Czech Republic.

Tertiary Education Graduates by Gender and Political History



Tertiary Education Graduates by Gender and Political History

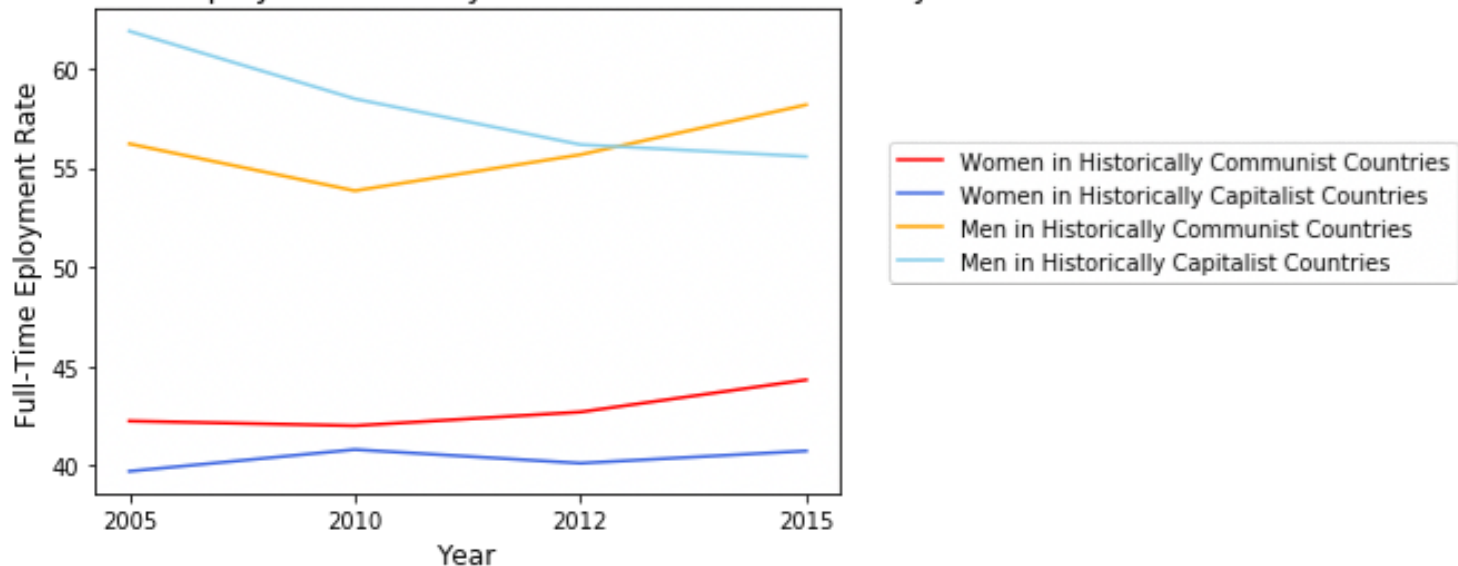


More women graduate from tertiary education programs than their male counterparts.

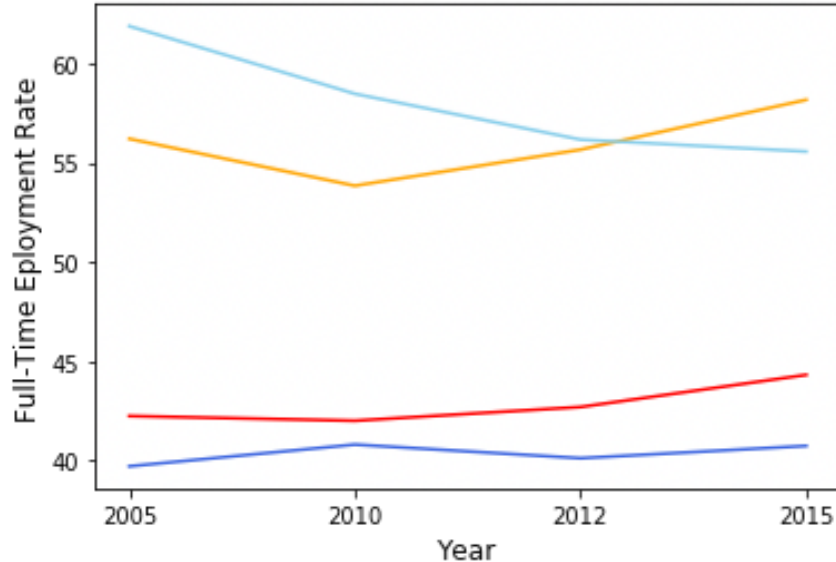
The gap is particularly extreme in historically communist countries.

Overall, traditionally capitalist countries produce more graduates of tertiary education than communist ones.

Full-Time Employment Rate by Gender and Political History



Full-Time Employment Rate by Gender and Political History

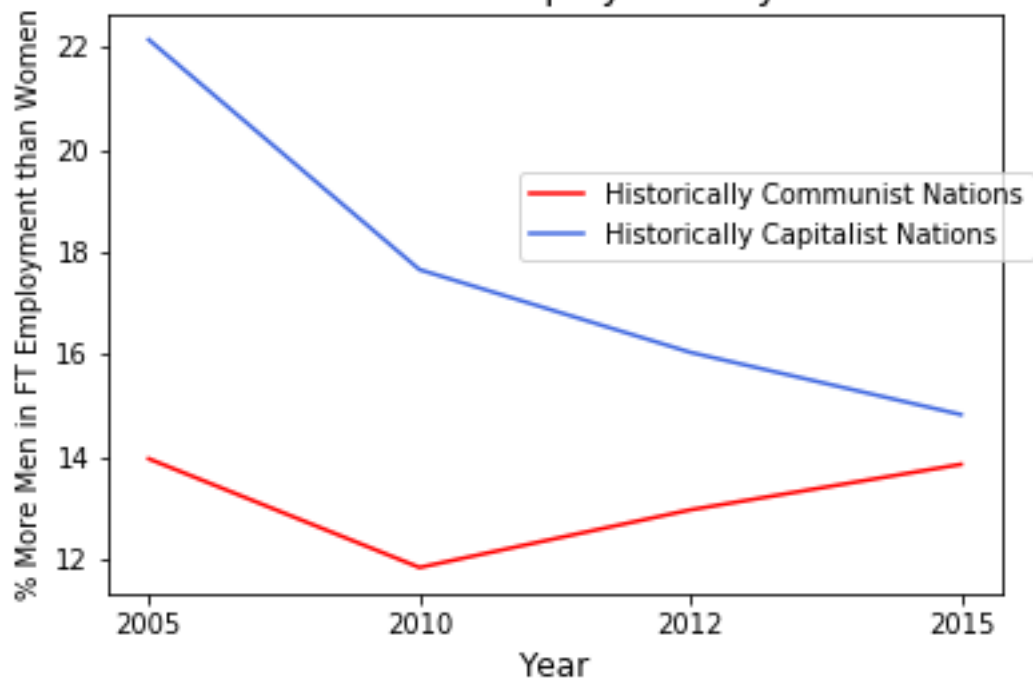


However, significantly more men have full-time jobs than women.

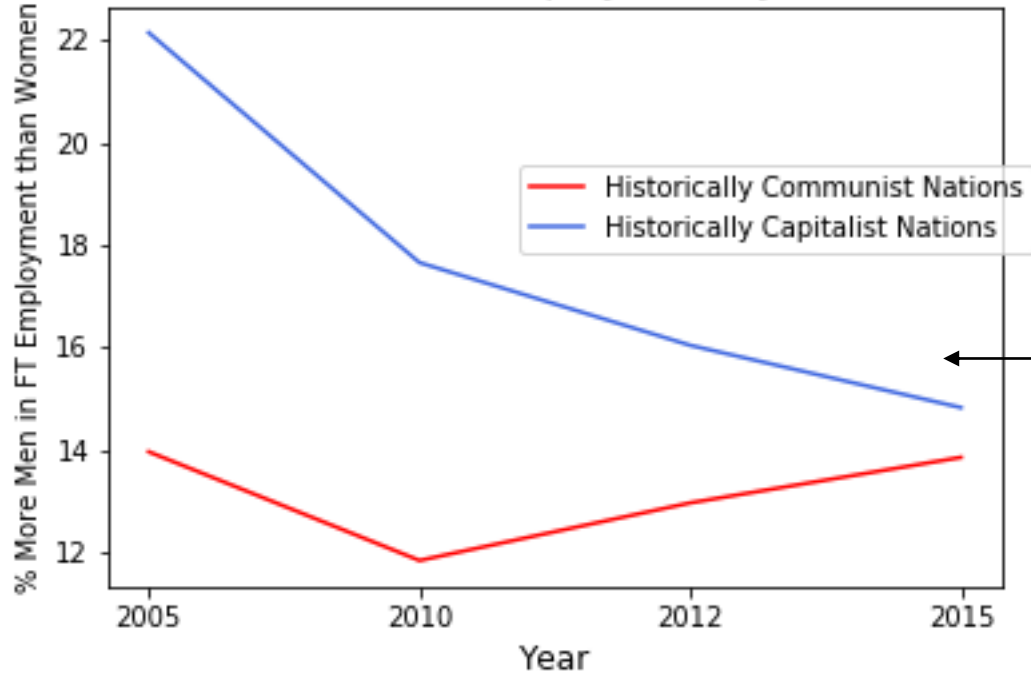
In line with what we know about communist's practice of having women in the workforce, we do see slightly higher levels of female employment in formerly communist countries.

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Gender Difference in FT Employment by Political History



Gender Difference in FT Employment by Political History



The gender gap in full-time employment is decreasing much more quickly in historically capitalist nations than in historically communist ones.



**a final fact to end on**

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Gender equality has strong, **positive impacts on GDP** per capita [...]

By 2050, improving gender equality would lead to an increase in EU GDP per capita by 6.1 to 9.6%, which amounts to **€1.95 to €3.15 trillion.**<sup>7</sup>

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# Sources

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women\\_and\\_religion#Christianity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_and_religion#Christianity)
  2. <https://www.patheos.com/library/protestantism/ethics-morality-community/gender-and-sexuality>
  3. <https://academic.oup.com/ijpor/article-abstract/5/1/40/1034059?redirectedFrom=PDF>
  4. <http://ww1.antiochian.org/role-women-orthodox-church>
  5. <https://www.gracechurch.org/about/distinctives/role-of-women?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>
  6. <https://ehne.fr/en/article/gender-and-europe/gender-citizenship-europe/european-union-gender-equality-policies-1957>
  7. <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/policy-areas/economic-and-financial-affairs/economic-benefits-gender-equality>
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