



THE DETERMINANTS OF THE FERTILITY GAP BETWEEN DESIRED AND ACTUAL FERTILITY STATISTICS AMONG EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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PRESENTATION'S PLAN

- Problem and motivation
- The theory
- Methodology
- Conclusions



PROBLEM AND MOTIVATION



Unmet need for children

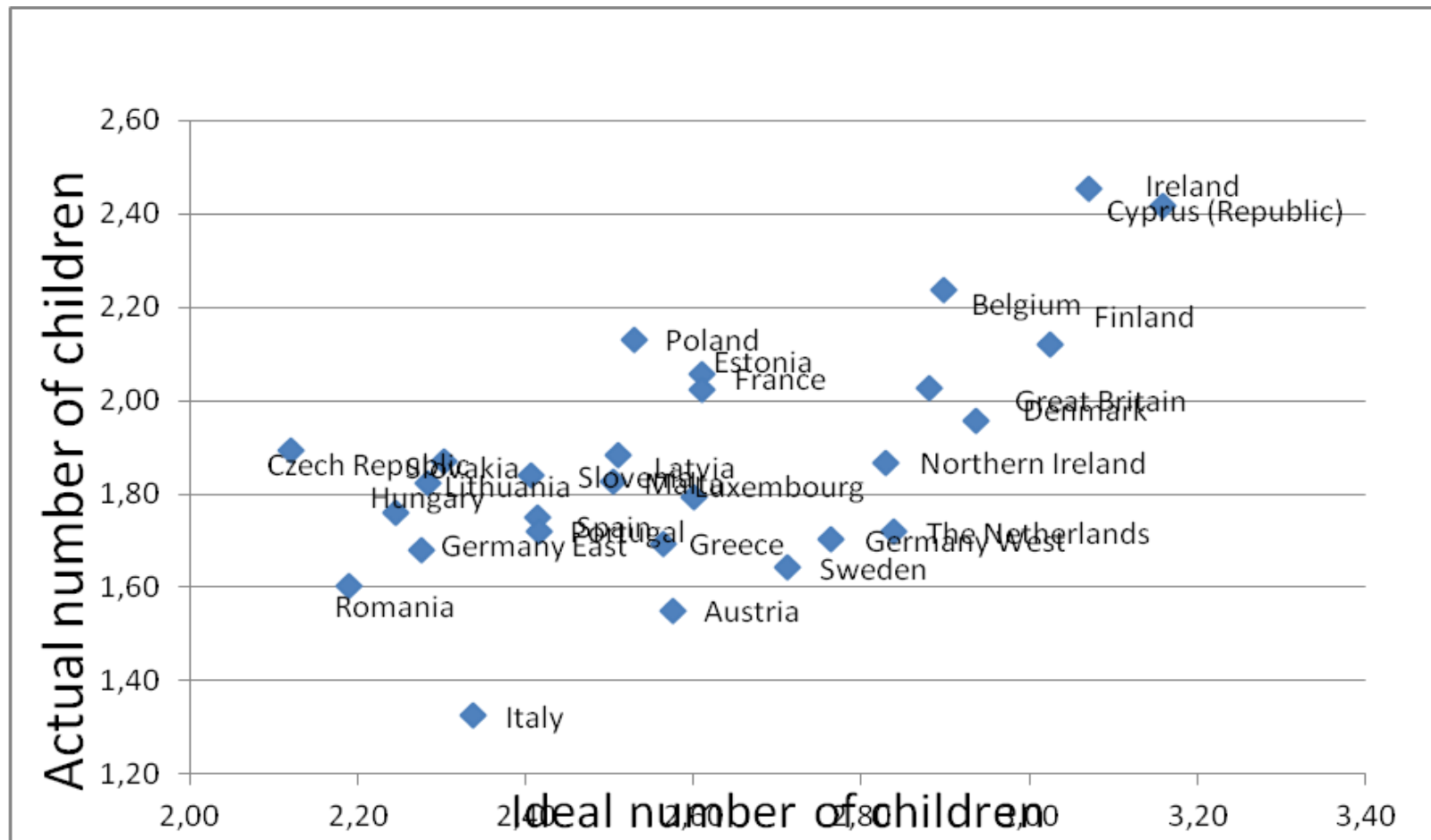
Obstacles and difficulties in realization of people's preferences for children

CURRENT TENDENCIES OF THE FERTILITY GAP

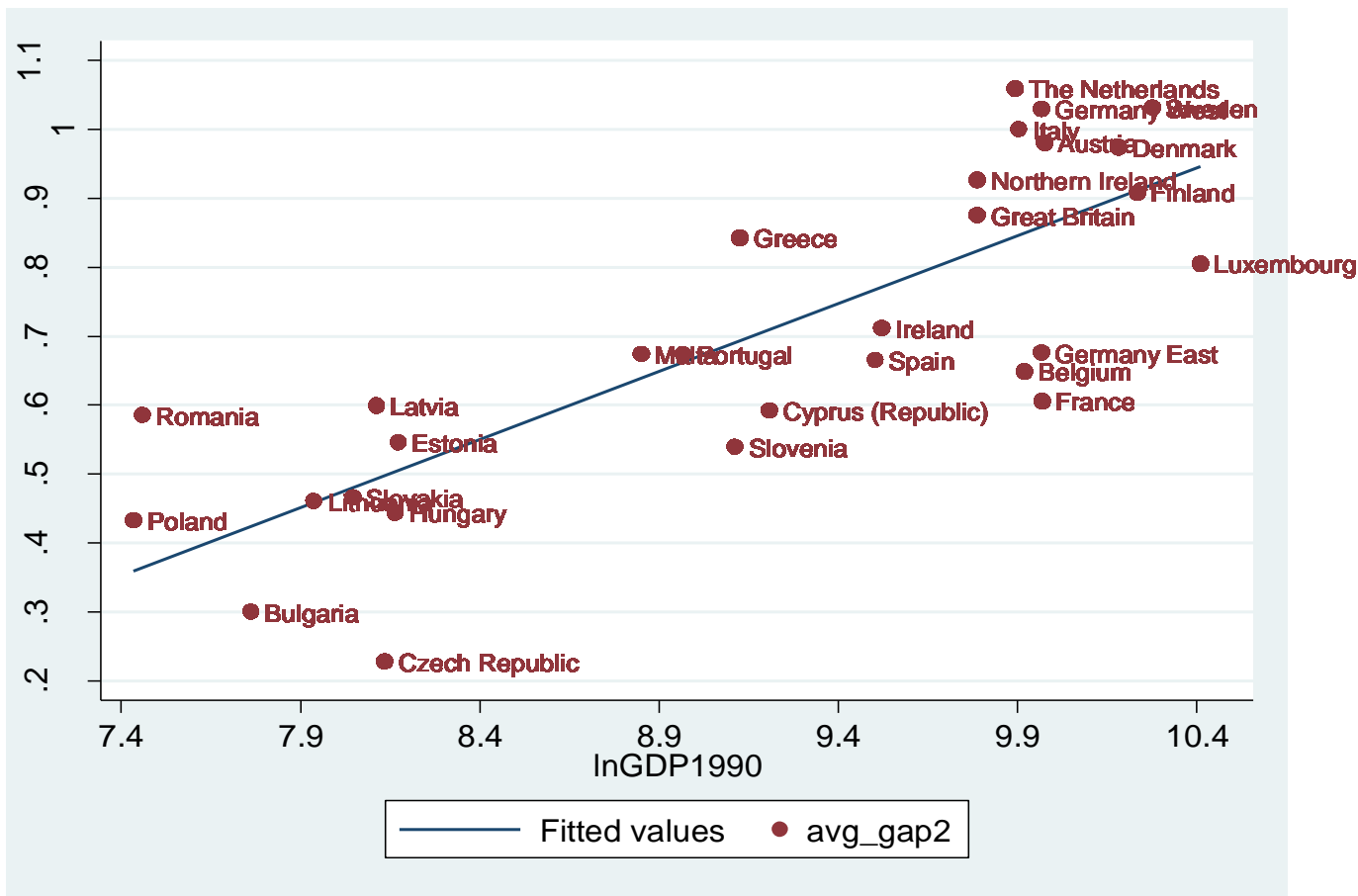
- “Europeans want more children than they actually have” European Commission and the Council of Europe (2.3 versus 1.5)[2005]
- Fertility ideals stay higher than the actual fertility rate
- Universal decline of fertility ideals and actual fertility
- Two child norm seems to erode(Frejka 2008)



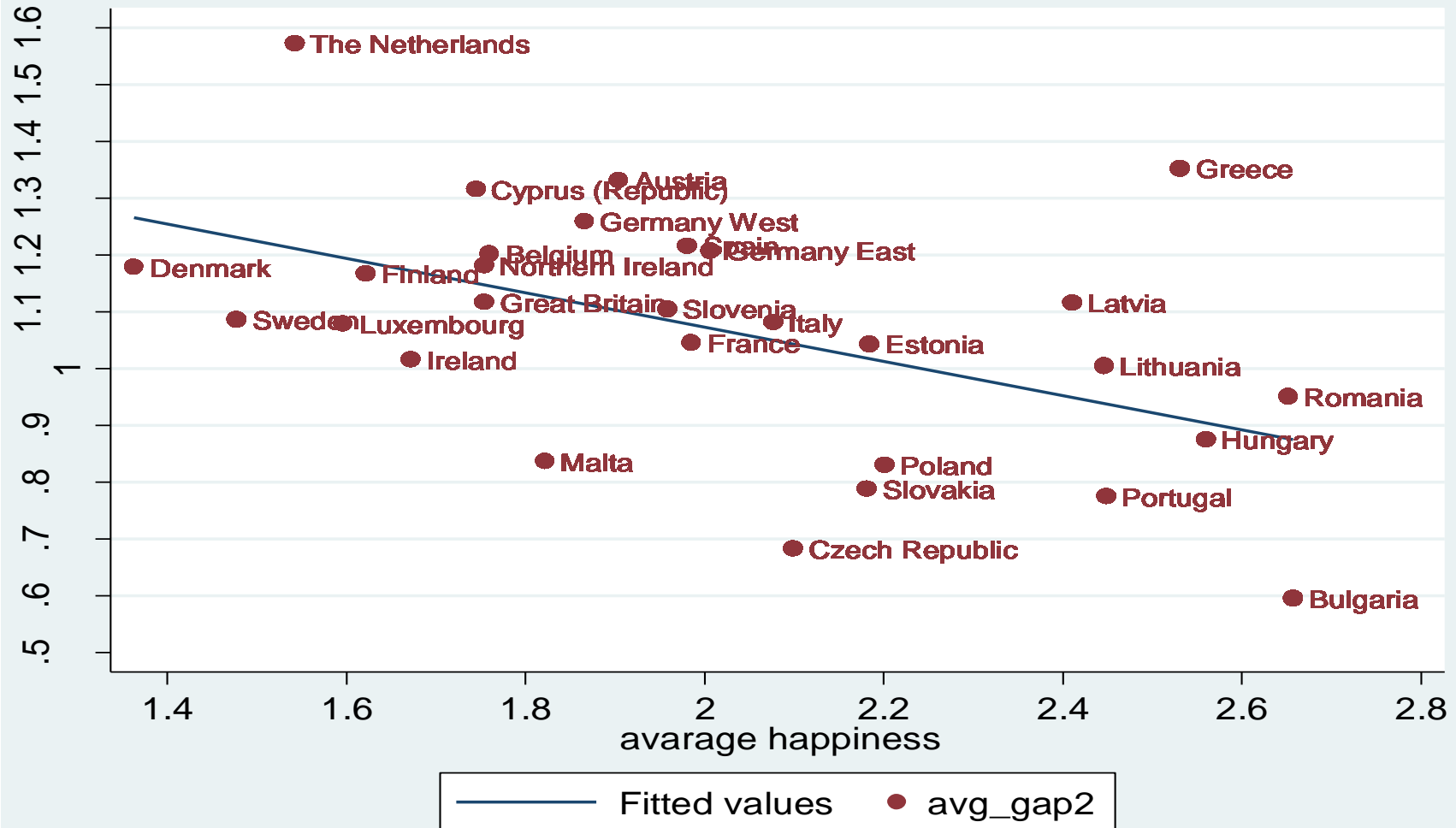
FERTILITY PREFERENCES AND ACTUAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN, WOMEN 35-55



DISTRIBUTION OF AVERAGE FERTILITY GAP VALUE BY COUNTRIES DEPENDING ON LOGARITHM OF GDP PER CAPITA, WOMEN 35-55



DISTRIBUTION OF THE AVERAGE FERTILITY GAP BY COUNTRIES DEPENDING ON AVERAGE LEVEL OF LIFE SATISFACTION, WOMEN 35-55



THEORETICAL EXPLANATION OF THE FERTILITY GAP

- The fertility preferences are known to be reasonable predictors of actual fertility rate in future [Freedman and Thornton 1980, Thomson, McDonald, Bumpass 1990, Elizabeth Thomson 1997]
- Tightening of the labor market and worsening of economic conditions in Spain contribute to the fertility gap [Adsera 2005]
- Recent studies have shown the effect of following factors prevented to realize fertility ideals: different couple fertility preferences, religion confession, economic uncertainty and labor market instability [Testa 2013, Adsera 2006, Goldstein 2003].
- Flexibility of the labor market, gender equity has become important predictors of the fertility gap. Women face the stark choices between children and employment, which in turn, leads to some women having fewer children than they would like to have and fertility decline [McDonald, 2000]
- Heterogeneity of lifestyle, preference choices affect work-family link [preference theory by Hakim]



HYPOTHESES(1)

- Those who have higher education and better employment position are expected to have higher fertility gap between ideals and actual fertility(Becker G.)
- Countries with the prevalence of gender inequality attitudes are expected to have lower fertility gap because of high fertility ideals and actual fertility rate



HYPOTHESES(2)

- Countries with high level of GDP are expected to have lower fertility gap than countries with low GDP(Welzel, freedom of choice)
- In countries with family support policy measures the gap is expected to be lower than in countries with weak family support policy.



DATA AND METHODOLOGY

- Data set: Eurobarometer 2011, EVS 2008, OECD Family Indicators, World Bank, 29 countries, age limits 35-55, women, 5000 respondents
- Methods: multilevel modeling, with random effects
- Dependent variable – delta (fertility gap=ideal n. child- real n. child) [-8;8]
- Independent testing variables:
 - Individual level: employment status[employed, self-employed, not working], level in society[1 low level in society;10 highest level in society]
 - Country level: GDP per capita 1990, pro-fertility index1990, GII, paid maternity leave, 1990, gender inequality attitudes (EVS)1990
- Controls: marital status, EPL1990, age of first marriage



MEASUREMENT

Pro-fertility index:

Do you justify: “1” never “10” always

- abortion
- divorce
- homosexuality

Gender inequality attitudes:

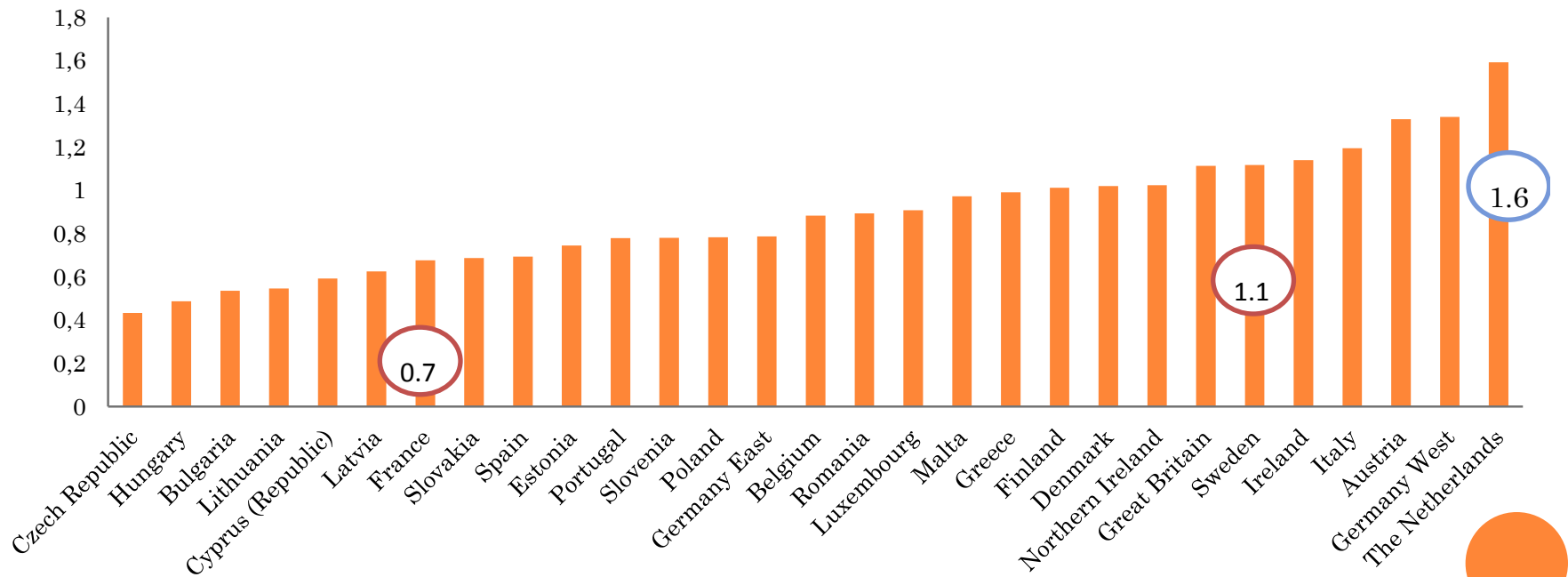
- jobs are scarce: giving men priority “1” agree “2” disagree
- being housewife as fulfilling as paid job “1” strongly agree “4” strongly disagree



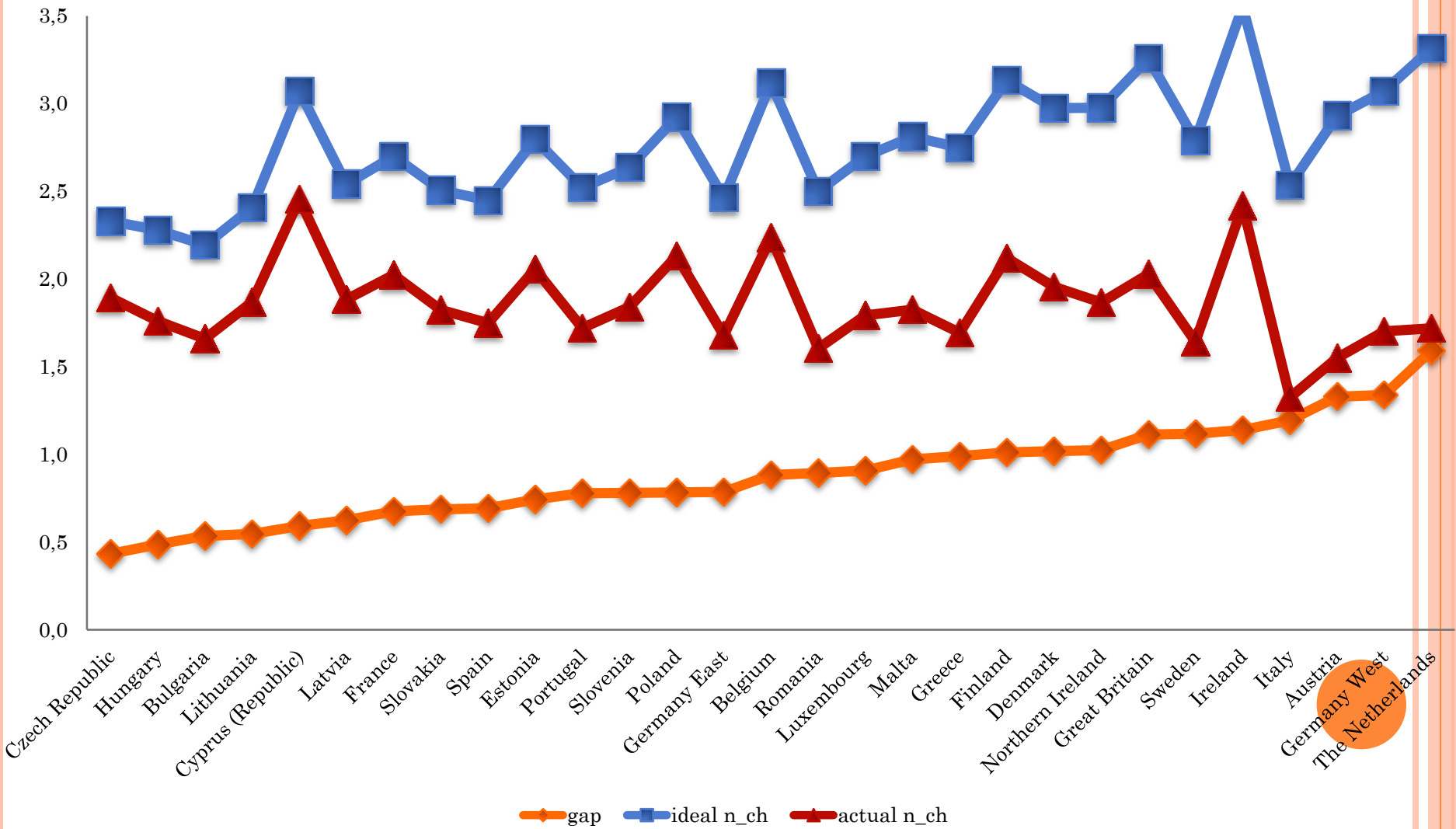
RESULTS

53.3% of European women 35-55 have **no gap** between fertility ideals and actual fertility

0,694 mean value of gap



IDEAL, ACTUAL FERTILITY, FERTILITY GAP



	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Individual level						
High education (base category not higher education)	0.105***	0.102***	0.105***	0.103***	0.107***	0.105***
Self-employed (base category- employed)	-0.0290	-0.0279	-0.0300	-0.0313*	-0.0364*	-.0379*
Not working	-0.0381***	-0.0369***	-0.0376***	-0.0375***	-0.0388***	-.0371***
Unmarried (base category married)	0.576***	0.575***	0.576***	0.575***	0.576***	.576***
Level in society (subjective)	0.000840***	0.000810***	0.000834***	0.000804***	.0008353***	.0008367***
Country level						
GDP90		1.11e-06**				
EPL90			0.00748**			
Pro-fertility index90				0.0280***		
Paid maternity leave(amount of weeks)					-.001189*	
Gender inequality attitudes						-.000032**
Age of first marriage						.0666***
Gender Inequality Index						-.7063*
Constant	0.210***	0.196***	0.197***	0.268***	0.237***	0.2752***
Log likelihood	-9677	-9688	-9687	-9684	-9690	-9685
Number of individuals	5179	5179	5179	5179	5179	5179
Number of countries	29	29	29	29	29	29
ICC	0,158	0,183	0,007	0,435	0,094	0,176
AIC	19372	19401	19399	19391	19402	19395

CONCLUSIONS(1)

- **economic growth, stictness of the labor market, gender egalitarian attitudes** contribute to the rise of the fertility gap. Becker's rational choice approach contributes to the explanation of found results. Fertility gap is widespread in countries with gender egalitarian values, gender inequality attitudes decrease the gap



DISCUSSION

- Country level predictors current situation or with lag 1990-s versus 2011
- Which predictor has stronger effect? Gender traditional attitudes or economic development indicators?
- Existential security index, emancipative value index?





**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION**

This report was presented at the training methodological workshop
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http://lcsr.hse.ru/en/seminar_m2015

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