Is gender equality stalling?

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Introduction

The general belief is that younger people are more liberal and progressive, but they tend to become more conservative with age. However, recent evidence suggests a shift: young women are becoming more likely to identify as politically liberal, while for young men, it is becoming less likely (Saad et al., 2024). One of the Ipsos' annual International Women's Day surveys' key findings is that younger generations hold more conservative views regarding gender equality. Younger generations are less progressive, and there is a large gap between young men and women. Young women are more likely to identify as feminists, while young men think that the efforts toward gender equality are going too far and are even discriminating against men. (Ipsos, 2025). Furthermore, influencers such as Andrew Tate, Jordan Peterson, and Adin Ross are gaining increasing popularity among young men. These influencers promote the claim that feminism has harmed men (Hall, 2025). The gender divide is also visible in politics. Young men massively voted for Donald Trump in the 2024 elections, while young women voted for Kamala Harris. Changing the generational trend of the younger generation favoring left-leaning candidates (Yerushalmy, 2024).

This growing gender divide raises the question: What explains the gender gap among young individuals in their attitudes toward gender equality policies? I hypothesize that perceived competition plays an essential role. As men's traditional advantages in employment, education, and relationships erode, gender equality may appear as a zero-sum game where young men feel they are losing. This sense of threat may fuel resistance to gender equality and activate sexist attitudes.

Based on this, I hypothesize that age moderates the relationship between gender and opposition to gender equality policies, so that the gap between men and women is greater for younger people.

The position of young men is changing. Profound societal shifts are redefining traditional gender roles and power structures. The economic, educational, and relational advantages that men once had are slowly eroding. Young men are feeling left behind. Their employment prospects are diminishing (Bächmann, 2022), and their lower participation in higher education further weakens their competitiveness in the labor market (European Expert Network on Economics of Education (EENEE) & Viarengo, 2021). As a result, some might perceive gender equality as a zero-sum game in which they are losing. This perceived competition might cause resistance to gender equality.

I also argue that perceived competition works as a driver for sexism. Hostile sexism criticizes women who do not follow the traditional gender roles and ideologies (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Gender equality policies might feel like a threat to the existing order, activating hostile sexist attitudes. Benevolent sexism has a more positive tone, but it still frames women in their traditional roles (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Gender equality policies might now be seen as a threat to the existing values of men being protectors and providers, while women are nurturing and caring. In modern sexism, the existence of gender discrimination is being rejected (Swim & Cohen, 1997). Now, gender equality policies can be seen as giving women unfair advantages. Therefore, I expect that the positive effect of hostile, benevolent, and modern sexism on opposition to gender equality policies is stronger among younger men.

I test the hypothesis using linear regression, performing a two-way interaction between age and gender, as well as a three-way interaction among age, gender, and sexism. The data used comes from the European Social Survey (ESS). Wave 11 was conducted in 2023-2024 and has a special gender-themed questionnaire.

The results of this research show that age moderates the relationship between gender and support for gender equality policies and that sexism influences attitudes towards gender equality policies. The study does not find that this effect is more substantial among younger men than older men or women.

This research has both social and scientific relevance. First, it examines the current social issue of the progressiveness gap between men and women, particularly among younger generations. The research aims to determine whether, for current generations, the activation of sexist attitudes due to perceived competition influences is the underlying cause of the change in progressiveness. Second, the study uses very recent data and explores a relatively new area of research.

The thesis is constructed in the following manner: in the literature section, we begin by explaining all the key concepts necessary to support the hypothesis. First, we talk about the different forms of sexism, hostile, benevolent, and modern sexism, and how these affect gender equality policies. Then, with the use of perceived competition and the use of societal change, I theorize that the positive effect of the different forms of sexism on attitudes towards gender-equal policies is more substantial for younger men. After the hypotheses, I present the method and data used in this research. The meaning and limitations will be discussed after the results.

Literature review

Sexism

Sexism can be defined as the belief that one sex is superior to the other. In most cases, it is male prejudice or discrimination against women (Schaefer, 2012). Prejudice is a negative attitude towards an individual based on their membership in a particular group, such as being a woman. The behaviour when acting upon these prejudices is known as discrimination. Our understanding of another group is based on stereotypes and social distance (Grothe, 2025). Social distance refers to the level of acceptance or closeness we feel toward members of different social or identity groups (Crossman, 2019). This can be influenced by gender role expectations or assumptions about how women should behave. For example, a hiring manager might subconsciously view a woman as less suitable for a leadership role because of the stereotype that women are more emotional or less assertive than men (Badura et al., 2018), leading to greater social distance in professional settings.

Glick and Fiske (1996) argue that the relationship between men and women is unique and cannot be easily compared to, for example, ethnic prejudice because men and women are deeply interconnected in society. Furthermore, sexism is not only made up of negative attitudes; it also includes seemingly positive attitudes toward women. Women are, for example, more positively described in domestic roles, like taking care of the home and family, while men are independent, goal-focused, or masculine, which comes from seeing them mostly in work roles (Eagly & Mladinic, 1994). Women being generally disadvantaged but also loved is a confusing contradiction. Therefore, Glick and Fiske (1996) developed the ambivalent sexism theory. In this theory, sexism is viewed as a multidimensional construct, with two types of sexist attitudes: hostile and benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism suits the classical definition of prejudice. It is negative in tone and criticizes women who challenge traditional gender roles and ideologies. The relationship between men and women is seen as competitive, where women are seen as trying to control or undermine men and take over their dominant position in society. Benevolent sexism, on the other hand, has a more positive tone. Women who conform to traditional roles, such as stay-at-home mothers, are idealized. It sees women as morally pure, nurturing and uniquely caring. However, it also suggests that women are weak and dependent on men for protection. It frames gender roles as complementary, with men positioned as protectors and providers, and women as caregivers and mothers (Barreto & Doyle, 2022). The behaviours that belong to benevolent sexism tend to be more socially acceptable and are even more encouraged. However, despite the more positive tone, benevolent sexism is still not considered beneficial. It is still used to maintain traditional gender roles and support male dominance (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Benevolence sexism works alongside hostile sexism to preserve and reinforce the lower social status of girls and women.

The modern sexism scale was proposed by Swim et al. in 1995. This scale measures hidden or unnoticed sexism built into cultural and societal norms. Respondents of this scale tend to deny the existence of discrimination against women, are offended by complaints about discrimination and resent special favors for women (Swim & Cohen, 1997). Thus, modern sexism has three aspects. First, there is the denial of discrimination against women. Here, it is recognized that sexism not only includes certain beliefs and attitudes about women but also

resistance to addressing gender-based inequality. Key to this resistance is denying that inequality or discrimination even exists. Secondly, any complaints about gender discrimination are rejected or delegitimized. Protests, public outcry, or mobilization are seen as unjustified because if discrimination isn't acknowledged, there is nothing to protest for. Finally, modern sexism includes opposition to actions taken to reduce gender inequality, such as gender policies. They are viewed as unfair advantages for women (Anduiza & Rico, 2022). Modern sexism is a lot more subtle than traditional sexism. It may not openly disparage women, but by denying the existence of discrimination, the progress of equality is harmed. Women's lack of progress is seen as a result of their own shortcomings rather than systemic inequality. (Zehnter et al., 2021).

Sexism and its effects on gender equality policies

The European Commission has established a strategy plan for a gender-equal Europe by 2025. "The key objectives are ending gender-based violence, challenging gender stereotypes, closing gender gaps in the labor market, achieving equal participation across different sectors of the economy, addressing the gender pay and pension gaps, closing the gender care gap, and achieving gender balance in decision-making and politics" (Gender Equality Strategy, n.d., Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 section).

Policies themselves are gender-coded. Women's issues are social services, education, and health, while men's issues primarily involve law enforcement and defence. Beauregard et al. (2022) find that hostile sexism is associated with decreased support for government spending on women's issues and increased support for spending on men's issues. They explain that this is the case because hostile sexism is linked to the belief that women are undeserving and make illegitimate demands at the expense of men. Those with sexist views see policy areas associated with women as underserving and taking away resources from more valuable or masculine policy issues. The challenging of the status quo will lead hostile sexists to fight against resources for feminized policy areas. Skewes et al. (2019) researched employees of a Danish university and found that individuals who hold modern sexist views are less likely to support gender equity initiatives. Those with high modern sexism scores often believe that either enough, or even too much, has already been done to promote gender equity. The employees are unaware of the sexism they are contributing to within the organization, leaving the sexist attitudes unchallenged.

Hostile and benevolent sexism can cause different forms of gender discrimination on the work floor. First, more hostile sexism is associated with a more negative evaluation and lower recommendation of female candidates for a managerial position (Masser & Abrams, 2004). Stronger hostile sexism is also related to a more negative attitude towards a gender-ambiguous job applicant (Salvaggio et al., 2009). The likelihood of being sexually harassed in the workplace increases with hostile sexism. Hostile sexism justifies gender income inequality by attributing it to women's own choices, such as preferring lower-paid work arrangements. This creates a barrier to support for equal pay (Connor & Fiske, 2018). Benevolent sexism has been found to influence the evaluation of female leadership candidates. Women are portrayed as warm but less competent, especially in male-dominated fields. Benevolent sexism, however, was associated with higher salary recommendations for women (Lockhart, 2024). Benevolent sexism in the workplace also subtly reinforces traditional gender roles by encouraging support

that promotes dependency rather than autonomy, such as offering women help instead of tools for independent problem-solving. This influences how female employees, especially in male-dominated fields, are evaluated. This often leads to lower competence assessments and gendered expectations, hindering career development (Reilly et al., 2016; Shnabel et al., 2015). Benevolent sexist attitudes only support employment equity policies that promote the hiring of women in feminine, and not in masculine, positions. Therefore, this contributes to occupational gender segregation and leads to stagnation in the promotion of women to masculine positions (Hideg & Ferris, 2016). Concludingly, hostile sexism has direct negative consequences for women's access to employment, opportunities for professional growth and performance evaluations. Benevolent sexism has more indirect consequences and contributes to stigmatization. Modern sexism appears to be strongly associated with beliefs that sexual misconduct is not widespread. It is also associated with the feeling that the # MeToo movement has gone too far and that mandatory workplace harassment training is unnecessary (Archer & Kam, 2020). The effect of modern sexism on males' opinions about pay equity is negative (Cassese et al., 2015).

Hostile and benevolent sexism influences policies regarding female representation in politics. Hostile sexists are against an increase in women's presence in politics through the implementation of gender quotas. Benevolent sexists, on the contrary, are more likely to support gender quotas (Beauregard & Sheppard, 2020). Individuals who favor traditional stereotypes about women, such as those portraying them as pure, sensitive, and caring, tend to show higher levels of support for gender quotas (Pereira & Porto, 2020). This might be due to the benevolent view that women need help and protection; without the assistance of quotas, they would not be able to make it into politics. A greater degree of modern sexism harms the support for quotas, even among respondents who want more women in parliament. The belief is that women do not run for parliament because they are uninterested or lack ambition. Respondents believe that political parties already do enough to recruit women candidates. Only when a respondent desires more than 60% of women in parliament does the support for quotas become positive. Societal gender norms that penalize female candidates are often overlooked, along with the significant influence of political parties in recruiting and selecting candidates (Miura et al., 2022).

The effect of hostile and benevolent sexism on family policies has been extensively researched when looking at abortion rights, but less so for paid leave for men and women. Some research finds that an increase in hostile sexism is associated with a pro-life attitude rather than a pro-choice attitude (Cizmar & Kalkan, 2023; Petterson & Sutton, 2017). Other research finds that benevolent sexism is related to a restriction of women's reproductive rights (Huang et al., 2016). Sutton et al. (2010) find that only benevolent and not hostile sexism is related to restricting pregnant women's choices. Benevolent sexism is even associated with attitudes toward traumatic abortion. Traumatic abortion is motivated by medical concerns (Osborne & Davies, 2012). Modern sexism is a predictor of opposition against abortion due to social and economic reasons and against traumatic abortion (Baker et al., 2022). Research by Tavits et al. (2023) on parental leave finds that offering parental leave to fathers, a policy that disrupts traditional gender roles and supports more progressive ones, has the potential to reduce attitudinal gender bias. Male leaders who take leave beyond the standard are more negatively

evaluated than female leaders and male leaders who take a shorter leave, indicating the significant stigmatization of male managers taking leave, which perpetuates the stereotype that women are caregivers (Gartzia et al., 2018). Szastok et al. (2019) find that a benevolent sexist attitude views mothers more positively when they take longer maternity leaves. Individuals who are lower in benevolent sexism tend to be more accepting of women balancing careers and motherhood.

Perceived competition between men and women

Humans are all members of various groups, including national, ethnic, and gender groups. Being part of a group, from an evolutionary perspective, has had numerous advantages. Individuals who belong to the group are perceived as in-group members, while those outside the group are perceived as out-group members. An intergroup conflict is a disagreement between the goals and values of the two groups. These conflicts can have different sources, such as who is in power and influences the other party's behaviors or outcomes. Intergroup conflicts affect the perceptions and behaviors of the individuals involved. Prejudice and stereotypes can lead to discrimination and aggression towards out-group members (Böhm et al., 2018).

Intergroup threat theory is another explanation for why groups come into conflict with or develop negative attitudes toward each other. If one group feels that the other group is in a position to cause them harm, then an intergroup threat is felt (Stephan et al., 2009).

The realistic group conflict theory argues that prejudice and discrimination result from competition over limited resources between groups (Sherif, 1967). If the perceived competition for resources increases, so does the intergroup threat and conflict. Succeeding is now more beneficial. Furthermore, the greater the conflict, the larger the hostility towards the other group. This theory does not require actual conflict over the resources; perceived competition is already enough (Esses et al., 1998). The interdependence of the groups can lead to a zero-sum belief. A zero-sum belief means that the gain for one group automatically corresponds to a loss for the other group. This can lead to a competitive intergroup relationship (Böhm et al., 2018). To remove the competition, a group will try to decrease the competitiveness of the other group. Negative attitudes and attributes will be used to convince both their own group and other groups of the competitor's lack of worth, using negative traits and values. Another way to try to remove the competition is by using discriminatory behavior toward group members and opposing social programs that may help increase the competitiveness of the other group. Finally, one group may deny access to its territory or move away from the other group (Esses et al., 1998). The zero-sum belief impacts how people see the distribution of resources, which in turn affects their views on where social efforts should be directed (Kaiser et al., 2009). This mindset can lead to a reluctance to allocate resources for addressing social inequities, contributing to the ongoing persistence of disparities between groups (Wilkins et al., 2014).

In the intergroup threat theory, there is, in addition to a realistic threat, also a symbolic threat. It is argued that conflicting values and beliefs cause a threat. Initially explained for the anti-black bias of whites. Symbolic racism suggests that racial bias is no longer rooted in beliefs about the biological inferiority of black people (as in traditional racism) but rather stems from the perception that black individuals violate or threaten values that are important to white people.

Policies that promote equity can feel like a threat to the value of equity by giving minorities an unequal advantage, especially if the majority thinks that discrimination and prejudice against the minority are not present. Rather than being perceived as competition over material resources, it can be viewed as competition over values (Riek et al., 2006).

Societal change

The focus of this research is on the younger generation because there is a growing generational divide where young men are significantly more likely to believe that efforts toward gender equality have gone too far and are now disadvantaging men (Ipsos, 2025). Multiple factors can significantly influence the shaping of gender dynamics within societies. Education is a crucial factor in breaking down stereotypes, promoting gender-sensitive attitudes, and developing empathy and understanding among individuals and communities (Ahmed & Khan, 2023). In Europe, the share of women and men graduating from university has increased steadily. The gender gap has not only closed but is now even reversing in favor of women, with more women graduating from university than men (European Expert Network on Economics of Education (EENEE) & Viarengo, 2021; *Women Continue to Gradually Outpace Men in Educational Attainment*, n.d.). Another factor is employment. Economic factors play a crucial role in determining the direction of societies and influencing individual livelihoods worldwide (Ahmed & Khan, 2023). Men and women often work in different sectors (Ahmed & Khan, 2023). Female unemployment was historically higher than male unemployment. Nowadays, especially for youth unemployment, this rate is consistently higher for men than for women (Francis-Devine, 2025; *OECD Data Explorer*, n.d.). Industries expected to have the highest wage and employment growth over the next decade are mainly dominated by women and at the same time, the labor force participation of men is going down (*World Bank Open Data*, n.d., Industries With the Most Rapidly Declining Wage and Salary Employment, 2024 & Industries With the Largest Wage and Salary Employment Growth, 2024). Women used to face a higher risk of unemployment in the 1980s; however, they now face a significantly lower risk than men in the 21st century (Bächmann, 2022). Women are also becoming more economically independent (Statistics Netherlands, 2024). Economic independence is crucial for gender equality. It enables women to make decisions about their well-being and that of their communities. It also challenges and shifts socio-cultural norms that have traditionally limited women's roles in both public and private life (Pandey, 2024). Another societal change is that, primarily among women, there has been an increase in singlehood. Single men are far more likely than single women to seek relationships or go on a date (Pew Research Center, 2020).

These are some significant societal shifts that are redefining traditional gender roles and power structures. The position of men has changed drastically. Their employment prospects are decreasing, and they are not increasing their chances in the job market by attending college. Men are losing power and control over society and thus, over their future. As a result, some perceive gender equality not as a shared societal good but as a zero-sum game in which they are losing. This perception can foster resentment and a desire to reassert traditional norms. Women are often seen as their direct competitors and the scapegoats of their problems. In the time of social media, it can make men susceptible to influencers who promote traditional, sexist, and patriarchal views (McGill, 2024).

This thesis argues that the growing backlash among younger men toward gender equality policies relates to rapid societal changes that challenge traditional gender roles and status

hierarchies. As women improve in education, employment, and independence, younger men, who are still forming their social and economic identities, may experience increased competition and a perceived symbolic threat. This perceived threat can cause forms of sexist attitudes, including hostile, benevolent, and modern sexism, which in turn diminish support for gender equality policies. Building on theories of perceived intergroup competition and ambivalent sexism, this study hypothesizes that age plays a moderating role in this dynamic, with younger men being particularly affected. By examining how different expressions of sexism interact with age and gender, this research aims to give insight into the psychological and structural mechanisms that underlie opposition to gender equality in increasingly equal societies.

Theory and Hypotheses

The hypotheses build upon existing theories of sexism and perceived intergroup competition. I expect that an increase in perceived competition causes an increase in hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, and modern sexism, especially for younger men, which then causes an increase in opposition to gender equality policies. I argue that younger men are more likely to experience perceived competition with women due to the rapid pace of societal changes. For example, a rise in women's education and employment, economic difficulties such as the housing crisis, and evolving gender norms, for example, women dating less. All these factors may threaten traditional status hierarchies. This perceived status threat can increase resistance to gender equality, particularly among younger men who are still establishing their social and economic position. Resistance should also be present in relatively gender-equal societies, where the competition between men and women is larger. Consequently, I hypothesize that age moderates the relationship between gender and opposition to gender equality policies, with younger men showing higher levels of opposition than older men and women.

H1: Age moderates the relationship between gender and opposition to gender equality policies so that the gap between men and women is greater for younger people.

Hostile sexism has a negative tone and criticizes women who challenge traditional gender roles and ideologies. The theory shows that hostile sexism is strongly associated with opposition to gender equality policies. Such policies are perceived as unfair advantages for women and a threat to existing hierarchies. In the society of today, traditional gender roles are starting to erode, and women increasingly begin to succeed in education and professional life and become more financially independent. Gender equality may appear as a zero-sum game in which women's advancement comes at the expense of men. These hostile sexist attitudes might thus be more strongly activated for younger men and have a larger effect on their opposition to gender equality policies compared to older men or women, who may not experience the same level of competition or social insecurity.

H2: The positive effect of hostile sexism on opposition to gender equality policies is stronger among younger men than older men or women, so the gap between men and women is greater for younger people.

Benevolent sexism has a more positive tone. It frames gender roles as complementary; men are positioned as protectors and providers, while women are caregivers and mothers. Thus, it still makes sure that the traditional gender roles and the dominance of men are maintained. Benevolent sexism has mixed effects on the support for gender equality policies. However, I argue that some men may see gender equality policies as threatening the value system ingrained in benevolent sexism, that men are protectors and providers while women are nurturing and caring. This symbolic threat may be especially prominent for younger men who are growing up in a society where gender roles are rapidly changing. They might feel uncertain about their place in this developing environment, which makes them more sensitive to messages that emphasize traditional roles for women. Young men might thus not reject

equality because they believe women are inferior (as in hostile sexism), but because gender equality is perceived as eroding a morally structured worldview where women are cherished, and men are strong providers.

H3: The positive effect of benevolent sexism on opposition to gender equality policies is stronger among younger men than older men or women, so the gap between men and women is greater for younger people.

Modern sexism is defined as the denial that gender discrimination still exists. Women may not be openly disparaged, but by denying the existence of discrimination, inequality and gender issues can be framed as no longer relevant. Younger men may be more vulnerable to modern sexist beliefs. First, they did not live through the most visible struggles for gender equality and are more likely to perceive that men and women now compete on an equal playing field. Secondly, they may even feel disadvantaged, especially in educational settings where women are increasingly outperforming men or in the labour market, where economic pressures and competition are high. As a result, younger men may interpret gender equality policies as giving women an unfair advantage.

H4: The positive effect of modern sexism on opposition to gender equality policies is stronger among younger men than older men or women, so the gap between men and women is greater for younger people.

Data

Data source

I use the European Social Survey (ESS) to test the hypothesis. The ESS is an academically driven, cross-national survey conducted through face-to-face interviews every 2 years. Every survey wave measures individuals' attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns in more than 30 European countries. The ESS has designed a special module to measure attitudes towards gender. The questions focus on attitudes towards feminine and masculine identities, sexism, gender discrimination, and gender equality. The module also investigated policy responses to gender inequalities implemented by governments, organizations and social movements. I will use the specific gender module included in Wave 11 for the 2023/2024 academic year. Wave 11 includes 24 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and has 40156 respondents. In each new round, new sample members are selected. All countries use random probability sampling. In each wave, everyone older than 15 and living in a private household has the chance to be selected. The ESS has a response rate target of 70%. The ESS data is freely available and can be downloaded from the ESS data portal (ESS | Sikt, n.d.). The ESS survey is well-suited for my research. It has a dedicated gender module, a high-quality survey design and includes many European countries with a high level of gender equality.

Dependent variable: support for gender equality policies

The survey has four questions that test the support for gender equality policies. These are; (1) *Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, (2) firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace, (3) Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same work and (4) Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men.* The respondents are then asked to what extent they are in favor of or against these measures. Strongly in favor is coded with number one and strongly against is coded with number five.

The policies focused on the workplace have a Spearman correlation of 0.45, and the policies that focus more on legal measures, number of seats in parliament, and require equal periods of paid leave to care for their child are also highly correlated, with a correlation of 0.40. Therefore, we will consider a general measure of policy support, where the four measures will be combined into one, group these policies into two categories, the workplace-focused policies (fines and firing) and the more structural/legal policies (leave and parliamentary quota). The workplace-focused policies take place in a professional environment and are more about enforcement and accountability, while the more legal policies relate more to a change in society. Sexism may express itself differently in the different policy domains. Table 6a in the appendix shows the correlation table of gender equality policies.

On average, respondents were most supportive of workplace-focused policies (fines and firing) and the most against more structural/legal policies (leave and parliamentary quota). Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of the questions used for the dependent variable.

Table 1: Descriptive of the dependent variables

Variable	Observation	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Equal periods of paid leave	39,007	2.51	1.31	1	5
Firing employees who make insulting comments	39,116	2.14	1.10	1	5
Make businesses pay a fine	39,027	2.09	1.10	1	5
Number of seats in parliament	38,529	2.51	1.19	1	5

There are differences in the state and implementation of these policies in the European member states. The EU mandates a minimum of 14 weeks of maternity leave, with 2 weeks' compulsory leave before and/or after confinement. Fathers are entitled to at least 2 weeks (EPRS, European Parliamentary Research Service et al., 2023).

There are large differences in how many weeks countries have in their national legislation. This variation may influence respondents' favourability of a legal measure that requires both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child (EPRS, European Parliamentary Research Service et al., 2023).

There is no EU legislation on gender quotas for European elections; the responsibility to ensure that women and men have the same opportunities to be elected depends on the member states. Currently, 11-member states have quotas for the candidate list for national parliaments. At the end of 2024, the European parliament consisted of 38.8% women and 61.2% men. The member states' single/lower houses of national parliaments had 66.9% men and 33.1% women on average (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2025).

Women remain underrepresented in parliament across most EU countries (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2025). These differences between countries are very important for interpreting support for gender parity in politics.

To combat sexual harassment and unequal pay in the workplace, the EU implemented an Equal Treatment Directive in 2006. Employers must ensure that men and women are treated equally regarding salary, working conditions, and promotion opportunities. Furthermore, employers must put policies in place to protect victims of harassment (Paulsen, 2025). This directive has caused some similarity among Member States in sexual harassment laws, but there are still differences in the implementation and enforcement (Riso, 2024).

Independent variables: age, gender and sexism

For hypothesis 1 we will need data about age and gender. Gender is a binary variable where men are equal to one and female is equal to zero. We will split up age into four categories 15-28, 29-44, 45-60, and 61+. Then to test if age moderates the relationship between gender and opposition to gender equality policies, we will have a two-way interaction of gender x age.

To test hypothesis 2, besides data about age and gender, we also need information about the level of hostile sexism. Two questions in the survey relate to hostile sexism: *(1) How often women seek to gain power by getting control over men and (2) How often women get easily offended?* Responses were measured on a 5-point frequency scale (1= Never to 5 = Always). Higher scores correspond to higher levels of sexism. These questions have a correlation of 0,45; therefore, I will add the scores together. By making a three-way interaction between hostile sexism, age and gender I will be able to find out if the positive effect of hostile sexism on opposition to gender equality policies is stronger among younger men.

For hypothesis 3, I will need data about benevolent sexism. I will be using the following question that relates to benevolent sexism: *(1) Women should be protected by men.* The answers were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree). This means that lower values indicate more sexist responses. Therefore, for this variable, I reversed the scale. Then again, I will make a three-way interaction term of benevolent sexism, age and gender to find out if the effect of benevolent sexism is stronger among young men.

Hypothesis 4 is about the effect of modern sexism on the opposition to gender equality policies. In the survey there is one question that describes modern sexism: *How often women exaggerate claims of sexual harassment in the workplace.* This question is answered using a 5-point frequency scale (1= never to 5 = always). High scores indicate a high level of sexist response, while low scores indicate lower levels of sexism. To test the hypothesis, I will use a three-way interaction between modern sexism, age and gender.

In Table 2, you can see the average values of the sexist variables. The highest average value is for the question; *Women should be protected by men*, which represents benevolent sexism. The lowest average value is for; *How often women exaggerate claims of sexual harassment in the workplace,* which is used for modern sexism. In this survey, it appears that the highest level of sexism is benevolent sexism, followed by hostile sexism and then modern sexism.

Table 2: Descriptive of the independent variables

Variable	Observation	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Women seek to gain power by getting control over men	37,456	2.89	0.84	1	5
Women get easily offended	38,672	3.17	0.83	1	5
Women exaggerate claims of sexual harassment	35,833	2.53	0.88	1	5
Women should be protected by men	39,335	3.46	1.05	1	5

Control variables

To account for other factors that may influence the results, I will include the following control variables: education, employment, income, religiosity, race, and whether the respondent resides in a city. I expect education, employment and income to correlate with the dependent variables as well as with gender and age. These control variables reflect an individual's socioeconomic and economic position in society. Socioeconomic status represents economic differences within society (Worthy et al., 2025). Education is measured through the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). I grouped it into three categories: primary, secondary, and tertiary. Income is calculated as household net income after tax and is reported in deciles. To clarify, I have divided it into three levels: low-income, middle-income, and high-income. In the survey, respondents are asked if they have done paid work in the last 7 days, which I use as a proxy for employment. I also expect that religion and race have an influence on the dependent variable, as well as on gender and age. Younger people are less religious than older people, and women tend to be more religious than men (Pew Research Center, 2016 & Pew Research Center, 2018). Race is measured with the question of whether the respondent feels part of the same race or ethnic group as most people in the country. Both dummy variables are recoded from 0 to 1 to make the interpretation easier. Urban and rural areas have opposing political views (Parker et al., 2018). Therefore, I add living in a city as a control variable. I believe it correlates with support for gender equality policies and for policies that address both gender and age. In the survey, respondents are asked to describe the area in which they live. For a more straightforward interpretation, I created two categories: urban (1) and rural (0).

Regression model

The statistical method is ordinary least squares regression. I center the sexism variables. This way, the main effect shows the difference between men and women at an average level of sexism. It makes interpretation easier as hostile sexism equal to 0 does not exist. Country fixed effects are used to control for unobserved, country-level differences that are constant across individuals within each country.

$$\text{All policies} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{sexism\_centered} + \beta_2 * \text{male} + \beta_3 * \text{age group} + \beta_4 * (\text{sexism\_centered} \times \text{gender}) + \beta_5 * (\text{sexism\_centered} \times \text{age group}) + \beta_6 * (\text{age} \times \text{gender}) + \beta_7 * (\text{sexism\_centered} \times \text{age} \times \text{gender}) + \delta_c + e$$

Results

Descriptive overview

To begin the results section, Table 3 provides a descriptive overview of the mean scores for the three independent variables: hostile, benevolent, and modern sexism. Men report higher levels of sexism than women across all age categories and all three forms. The pattern across age groups is more complex. For women, the sexism scores seem to increase with age. For men, modern sexism also appears to increase with age. However, for hostile and benevolent sexism, the pattern is unclear. The descriptive show that sexism is strongly gender-related. Modern sexism also seems to be age-related. Hostile and benevolent sexism, on the other hand, is already at high levels across all age groups.

Table 3:Descriptive overview of the mean scores for the independent variables by age and gender

	Hostile	Benevolent	Modern
Men			
15–28	3.09	3.57	2.49
29–44	3.05	3.54	2.51
45–60	3.10	3.57	2.65
61+	3.11	3.68	2.77
Total	3.10	3.60	2.63
Women			
15–28	2.87	3.22	2.14
29–44	2.95	3.27	2.30
45–60	3.00	3.25	2.45
61+	3.01	3.47	2.63
Total	2.97	3.33	2.44

Table 4 provides a descriptive overview of the average levels of opposition for the three dependent variables: all policies, workplace, and legal. The levels of opposition for all three policy measures are higher for men than for women. The level of opposition also seems to increase with age. The descriptive results show that opposition to different kinds of gender equality policies varies by gender and age group.

Table 4: Descriptive overview of the mean scores for the dependent variable by age and gender

	All Policies	Workplace	Legal
Men			
15–28	2.35	2.11	2.59
29–44	2.43	2.18	2.69
45–60	2.48	2.26	2.71
61+	2.49	2.31	2.68
Total	2.45	2.24	2.68
Women			
15–28	2.01	1.85	2.18
29–44	2.11	1.91	2.32
45–60	2.19	2.00	2.40
61+	2.26	2.10	2.43
Total	2.17	2.00	2.36

In the appendix, the summary statistics of all variables used are presented in Table 15a.

Table 5 is a correlation table between the different forms of sexism. This makes it possible to assess the relationship between the different dimensions of sexism. Hostile sexism and modern sexism are somewhat strongly correlated with each other. Benevolent sexism is very weakly correlated with hostile sexism and with modern sexism. This does make theoretical sense. Both hostile sexism and modern sexism are negatively in tone and criticize women, while benevolent sexism has a positive and protective view of women. They are distinct concepts. Having high levels of modern sexism or hostile sexism does not mean high levels of benevolent sexism. This justifies using three different forms of sexism in the regression analysis.

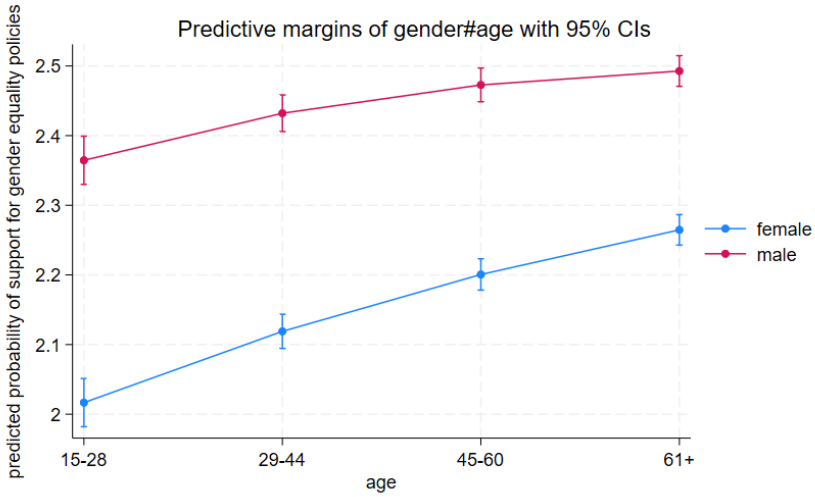
Table 5: Correlation table of the different forms of sexism

	Hostile sexism	Benevolent sexism	Modern sexism
Hostile sexism	1,00		
Benevolent sexism	0,10	1,00	
MODERN SExism	0,42	0,08	1,00

H1: Gender gap in opposition for gender equality policies

In this section, I will discuss the results of hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 states that age moderates the relationship between gender and opposition gender equality policies, such that the gap between men and women is greater for younger individuals. Let us start by clarifying that higher values indicate greater opposition to gender equality policies. The table with the regression results for H1 is located in the appendix (table 7a). We test the first hypothesis with an interaction between age and gender. In Figure 1, the effects of the interaction are made visual. The attitudes towards gender equality policies are plotted against men's and women's four different age groups. The results support the hypothesis that age moderates the relationship between gender and opposition to gender equality policies. However, it does not support the claim that younger men have higher levels of opposition. The main effect of gender has a positive and significant coefficient of (b = 0.348, p<0.00). This means that men are have higher levels of opposition than women. The main effect of age is also significant and positive. Opposition increases with age; the oldest group is the most resistant of all age groups. For the interaction effect, there is a significant negative coefficient for men aged 45-60, with a coefficient of (b= –0.0758, p<0.05), and a significant negative coefficient for men aged 61 years or older, with a coefficient of (b=–0.120, p<0.00). The interaction terms are negative, indicating that they offset the combined main effects of gender and age; for older men, the predicted opposition score is lower than expected based solely on the main effects. This suggests that the gender gap in opposition narrows in these groups compared to the gender gap among younger age groups. Both men and women have higher levels of opposition with age; older men become more similar to women of the same age group in their attitudes toward gender policy. The margins plot also shows this. The gap between men and women is the largest among the youngest group and decreases as age increases. Thus, it appears that the gender gap in opposition for gender equality policies between men and women is larger among younger men than older men.

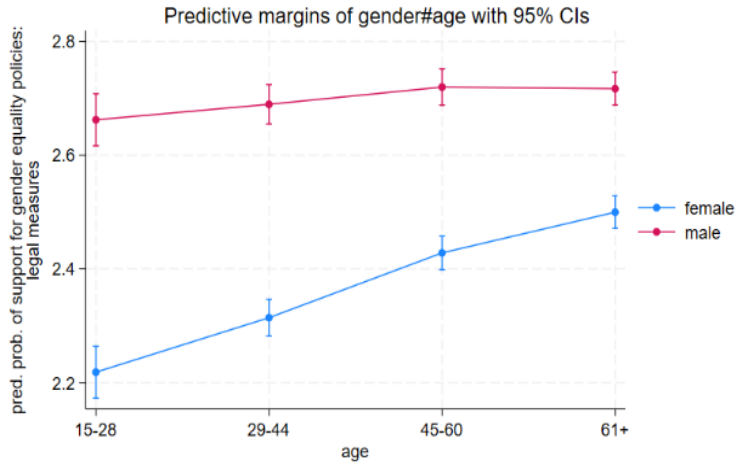
Figure 1: Plot of H1 for all policies



Note: Predicted opposition for gender equality policies by gender and age group based on the OLS regression with interaction term (gender x age). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. The plot shows predicted values with 95% confidence intervals, adjusted

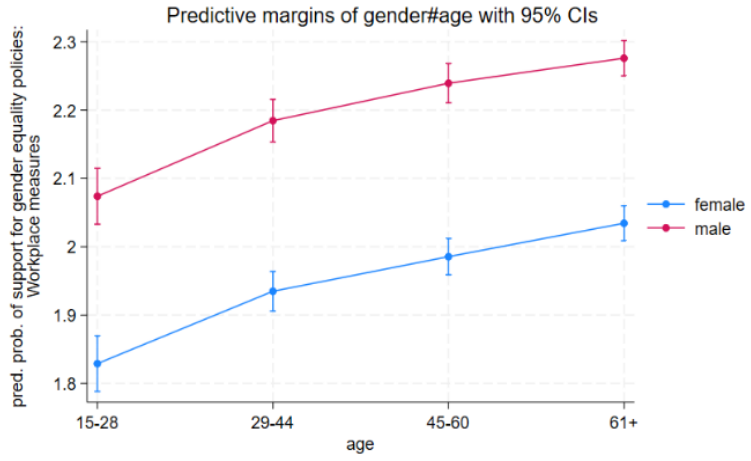
for education, income, employment, religion, race, living in a city and country fixed effects. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 7a).

Figure 2: Plot for H1 for legal measures



Note: Predicted opposition for gender equality policies for legal measures by gender and age group based on the OLS regression with interaction term (gender x age). Higher values on the y-axis indicate greater resistance. The plot shows predicted values with 95% confidence intervals, adjusted for education, income, employment, religion, race, living in a city and country fixed effects. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 7a).

Figure 3: Plot for H1 for workplace measures



Note: Predicted opposition for gender equality policies for the workplace by gender and age group based on the OLS regression with interaction term (gender x age). Higher values on the y-axis indicate greater resistance. The plot shows predicted values with 95% confidence intervals, adjusted for education, income, employment, religion, race, living in a city and country fixed effects. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 7a).

The regression table for the results, which shows the level of opposition for gender equality legal measures and workplace measures, can be found in the appendix. In Figure 2, I plotted men and women among the four age groups for legal equality policy measures. The first thing that stands out is that both men and women are more opposed to legal measures than all policies. Besides that, the gap between young men and young women is also wider. The interaction effect is larger and significant at the 10% level for all the interaction terms. For the 61+ age group, the interaction coefficient term is now ($b = 0.227$, $p<0.00$) compared to ($b=-0.120$, $p<0.00$) for all policies. The gender gap shrinks thus faster for the legal measure policies, even though they face more resistance overall. These results offer further evidence for the moderating effect of age on gender and opposition for gender equality policies. The attitudes of men and women align more as they age, particularly in opposition of legal measures.

Figure 3 presents the predicted probabilities of opposition for gender equality policies in the workplace disaggregated by gender and age. The data show that men are more resistant of these policies, and opposition declines with age. Younger respondents are the least resistant. The lowest predictive probabilities are for the 15-28 age group for both genders. In this model, the interaction term between gender and age is statistically insignificant. This indicates that age does not significantly moderate the relationship between gender and the opposition for workplace measures. While men consistently show higher levels of opposition than women for all age groups, the size of this gender gap does not change with age. Men's and women's opposition levels changes at a similar rate as they age.

This is in contrast with the findings for all policies and legal measures, where the gender gap narrows with age. This difference underscores the importance of examining various gender equality policies.

H2: Hostile sexism

Hypothesis 2 is the following: the positive effect of hostile sexism on opposition to gender equality policies is stronger, so the gap between men and women is greater for younger people. A three-way interaction model is used to test this hypothesis. It is complicated to interpret such an interaction therefore, I will first start by explaining the regression results, which are in Table 8a in the appendix. Then, using a figure, I will try to visualize the results. Higher values of the dependent variable indicate higher opposition towards gender equality policies. For hostile sexism, higher values indicate higher levels of sexism. The three-way interaction term is the following: age x gender x hostile sexism. The reference group is women in the age category 15-28. Furthermore, hostile sexism is centered; this means that the value of zero represents the mean. In the figures, where the results are visualized, the x-axis shows again the original hostile sexism scores from 1 to 5.

The main effect of hostile sexism on the opposition to gender equality policies is positively significant ($b = 0.121$, $p < 0.00$). This means that if all other variables are being held constant, an increase in hostile sexism with respect to the average is associated with an increase in opposition towards gender equality policies. This effect applies specifically to the reference group.

The variable gender has a positive and significant effect ($b= 0.328$, $p<0.00$). At an average level of hostile sexism, men and women differ significantly in their opposition to gender equality policies.

The first two-way interaction is gender x hostile sexism and it shows positive and significant results ($b = 0.073$, $p<0.05$). This interaction suggests that the effect of hostile sexism on the opposition to gender equality policies is stronger for men than for women. In other words, if men report higher levels of hostile sexism, their opposition towards gender equality policies increases stronger in comparison to women. Hostile sexism is, thus, for the whole population, a good predictor for opposition to gender equality policies, but it is an even stronger predictor for men.

The effect of age is positive and significant for all age groups. It appears that older age groups, on average, show more opposition towards gender equality policies in comparison to youngsters aged 15-28, independent of hostile sexism or other control variables.

The two-way interaction between hostile sexism and age is insignificant. This suggests that the effect of hostile sexism on gender equality policies is the same across ages. It cannot be said with certainty that age changes the strength of the effect of hostile sexism.

Gender x age shows only a significant negative effect for male age 61 or above ($b = 0.111$, $p<0.00$). If we don't take into account hostile sexism, then it appears that there is a larger gap between men and women in the age group 61+ than in the age group 15-28.

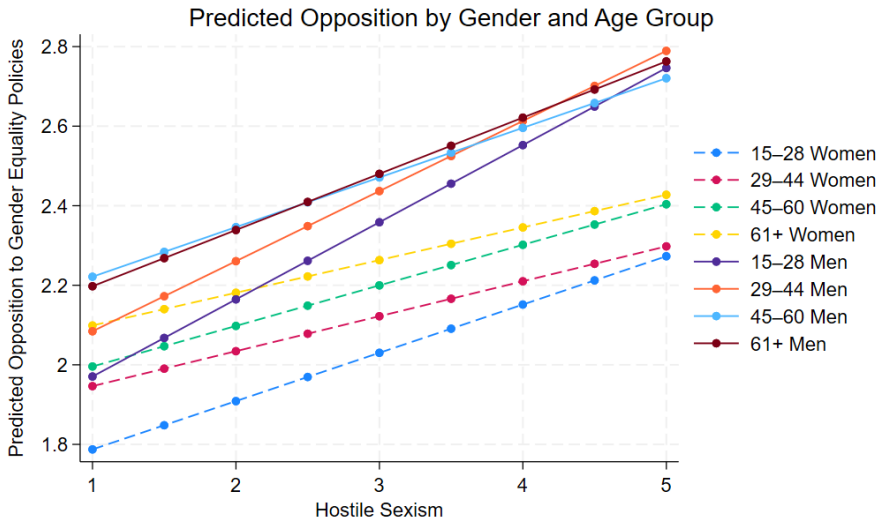
Now, I will look into the three-way interaction effect. To repeat, the three-way interaction is the following: gender x age x hostile sexism. All of the three-way interaction terms are insignificant. This suggests that the effect of hostile sexism on the opposition to gender equality policies does not systematically vary with age and gender. There is no proof that the relationship

between hostile sexism and opposition to gender equality policies is stronger for younger men than for other groups. My hypothesis is therefore not supported.

In figure 4 I visualized the results to make my results less abstract. First, the lines go upward, meaning that more sexism means more opposition. Secondly, men show more opposition at average levels of hostile sexism: the solid lines that belong to males are all higher than the dashed lines that belong to women. The effects of the variable hostile sexism and gender are therefore, both visible. There is a clear difference in the steepness of the lines between men and women, indicating that the effect of hostile sexism is stronger for men. This shows the interaction term male x hostile sexism. Visually, the steepest increase appears among younger men (especially those aged 15–28 and 29–44), though differences in slope between age groups remain subtle and should be interpreted with caution, given the non-significant interaction between hostile sexism and age. For the three-way interaction effect, the graph does seem to show a gap between man and women that widens for the younger age groups (15-28 & 29-44) as the levels for hostile sexism increase.

Although the visualization of expected opposition to gender equality policies shows that the gap between men and women at higher levels of hostile sexism appears to widen among younger age groups, the regression model shows no significant three-way interaction between hostile sexism, gender and age ($p>0.05$). This means that the observed visual patterns cannot be confirmed with certainty. In sum, while hostile sexism is a strong and consistent predictor of opposition to gender equality policies across the population, there is no evidence that this effect is systematically stronger among younger men. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is not supported.

Figure 4: Plot for H2 for all policies



Note: Predicted opposition to gender equality measures by level of hostile sexism, plotted by age and gender. The dashed lines correspond to women. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (hostile sexism x age x gender). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. Higher values on the x-axis indicate higher levels of sexism. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 8a). The predicted

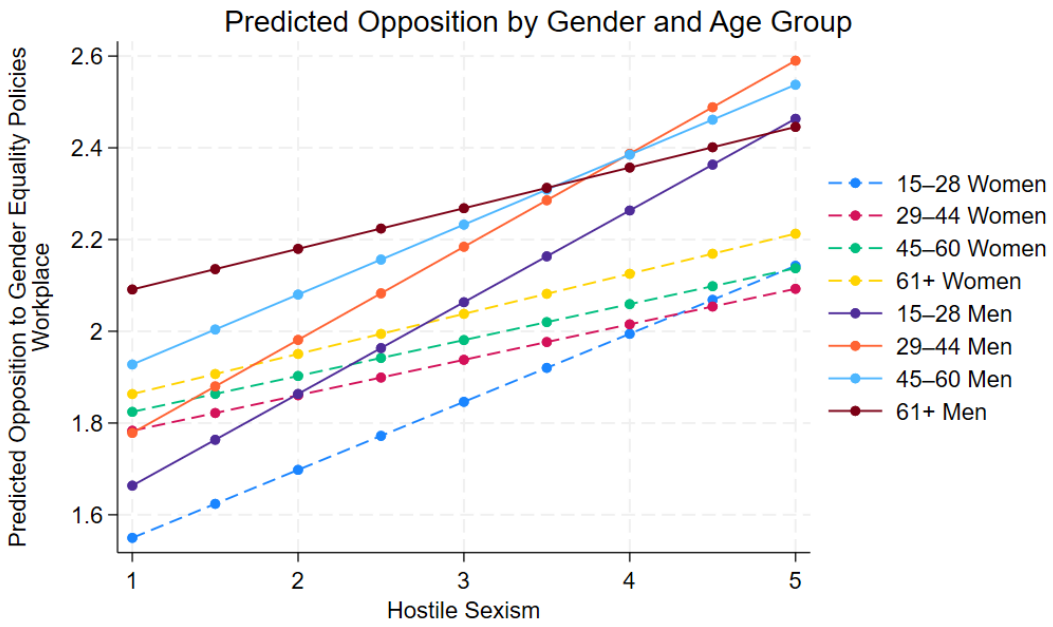
values in the margins plot are based on average levels of the control variables, while the regression coefficients reflect effects relative to the reference group. Therefore, the values from the margins plot may not directly match manual calculations based on the regression output.

In Table 8a in the appendix and Figure 5, I test hypothesis 2 again, but now for workplace measures. First, it appears that the association between hostile sexism and opposition is stronger when looking specifically at workplace gender equality measures (b=0.148, p<0.00) compared to all policy types combined (b = 0.121, p < 0.00). It suggests that individuals higher in hostile sexism may show relatively stronger resistance to workplace reforms promoting gender equality. However, the estimates come from two separate models, a statistical comparison can therefore not be made. The coefficient for male is smaller for workplace measures (b= 0.217, p<0.00) than for all policies (b= 0.328, p<0.00). This implies that while men are in both case more opposed, the difference is less pronounced when the policy is about workplace reforms. Another interesting difference is that in the model focusing on workplace measures the two-way interaction term male x hostile sexism is not statistically significant. This suggest that for workplace gender equality measures hostile sexism does not predict opposition more strongly for men than for women. On the other hand, the interaction age x hostile sexism is statistically significant for workplace measures in contrast to the model including all policies. It implies that the effect of hostile sexism on the opposition of workplace gender equality measures differs per age group. The three-way interaction term is insignificant for workplace policy measures.

Comparing the two graphs of workplace- and all policies some differences emerge. The line representing men aged 61 and older is a lot less steep compared to the general policy figure. It appears to run almost parallel to the women's lines, suggesting that hostile sexism has a relatively smaller effect on opposition to workplace equality policies among older men. In contrast, in the general policy figure, the slope for older men aligns more closely with the younger male age groups, indicating a more consistent effect of hostile sexism across ages. Another difference is that for women the line aged 15-28 rises a lot sharper in comparison to older women and it seems to even run parallel to the lines of male age groups. This suggests that hostile sexism has a large impact on young girls in the workplace context. Finally, the gender gap appears to widen with increasing levels of hostile sexism among the youngest age group (15–28), particularly in the workplace figure, while for older groups the gap between men and women remains relatively stable.

These visual patterns are in line with Hypothesis 2, which expected that the positive effect of hostile sexism on opposition to gender equality policies is stronger among younger individuals. Expressing itself in a gender gap in the younger age groups. However, it should be noted that the three-way interaction between hostile sexism, gender and age was not statistically significant. Therefore, the visual interpretation should be interpreted with caution and not taken as evidence.

Figure 5: Plot for H2 for workplace measures



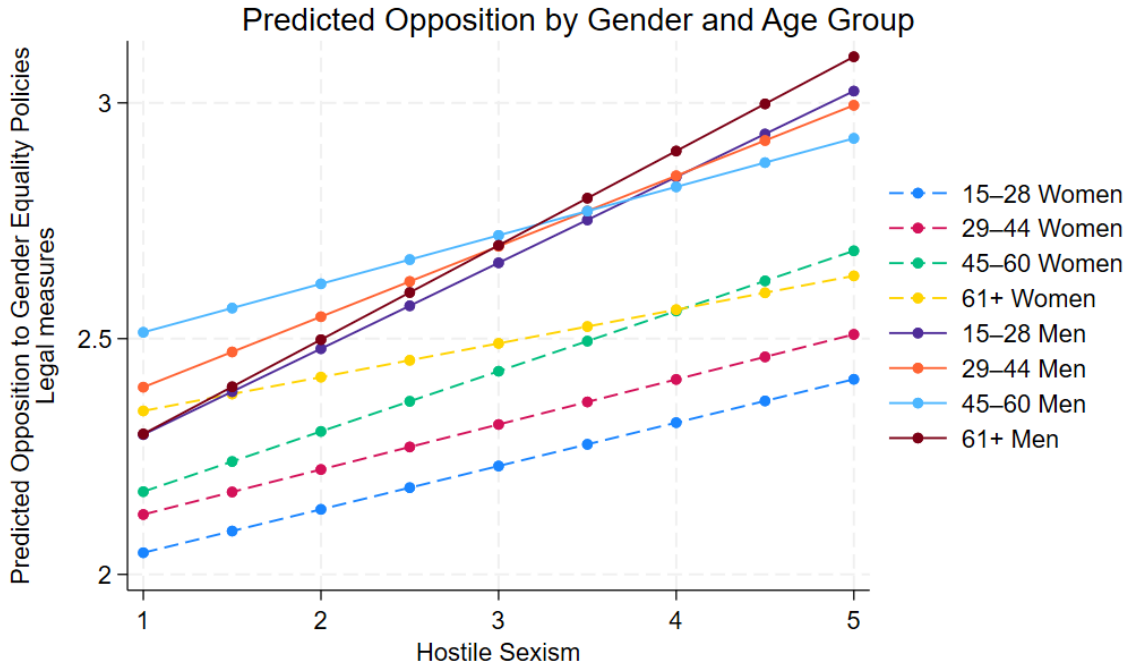
Note: Predicted opposition to gender equality policies for legal measures by level of hostile sexism, plotted by age and gender. The dashed lines correspond to women. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (hostile sexism x age x gender). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. Higher values on the x-axis indicate higher levels of sexism. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 8a). The predicted values in the margins plot are based on average levels of the control variables, while the regression coefficients reflect effects relative to the reference group. Therefore, the values from the margins plot may not directly match manual calculations based on the regression output.

In Table 8a in the appendix and Figure 6, I test Hypothesis 2 once more, this time focusing on legal gender equality measures. Interestingly, the association between hostile sexism and opposition appears weaker for legal measures ($b = 0.092$, $p < 0.00$) than for all policy types combined ($b = 0.121$, $p < 0.00$) and workplace measures ($b = 0.148$, $p < 0.00$). This suggests that

individuals high in hostile sexism may be somewhat less resistant to legal reforms than to workplace-related gender equality initiatives. As the estimates come from separate models, no formal statistical comparison can be made. By contrast, the coefficient for males is higher in the legal measures model (b = 0.431, p < 0.00) compared to both the all policies model (b = 0.328, p < 0.00) and the workplace model (b = 0.217, p < 0.00). This suggests that the gender gap in opposition is particularly pronounced when considering legal reforms. The two-way interaction terms in the legal measures model show a similar strength and pattern of significance as in the all policies model. This suggests that the way hostile sexism interacts with gender and age is consistent mainly across both general and legal gender equality measures, even though the overall levels of opposition and main effects differ somewhat. While one of the three-way interaction terms reached statistical significance, this finding should be interpreted with caution, as the overall pattern in the regression results does not support the theoretically expected interaction effect between hostile sexism, gender, and age.

In figure 6, a visualization of the regression results for legal measures is plotted. The gender gap for both older people and younger seems to widen with an increase in hostile sexism levels. The gap appears to be wider for the 15-28 age group. However, the three-way interaction results were statistically insignificant; therefore, the visual interpretation should be viewed with caution.

Figure 6: Plot for H2 for legal measures



Note: Predicted opposition to gender equality policies for workplace measures by level of hostile sexism, plotted by age and gender. The dashed lines correspond to women. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (hostile sexism x age x gender). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. Higher values on the x-axis indicate higher levels of sexism. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 8a). The predicted values in the margins plot are based on average levels of the control

variables, while the regression coefficients reflect effects relative to the reference group. Therefore, the values from the margins plot may not directly match manual calculations based on the regression output.

H3: Benevolent sexism

In this section, hypothesis 3 about benevolent sexism will be tested. Hypothesis 3 is the following: the positive effect of benevolent sexism on opposition to gender equality policies is stronger so the gap between men and women is greater for younger people. A three-way interaction model is used to test this hypothesis. The three-way interaction term is as follows: age × gender × benevolent sexism. I will begin by explaining the regression results, which are presented in Table 4a of the appendix. Then, using a figure, I will try to visualize the results. Higher values of the dependent variable indicate higher opposition towards gender equality policies. For benevolent sexism, higher values indicate higher levels of sexism. The reference group consists of women in the 15-28 age category. Furthermore, benevolent sexism is centered; this means that the value of zero represents the mean. In the figures, where the results are visualized, the x-axis again shows the original benevolent sexism scores, ranging from 1 to 5.

The main effect of benevolent sexism on the opposition of gender equality policies is statistically insignificant. This means that for the reference group of women aged 15-28 higher levels of benevolent sexism are not statistically associated with an increase in opposition if all other variables are held constant. When performing additional statistical analysis on subsets of the dataset, a similar non-significant effect is observed for men in the 15-28 age group. However, for men and women above the age of 28, the results do become statistically significant with small negative coefficients. This indicates that, for both men and women above the age of 28, higher levels of benevolent sexism are associated with slightly lower levels of opposition to gender equality policies.

Although separate regressions for different genders and age groups show significant effects of benevolent sexism, the two-way interaction terms, benevolent sexism × male and benevolent sexism × age, are statistically insignificant in the whole model. This suggests that the effect of benevolent sexism on opposition to gender equality policies does not differ significantly between men and women or across age groups compared to the reference category. Hence, while benevolent sexism may influence opposition within certain groups, there is no strong evidence that the strength or direction of this effect varies by age or gender.

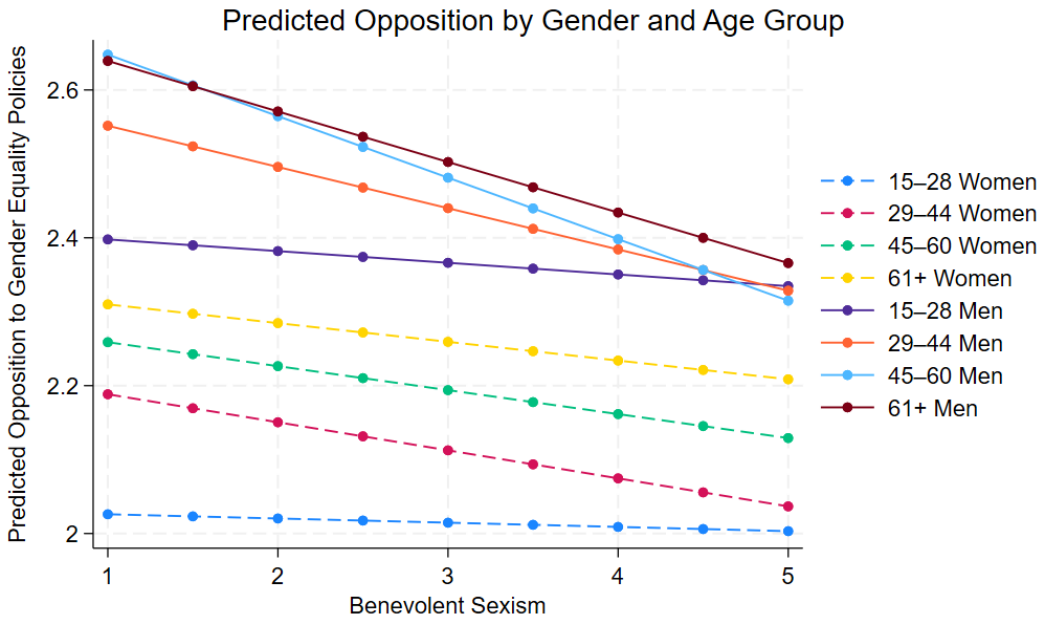
All the three-way interaction terms of benevolent sexism x age x gender are statistically insignificant. It tests if the difference in the effect between men and women, the gap, varies by

younger people versus older people. The positive and statistically significant coefficient for gender (b= 0.352, p<0.00) indicates that men show higher levels of opposition to gender equality policies overall. However, this gender gap in overall opposition between younger and older individuals does not close or widen due to benevolent sexism.

Figure 7 visualizes the predicted opposition to gender equality policies by gender and age group across different levels of benevolent sexism. The first thing to notice is that men across all age groups consistently show higher levels of opposition to gender equality policies. This reflects the significant main effect of gender found in the regression analysis. Second, all the lines have a downward slope. This suggests that higher levels of benevolent sexism are associated with lower opposition to gender equality policies, particularly for the older age groups. The line for age groups 15-28 for men and women is almost horizontal, suggesting that benevolent sexism has limited influence in these age groups. As a result, the gender gap barely closes among the youngest age group with an increase of benevolent sexism. For the oldest age group, the gap does seem to narrow slightly. All these suggestions, based on the figure, should be interpreted with caution, as the interaction results are all statistically insignificant. The visual trends are not strong enough to be confirmed statistically.

In conclusion, hypothesis 3 is not supported by the results. The three-way interaction between benevolent sexism, gender, and age is statistically insignificant, indicating that the effect of benevolent sexism on opposition to gender equality policies does not vary y across gender and age. The visual trend suggests that the gender gap in opposition may narrow slightly for the oldest age group. This is a direction that is opposite to what was hypothesized.

Figure 7: Plot for H3 for all policies

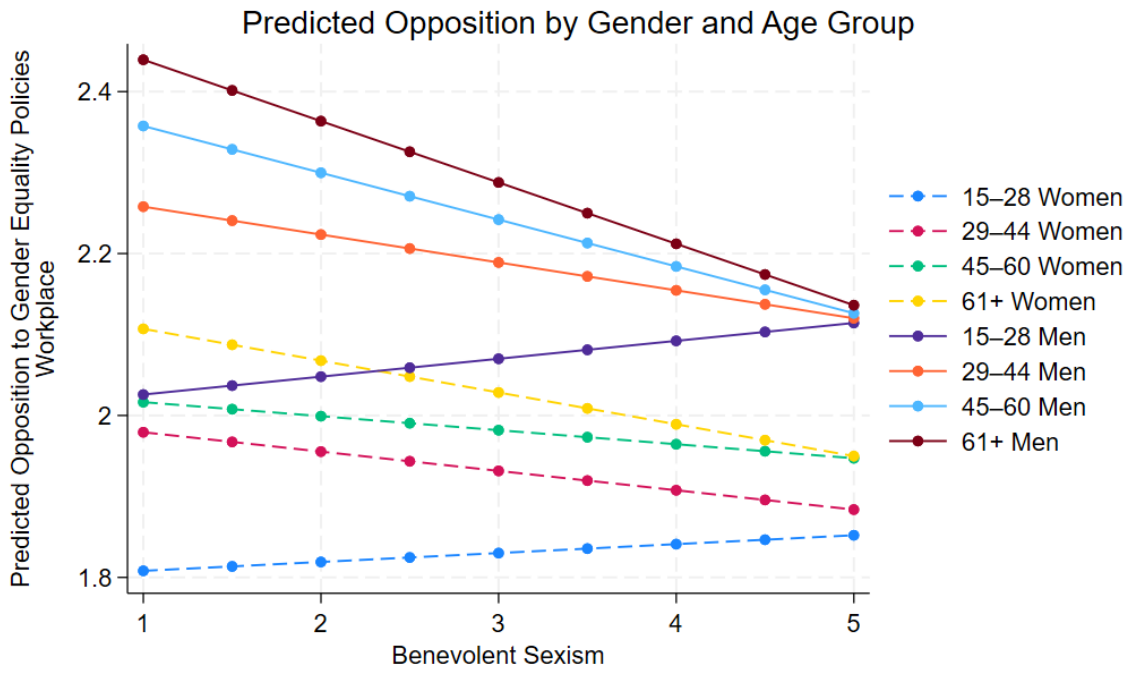


Note: Predicted opposition to gender equality policies by level of benevolent sexism, plotted by age and gender. The dashed lines correspond to women. Results are based on an OLS

regression with a three-way interaction term (benevolent sexism x age x gender). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. Higher values on the x-axis indicate higher levels of sexism. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 4a). The predicted values in the margins plot are based on average levels of the control variables, while the regression coefficients reflect effects relative to the reference group. Therefore, the values from the margins plot may not directly match manual calculations based on the regression output.

In this section, I will conduct the same analysis as before, but instead of combining all gender equality policies, I will focus solely on workplace policies. In Table 4a, the regression results are presented, and in Figure 8, the predicted values are visualized. What stands out is that benevolent sexism becomes a positive but still insignificant coefficient for women aged 15-28 and men aged 15-28. This suggests that, for younger individuals, higher levels of benevolent sexism may be associated with slightly higher opposition to workplace-related measures; the figure also reflects this. The lines for men and women aged 15-28 are upwards-sloping, while all the other age groups have downwards-sloping lines. The remaining results align with the earlier findings based on all policies. Overall, the results do not support the hypothesis, both statistical and visual. The three-way interaction effect is statistically insignificant, indicating that there is no evidence to suggest that the effect of benevolent sexism differs meaningfully across gender and age groups in the context of workplace measures.

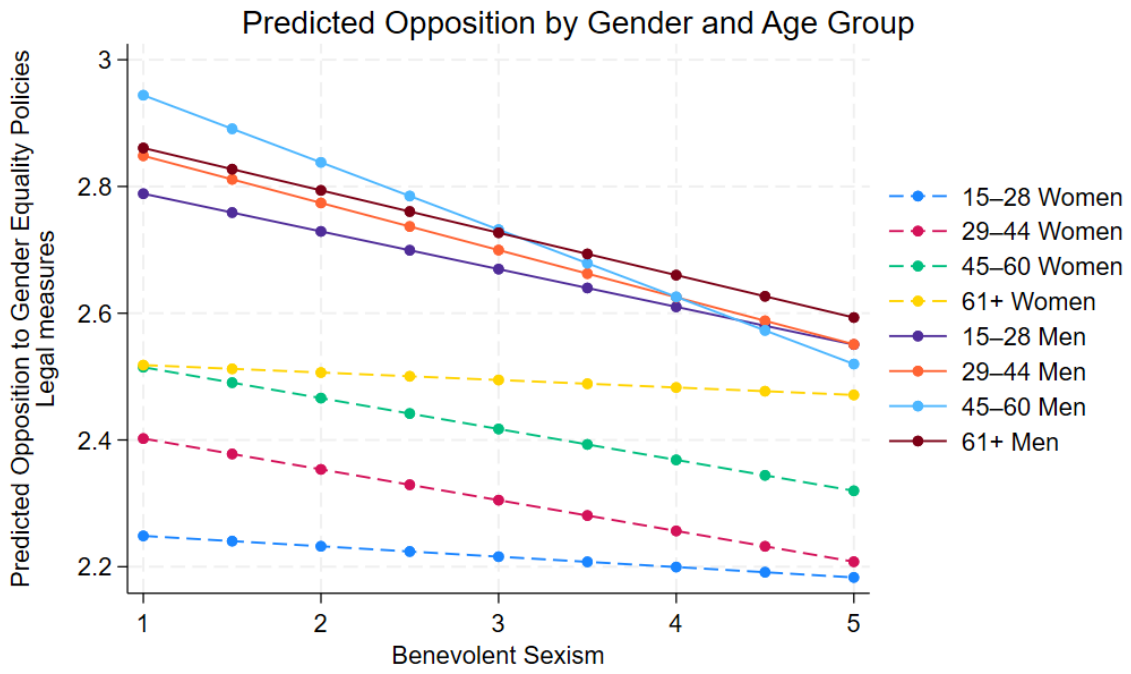
Figure 8: Plot for H3 for workplace measures



Note: Predicted opposition to gender equality policies for workplace measures by level of benevolent sexism, plotted by age and gender. The dashed lines correspond to women. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (benevolent sexism x age x gender). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. Higher values on the x-axis indicate higher levels of sexism. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 8a). The predicted values in the margins plot are based on average levels of the control variables, while the regression coefficients reflect effects relative to the reference group. Therefore, the values from the margins plot may not directly match manual calculations based on the regression output.

In the third model, the focus shifts to legal measures promoting gender equality. The regression results are presented in Table 4a in the appendix. Figure 9 shows a visual representation of the predicted values. Overall, the statistical results look very similar to the model, including all policy types for gender equality. The same goes for the figures. The figures reveal a similar pattern, with opposition to gender equality policies generally decreasing as benevolent sexism increases. A notable visual difference is that the line for the male age group 15-28 appears to be steeper for the legal measures model than for the all policies model. This suggests a somewhat greater decrease in opposition as benevolent sexism increases, possibly narrowing the gender gap in this age group. However, this pattern is not statistically significant and should be interpreted with caution. In summary, the results for legal measures do not support Hypothesis 3, both statistically and visually.

Figure 9: Plot for H3 for legal measures



Note: Predicted opposition to gender equality policies for legal measures by level of benevolent sexism, plotted by age and gender. The dashed lines correspond to women. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (benevolent sexism x age x gender). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. Higher values on the x-axis indicate higher levels of sexism. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 8a). The predicted values in the margins plot are based on average levels of the control variables, while the regression coefficients reflect effects relative to the reference group. Therefore, the values from the margins plot may not directly match manual calculations based on the regression output.

H4: Modern sexism

In this section the 4th hypothesis, the positive effect of modern sexism on opposition for gender equality policies is stronger, so that the gap between men and women is greater for younger people, will be tested using a three-way interaction. The three-way interaction is the following: modern sexism x age x gender. The regression results will be explained first; they are presented in table 5a. Figure 10 shown below is a visual representation of the predicted values of the regression. As before, the dependent variable is coded in such a way that higher values indicate higher opposition towards gender equality policies. For modern sexism, higher values indicate higher levels of sexism. The reference group is women in the age category 15-28. Furthermore,

modern sexism is centered; this means that the value of zero represents the mean. In the figures, where the results are visualized the x-axis shows again the original modern sexism scores from 1 to 5.

The first model that will be discussed looks at all kinds of gender equality policies. I will start with the main effect of modern sexism on the opposition of gender equality policies. Modern sexism has a statistically significant and a positive effect ($b = 0.158$, $p<0.00$). This means that if all other variables are held constant, an increase in modern sexism with respect to the average can be associated with an increase in the opposition towards gender equality policies. This effect applies specifically to the reference group.

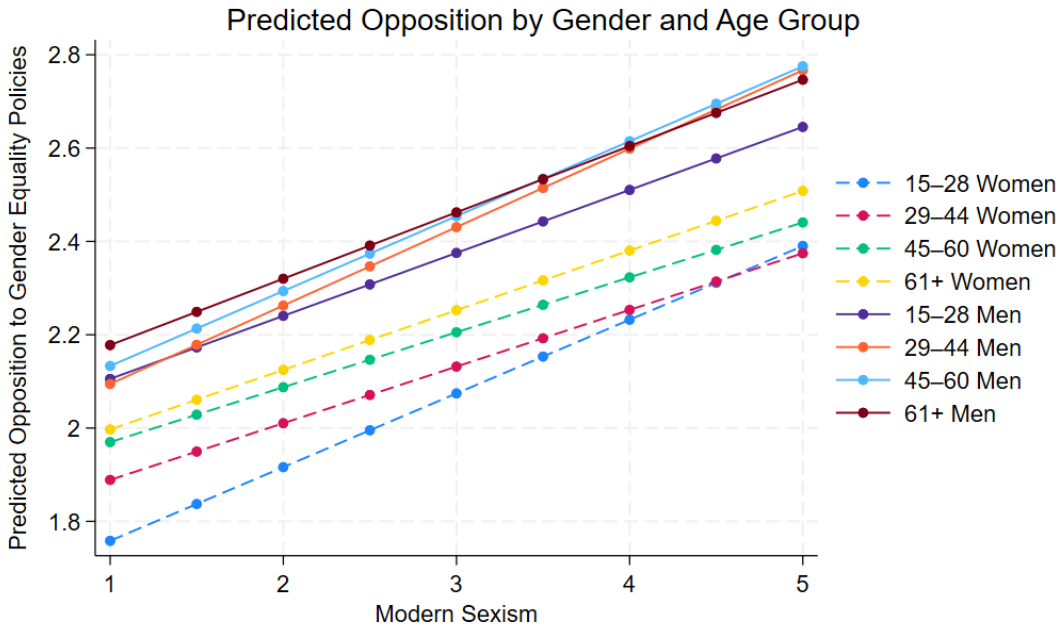
The two-way interaction term male x modern sexism is statistically insignificant. This suggests that the effect of modern sexism on opposition to gender equality policies does not differ significantly between men and women. Similarly, the two-way interaction between modern sexism and age is also insignificant for all age groups, implying that the effect of modern sexism does not vary meaningfully across age groups when considered independently. These effects can be visually confirmed in figure 10. Men and older age groups begin with higher baseline oppositions. However, the slopes of the lines, the effect of modern sexism, appear relatively parallel across gender and age categories.

The three-way interaction effect of modern sexism x age x gender has two small significant terms, the term male aged 29-44 ($b= 0.070$, $p<0.10$) and the term male aged 45-60 ($b=0.066$, $p<0.10$). This suggests that within these two specific age groups men are slightly more effected by modern sexism then women in the same age group. It appears that the gender gap in how modern sexism influences opposition varies slightly across the age groups 29-44 and 45-60. The result is interesting as it is not consistent with the hypothesis, which predicted a stronger effect among younger individuals, with a larger gender gap in opposition to younger age groups. Instead, it appears that middle-aged men are more strongly influenced by modern sexism in their levels of opposition.

Although the regression results indicate marginally significant three-way interaction effects for men aged 29–44 and 45–60, these patterns are not clearly visible in figure 10. The lines representing different gender and age groups run largely parallel to one another, and the differences in slope seem small.

In sum, the regression results and the visual representation are not in line with my hypothesis. The three-way interaction terms do show some significant results but not for the age groups I was expecting.

Figure 10: Plot for H4 for all policies



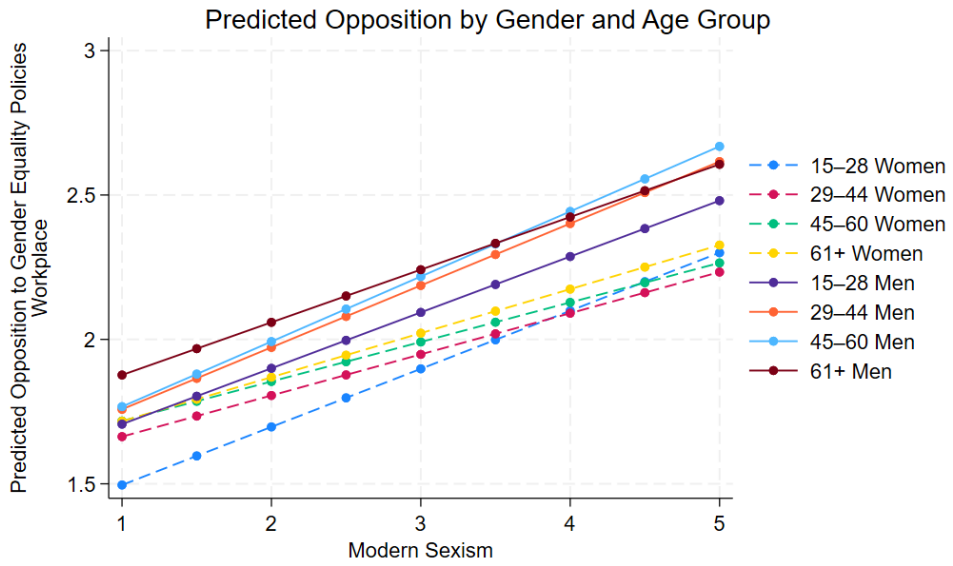
Note: Predicted opposition to gender equality policies by level of modern sexism, plotted by age and gender. The dashed lines correspond to women. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (modern sexism x age x gender). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. Higher values on the x-axis indicate higher levels of sexism. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 5a). The predicted values in the margins plot are based on average levels of the control variables, while the regression coefficients reflect effects relative to the reference group. Therefore, the values from the margins plot may not directly match manual calculations based on the regression output.

In this section, the focus will be on gender equality policies that specifically address the workplace. The regression results are in table 5a and in figure 11 is a visual representation of the regression results. There are some differences compared to the model with all-gender equality policies. First, the association of modern sexism with the opposition to gender equality policies appears stronger for workplace measures (b=0.201, p<0.00) than for all kinds of policy measures (b= 0.158, p<0.00). Second, the two-way interaction term, modern sexism × age, is statistically significant for workplace measures. This suggests that the effect of modern sexism on the opposition to workplace measures differs between age groups, averaged over both genders. The three-way interaction of modern sexism x age x gender is again statistically significant for age groups 29-44 (b = 0.078, p<0.10) and 45-60 (b= 0.096, p<0.05). It thus appears that the effect of modern sexism on the opposition of workplace measures focused on gender equality varies slightly across the age groups 29-44 and 45-60. A result that does not support the hypothesis.

When comparing the figure for workplace policies to the figure for all gender equality policies, the slopes appear steeper across all groups, indicating a stronger association between modern sexism and opposition to workplace-related measures. The line for age group 15-28 seems to have a different slope from the other age groups, especially for women. These differences align

with the regression results, which revealed a larger main effect and statistical significance for the two-way interaction effect of modern sexism by age.

Figure 11: Plot for H4 for workplace measures

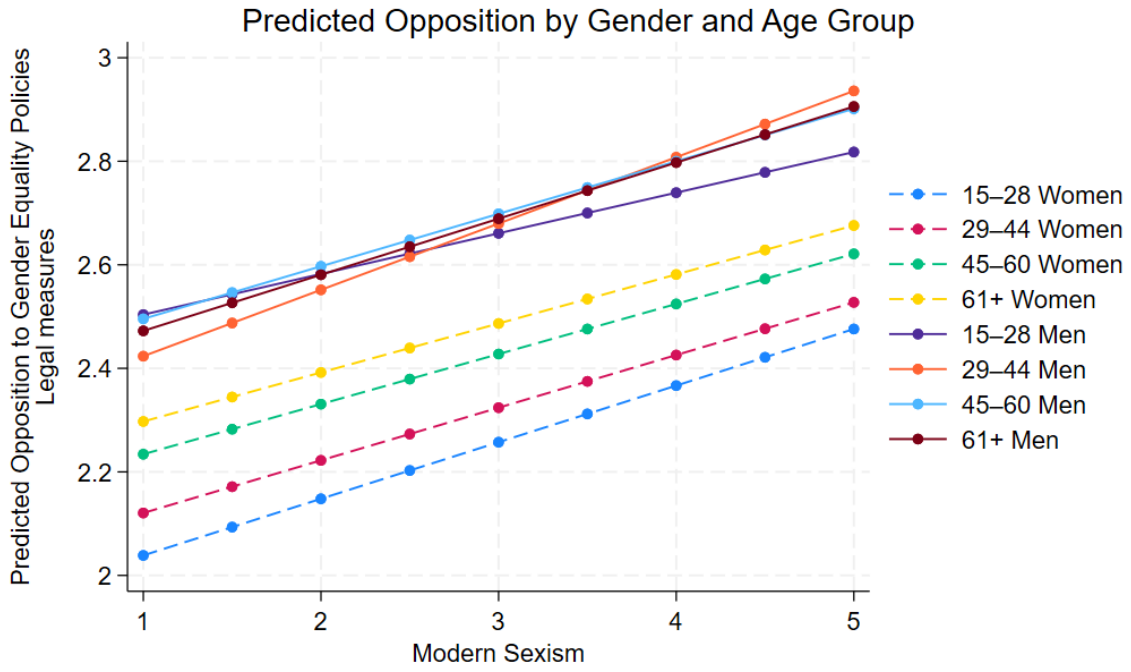


Note: Predicted opposition to gender equality policies for workplace measures by level of modern sexism, plotted by age and gender. The dashed lines correspond to women. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (modern sexism x age x gender). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. Higher values on the x-axis indicate higher levels of sexism. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 5a). The predicted values in the margins plot are based on average levels of the control variables, while the regression coefficients reflect effects relative to the reference group. Therefore, the values from the margins plot may not directly match manual calculations based on the regression output.

The following model focuses on gender policies that specifically address legal measures. In Table 5a in the appendix are the regression results, and in Figure 12, a visual representation in the form of a margins plot is presented. The main effect of modern sexism on the opposition of gender equality policies focused on legal measures is that the positive statistically significant effect (b= 0.109, p<0.00) is smaller in magnitude compared to the models concentrated on workplace measures (b = 0.201) or all policy types combined (b = 0.158). This suggests that modern sexism plays a less prominent role in shaping opposition to legal gender equality. Furthermore, the three-way interaction term is statistically insignificant for all age groups. Suggesting that the relationship between modern sexism and opposition to legal gender policies does not vary by age and gender. Overall, this model provides no support for Hypothesis 4. The relatively weak association between modern sexism and opposition to legal measures, combined with the absence of significant interaction effects, suggests that this

specific policy domain is less influenced by age- or gender-specific responses to modern sexist attitudes.

Figure 12: Plot for H4 for legal measures



Note: Predicted opposition to gender equality policies for legal measures by level of modern sexism, plotted by age and gender. The dashed lines correspond to women. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (modern sexism x age x gender). Higher values on the y-axis indicate higher levels of opposition. Higher values on the x-axis indicate higher levels of sexism. The corresponding regression table is in the appendix (table 5a). The predicted values in the margins plot are based on average levels of the control variables, while the regression coefficients reflect effects relative to the reference group. Therefore, the values from the margins plot may not directly match manual calculations based on the regression output.

Robustness

As part of a robustness check, we estimated the same models using ordinal logistic regression. The dataset comprises four questions related to gender equality policies, which were combined to construct a dependent policy variable. Additionally, I classified these questions into two categories: legal measures and workplace measures. I calculated the average value for each respondent to create the new variables. For respondents who did not answer all four questions, the statistical program adjusted the calculations to divide the combined answers by the appropriate number of responses. Each of the four questions was rated on a 1-5 scale. They were coded as strongly in favor (1), somewhat in favor (2), neither in favor nor against (3), somewhat against (4), and strongly against (5). This means that for the created dependent variable, there are now also values of, for example, 2.5 or 3.75. Therefore, the dependent variable created is no longer strictly ordinal but is now treated as continuous, making linear regression the appropriate analysis method. Ordinal logistic regression will be performed on all four questions separately to see if this has influenced the results. It will enable us to assess whether the findings also hold at the question level and whether they depend on averaging. The only difficulty is that ordinal logistic regression is hard to compare to linear regression. In ordinal logistic regression, the model predicts the probability of each possible outcome (*Marginal Analysis With Multiple Outcomes | Stata 14*, n.d.). This gives many graphs; therefore, they can be found in the appendix in figures 1 to 32. Only strongly in favor (1) and strongly against (5) will be shown, as these are easier to compare with the ordinary least squares regression.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that age moderates the relationship between gender and opposition gender equality policies, such that the gap between men and women is greater for younger individuals. The linear regression results supported this finding and revealed that, for all policies combined, the gender gap in opposition to gender equality policies is larger among younger men than among older men. For legal measures, a stronger effect was found for the interaction term (gender × age). For workplace policies, however, it was found that the size of the gender gap remains unchanged with age. The ordinal logistic regression results were largely consistent with those from the linear model. For the policies, dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men and requiring both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, a significant interaction effect was found. This is also visible in the graphs, which are displayed in the appendix in table 6a. The gender gap in the predicted probability of being strongly against these policies narrows by age. The same is true for the gender gap of the predicted probability of being strongly in favor; this also closes with age. When examining the policies of firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace and requiring businesses to pay a fine when they pay men more than women for the same work, the two-way interaction term (gender x age) is insignificant. The plots do not show convergence between male and female respondents across age groups. Overall, the ordinal regression confirms the pattern found in the linear models: age moderates the gender gap in opposition to some policies, particularly legal measures, but is not uniformly distributed across domains.

Now we will examine Hypothesis 2, which pertains to hostile sexism. The regression results are presented in table 7a figures 9a to 16a show the visual results. The general trend of the ordinal logistic regression is that as hostile sexism increases, the probability of strongly opposing the gender equality policy decreases/and the probability of being strongly against the gender equality policy increases. This is in line with the linear regression of hypothesis 2, which states that higher hostile sexism is associated with an increase in opposition towards gender equality policies. There is one exception: it does not apply to the policy, which requires both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. This policy has insignificant results for the effect of hostile sexism. Furthermore, all the interaction terms were insignificant in the ordinal logistic regression. In the graphs, there is a visual pattern of a gap between men and women as the levels of hostile sexism increase, but it is tough to see from the graphs if these gaps are wider for the younger age groups.

Now, I will examine Hypothesis 3 regarding benevolent sexism. The regression results are presented in table 8a figures 17a to 24a show the visual results. The effect of benevolent sexism on all four policies is insignificant. The ordinal logistic visual plots show that for three out of the four policies, as benevolent sexism increases, the probability of strongly supporting the gender equality policies increases/and the probability of being strongly against gender equality policies decreases. This is the same result as for the linear regression, which was not in line with the hypothesis. In the hypothesis, the expectation was that benevolent sexism would have a positive effect on the opposition to gender equality policies. The policy of making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same is an exception. For females, the lines run almost linearly. For men, the line for the age group 15-28 goes in the opposite direction as the other age groups and is thus in line with the hypothesis. This is also in line with the findings for workplace policies in the linear regression for males in the 15-28 age group. The three-way interaction term is significant for the age groups 45-60 and 61+ in the ordinal logistic regression for the pay-a-fine policy. Furthermore, the lines of the policy regarding the number of seats in parliament and firing employees who make insulting comments seem to run parallel to each other, which means that there is no difference in the effect of benevolent sexism between men and women or different age groups. The plot for the policy requires both parents to take equal periods of paid leave, and it shows a horizontal line for women in the age group 61 and above. The plots for the linear regression do show differences in slopes between the lines. In summary, the ordinal logistic regression confirms that the expected negative effect of benevolent sexism is absent. Only one policy is showing partial alignment with the hypothesis.

For hypothesis 4, an ordinal logistic regression has been performed. The results can be found in the appendix in table 9a and figures 25a to 32a. Modern sexism has a significant effect ($p < .001$), and the three-way interaction term (modern sexism × age × gender) has marginally significant effects ($p < 0.10$) on three of the four policies. It does not significantly affect the policy: require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. The graphs show consistently that for all policies, if modern sexism increases, the probability of being strongly in favor of the gender equality policy decreases/and the probability of being

strongly against the gender equality policy increases. This is in line with the linear regression that said the effect of modern sexism on the opposition for gender equality policies is positive and significant. It is challenging to visually detect the influence of modern sexism, which varies by age and gender. For all plots, the lines seem to run remarkably parallel. As with the linear regression, these results suggest that modern sexism predicts lower support for gender equality, but the expected moderation by gender and age is not consistently supported.
In sum, the ordinal logistic regression analysis mostly confirms the findings from the linear regression models.

Further robustness checks have been performed using alternative measures and specifications and then repeating the main models. First, I replicate Figure 1 (which belongs to hypothesis 1) by using a continuous measure for age to check for the sensitivity of the age categories. For hostile sexism, two questions were combined into one; therefore, the same regression was performed, but for each question separately. The plots are located in the appendix. In both cases, the results correspond with the main findings.

Discussion

The empirical findings support the hypothesis that age moderates the relationship between gender and oppostion to gender equality policies. Men show significantly greater opposition than women across all policy domains. Importantly, the interaction terms in the models for all policies and legal measures are negative and statistically significant, particularly for the 45-60 and 61 or above groups. This indicates that the gender gap in opposition is larger among younger respondents, which aligns with the hypothesis. In other words, younger men are signficantly more opposed to gender equality policies compared to younger women, wherea this gender gap narrows among older individuals. However, for workplace-related policies, the interaction effects are not statistically significant, suggesting that age does not moderate the gender gap in this specific domain. Hence hypothesis 1 can be partly confirmed. The expectation was that younger men experience higher levels of perceived intergroup competition and therefore would show greater resistance. This does seem to be the case for all policies and legal measures, but not for workplace measures. It might be the case that workplace measures are perceived as more normal and rational, such that it appears more justified and less threatening to younger men's perceived status. But this is only guessing and should be looked into with future research.

The statistical evidence for the strength of the positive effect of hostile sexism on the opposition for gender equality policies, so that the gap between men and women is greater for younger men is minimal. Although the visual patterns for hostile sexism do seem to show that the gap between men and women at higher levels of hostile sexism seem to widen among younger age groups, the regression model shows no significant three-way interaction effect for gender, age and hostile sexism. This results has been found for all three models: all policies, legal measures and workplace measures. Hypothesis 2 is therefore not supported.

For benevolent sexism, the results of the hypothesized interaction between benevolent sexism, gender, and age were again not statistically significant. The graphs for general and legal policy measures showed a negative effect of benevolent sexism on the opposition of gender equality policies. Only for workplace measures did benevolent sexism have a positive effect for men and women in the age group 15-28 on the opposition for these gender equality policies. It is, however, not possible to statistically or visually say if there is a larger gender gap for the younger age group in comparison with the older age group. Benevolent sexism shows the complete opposite of what was expected in the theory. Hypothesis 3 is not supported by any of the three models. I theorized that benevolent sexism would have a positive effect on the opposition to gender equality policies. I proposed that this would be because of a perceived symbolic threat to traditional gender roles. My results only show in the workplace domain a slight positive effect of benevolent sexism on opposition among younger respondents, but not statistically robust. For the other domains, it appears that benevolent sexism does not align with opposition to certain forms of gender equality policies. It is hard to rhyme this with the

classical meaning of benevolent sexism, in which women are perceived as weaker and more vulnerable and therefore need male protection. This kind of belief supports traditional and complementary gender roles, gender equality policies challenge these roles. One possible interpretation I would propose is that benevolent sexism operates selectively. The workplace policies, imposing fines on companies that pay men more than women, or firing employees for sexist comments, may be perceived as a threat and an unfair punishment. While the legal measures do not. It is important to note that the effects of benevolent sexism in the workplace domain were not statistically significant, so any interpretations should be made with caution. Further research is needed to explore these patterns and to better understand when and how benevolent sexism influences opposition to gender equality policies.

Modern sexism does seem to increase the opposition for general gender equality policies. The effect of modern sexism also appears to vary by age and gender. It however does not do this for the age groups I was expecting. The gender gap in how modern sexism influences opposition varies slightly across the age groups 29-44 and 45-60. It appears that middle-aged men are more strongly influenced by modern sexism in their levels of opposition. Comparing the models, shows that workplace measures have the same regression results for the three-way interaction as the all policies model, for legal measures there is not a significant three-way interaction effect. Overall, the regression results and the visual representation are not in line with hypothesis 4.

In sum, the results mean that age moderates the relationship between gender and opposition to gender equality policies and that sexism influences attitudes towards gender equality policies. However, there is not statistical evidence that the positive effect of sexism on opposition for gender equality policies influences the gender gap between men and women so that it becomes wider for younger people. The effect is only found for middle-aged men, this definitely needs future research as this cannot be explained by my theory.

If age moderates the relationship between gender and support for gender equality policies, it means that the difference in support between men and women is not the same across all age groups. The gap among younger people is larger than the gap among older people. This corresponds to the theorization that younger men are more likely to experience perceived competition with women due to rapid societal changes and, therefore, are more likely to be less supportive of gender equality policies. Older men have less to lose and are more supportive of gender equality policies. This is also in accordance with the research from Saad et al. (2024) and Ipsos. (2025) were it was found that younger generations hold more conservative views regarding gender equality and that a recent shift is emerging where the gap in identifying as political liberals is widening between young men and young women.

I do not find a stronger effect of sexism on attitudes towards gender equality policies among younger men in comparison to older men or women. Even though research by Off et al. (2022) finds that young men are most likely to perceive improvements in women's rights as a threat to the opportunities of men and are therefore considering the development of women's rights as a threat. My research suggests that there must be another reason for a larger gap in equality attitudes among younger people. Sexist attitudes appear not to be more strongly activated for younger men, even though they probably experience higher levels of competition or social

insecurity. Younger men are not more driven by sexism than older men. However, the gender divide seems to be more pronounced among younger people. Future research should dive deeper into the influence of social media on younger men. Research by Over et al. (2025) has already found that the negative effects of the manosphere, a network of social media influencers that promote male supremacy and antifeminist ideas, have a negative effect on the attitudes of young men towards women. This might cause cultural resentment, which is not necessarily grounded in personal threat.

The study has several limitations. First, benevolent and modern sexism are only tested using one survey item. The variable benevolent sexism would have been stronger and more robust if questions such as “women, compared to men, have a superior moral sensibility” or “every man ought to have a woman whom he adores” had been added as well (Barreto & Doyle, 2022). For modern sexism items incorporated from the scale developed by Swim et al. (1995) would have made the variable more reliable. Questions such as “discrimination against women is no longer a problem” or “women often miss out on good jobs due to sexual discrimination” would have improved the variable. It is unlikely that a single item can describe the whole theory of benevolent and modern sexism (Sauro, 2018). Secondly, the research is cross-sectional, which means that the data is collected at a single point in time. The disadvantage is that only associations can be established, but not causation. Furthermore, changes over time cannot be observed (Indeed Editorial Team, 2025). It is impossible to observe whether the gender gap is unique for the current generation or whether men will maintain these attitudes as they age. Another problem of cross-sectional data is that the analysis treats attitudes towards gender equality policies as comparable across countries. This is problematic as the actual implementation, visibility and media attention of these policies vary by country. As discussed in the data section. These factors will likely influence how respondents interpret and evaluate the specific measures of gender equality. I did use country-fixed effects so I was able to control for differences between countries, but it does not show how specific country factors influence people’s attitudes towards gender equality policies. Thirdly, the survey questions are on a 5-point Likert scale. This can cause bias. Respondents might avoid the extreme response options, while others might consistently choose the most extreme options. Furthermore, because there was a specific gender theme questionnaire, respondents whose overall impression of women was negative might answer all the questions in this manner without seeing the questions independently. This can cause inflated and reduced accuracy of the responses. The questionnaire is taken face to face; this can cause social desirability bias (Krishnamurthy, 2024). Younger men might express less support because they feel freer or more willing to be openly critical, while older men are more socially cautious. Finally, the gender equality policy items included in the survey may not have been sufficient to capture all the relevant issues dealing with gender equality. Important topics such as abortion and gender-based violence were not included. This might underestimate the resistance or support related to gender equality policies. This consequently could have changed the explanatory effect of sexism. It might have played a stronger role in shaping attitudes if these policies had been included.

Conclusion

This research aimed to explain the gender gap among young individuals in their attitudes toward gender equality policies. Based on quantitative analysis of the effect of hostile, benevolent and modern sexism on gender equality policies attitudes, it can be concluded that age moderates the relationship between gender and opposition to gender equality policies and that sexism influences attitudes towards gender equality policies. However, there is no statistical evidence that the positive effect of sexism on opposition to gender equality policies influences the gender gap between men and women so that it becomes wider for younger people. Therefore, the research question, 'What explains the gender gap among young individuals in their attitudes toward gender equality policies?' cannot be answered with the proposed theory that this is due to an increase in perceived intergroup competition, which expresses itself in an increase in the levels of hostile, benevolent and modern sexism. Consequently, this results in a wider gap in the levels of opposition to gender equality policies among younger individuals. The theory proved to be inappropriate for analysing the research question. One interesting result was that, for opposition to workplace measures, there was no larger gender gap among younger respondents. For benevolent sexism, an expected positive effect was only found for workplace measures. The effect of modern sexism on opposition to gender equality measures did appear to vary by age and gender, but not for the expected age group. Middle-aged men, instead of young men, were more strongly influenced by modern sexism in their levels of opposition. My theory cannot explain these unexpected results. Further research should investigate other theories that can explain the gender gap among young individuals in their attitudes toward gender equality policies, such as the influence of social media on youngsters. It would also be interesting to explore measures focused on the workplace, as these yield different results. Modern sexism appears to have the widest gender gap for middle-aged men; it would be interesting to find out why it is the case that middle-aged men feel more than their female counterparts that sexism is not present in society anymore. Besides further research that delves deeper into the theory, there are also certain limitations of the research that, if addressed, would improve future studies, such as using longitudinal data and adding more sexism and public opinion on specific policy questions in the survey. Conducting case studies to compare how different policy environments and public debates across countries influence public opinion on gender equality can help provide a better understanding of the national context. Based on the findings, policy efforts should prioritize communicating, especially to middle-aged, that sexism has not been solved yet and that there is not a special treatment for

women. This could be done by framing equality policies as beneficial for everyone. For example, the policies firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace or making businesses pay a fine when they pay more than women for doing the same work could be reframed into firing employees who make insulting comments directed at workers in the workplace and making business pay a fine when they pay certain workers more for doing the same work. This might make it feel less like an attack on men and more like a policy that benefits them, too, hopefully decreasing the gender gap in opposition to these policies. So that instead of a stall in gender equality, we can reverse it and accelerate gender equality.

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Appendix

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Tables and figures

Table 6a: Spearman correlation of the gender equality policies

	Firing employees who make insulting comment	Make businesses pay a fine	Number of seats in parliament	Equal periods of paid leave
Firing employees who make insulting comments	**1,00**			
Make businesses pay a fine	**0,45**	**1,00**		
Number of seats in parliament	**0,22**	**0,30**	**1,00**	
Equal periods of paid leave	**0,19**	**0,23**	**0,40**	**1,00**

Table 7a: OLS regression results for H1

	(1) all_policies	(2) legal	(3) workplace
Gender: male	0.348***	0.444***	0.245***
	(0.0249)	(0.0328)	(0.0293)
Age: 29-44	0.102***	0.0957***	0.106***
	(0.0217)	(0.0286)	(0.0256)
Age: 45-60	0.184***	0.210***	0.157***
	(0.0211)	(0.0278)	(0.0249)
Age: 61+	0.248***	0.281***	0.205***
	(0.0209)	(0.0274)	(0.0245)
Interaction term:			
Male x 29-44	-0.0348	-0.0685*	0.00473
	(0.0304)	(0.0401)	(0.0359)
Male x 45-60	-0.0758**	-0.152***	0.00890
	(0.0297)	(0.0391)	(0.0350)
Male x 61+	-0.120***	-0.227***	-0.00336
	(0.0287)	(0.0378)	(0.0338)
Control variables:			
Secondary education:	-0.00535	0.0270*	-0.0406***
	(0.0123)	(0.0161)	(0.0144)
Tertiary education:	0.0176	0.142***	-0.106***
	(0.0142)	(0.0187)	(0.0167)
Middle income	0.0281**	0.0458***	-0.00243
	(0.0112)	(0.0146)	(0.0131)
High income	0.0728***	0.182***	-0.0483***
	(0.0131)	(0.0173)	(0.0155)

Employed	-0.00688	0.0116	-0.0333**
	(0.0118)	(0.0155)	(0.0139)
religion	0.0925***	0.0849***	0.0946***
	(0.00967)	(0.0127)	(0.0114)
race	-0.0360**	0.0413**	-0.126***
	(0.0158)	(0.0207)	(0.0184)
Lives in a city	-0.0438***	-0.0403***	-0.0501***
	(0.00963)	(0.0127)	(0.0114)
Constant	2.342***	2.456***	2.288***
	(0.0316)	(0.0416)	(0.0369)
N	29273	29861	30144

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 8a: OLS regression results for H2

	(1) all_policies	(2) legal	(3) workplace
Hostile sexism	0.121***	0.0920***	0.148***
	(0.0237)	(0.0313)	(0.0278)
Gender: male	0.328***	0.431***	0.217***
	(0.0253)	(0.0335)	(0.030)
Two way interaction term:			
Male x hostile sexism	0.0725**	0.0902**	0.0517
	(0.0333)	(0.0441)	(0.0393)
Age: 29-44	0.0919***	0.0881***	0.0917***
	(0.0222)	(0.0294)	(0.0263)
Age: 45-60	0.170***	0.201***	0.135***
	(0.0216)	(0.0286)	(0.0256)
Age: 61+	0.233***	0.260***	0.192***
	(0.0214)	(0.0283)	(0.0253)

Two way interaction term:			
Hostile sexism x age 29-44	-0.0335	0.00353	-0.0709**
	(0.0287)	(0.0380)	(0.0338)
Hostile sexism x age 45-60	-0.0194	0.0357	-0.0700**
	(0.0285)	(0.0376)	(0.0335)
Hostile sexism x age 61+	-0.0392	-0.0204	-0.0609*
	(0.0280)	(0.0370)	(0.0329)
Two way interaction term:			
Male x age 29-44	-0.0136	-0.0529	0.0291
	(0.0309)	(0.0410)	(0.0367)
Male x age 45-60	-0.0571*	-0.143***	-0.0344
	(0.0302)	(0.0400)	(0.0358)
Male x age 61+	-0.111***	-0.223***	0.0131
	(0.0294)	(0.0388)	(0.0347)
Three way interaction term:			
Hostile sexism x male x age 29-44	0.0159	-0.0362	0.0738
	(0.0412)	(0.0546)	(0.0487)
Hostile sexism x male x age 45-60	-0.0497	-0.115**	0.0225
	(0.0408)	(0.0540)	(0.0482)
Hostile sexism x male x 61+	-0.0134	0.0382	-0.0505
	(0.0401)	(0.0530)	(0.0473)
Control variables:			
Secondary education:	-0.00163	0.0297*	-0.0364**

	(0.0126)	(0.0166)	(0.0148)
Tertiary education:	0.0345**	0.162***	-0.0921***
	(0.0146)	(0.0193)	(0.0173)
Middle income	0.0367***	0.0566***	0.00657
	(0.0114)	(0.0151)	(0.0135)
High income	0.0787***	0.187***	-0.0395**
	(0.0134)	(0.0177)	(0.0159)
Employed	-0.0100	0.00630	-0.0336**
	(0.0120)	(0.0158)	(0.0142)
religion	0.0834***	0.0762***	0.0858***
	(0.00988)	(0.0131)	(0.0117)
race	-0.0307*	0.0502**	-0.121***
	(0.0161)	(0.0213)	(0.0190)
Lives in a city	-0.0350***	-0.0283**	-0.0438***
	(0.00983)	(0.0130)	(0.0116)
Constant	2.370***	2.500***	2.298***
	(0.0326)	(0.0430)	(0.0382)
N	27769	28210	28438

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 9a: OLS regression results for H3

	(1) all policies	(2) legal	(3) workplace
Benevolent sexism	-0.00571	-0.0164	0.0110
	(0.0163)	(0.0215)	(0.0191)
Gender:male	0.352***	0.454***	0.2400***
	(0.0254)	(0.0335)	(0.0300)

Two way interaction: term			
Male x Benevolent sexism	-0.0101	-0.0432	0.0111
	(0.0239)	(0.0316)	(0.0282)
Age: 29-44	0.0979***	0.0891**	0.101***
	(0.0224)	(0.0296)	(0.0264)
Age: 45-60	0.179***	0.201***	0.152***
	(0.0218)	(0.0288)	(0.0257)
Age: 61+	0.245***	0.279***	0.198***
	(0.0214)	(0.0282)	(0.0252)
Two way interaction term:			
Benevolent sexism x age 29-44	-0.0322	-0.0322	-0.0349
	(0.0196)	(0.0259)	(0.0231)
Benevolent sexism x age 45-60	-0.0267	-0.0324	-0.0283
	(0.0192)	(0.0253)	(0.0226)
Benevolent sexism x age 61+	-0.0196	0.00460	-0.0503**
	(0.0186)	(0.0245)	(0.0219)
Two-way interaction term			
Male x age 29-44	-0.0241	-0.0591	-0.0175
	(0.310)	(0.0409)	(0.367)
Male x age 45-60	-0.0642**	-0.139	-0.0201
	(0.0303)	(0.0399)	(0.0357)
Male x age 61+	-0.108***	-0.221	0.0194
	(0.0293)	(0.0386)	(0.0345)

Three-way interaction term			
Benevolent sexism x male x age 29-44	-0.00777	0.0173	-0.0217
	(0.0291)	(0.0384)	(0.0344)
Benevolent sexism x male x age 45-60	-0.0407	-0.0142	-0.0516
	(0.0285)	(0.0376)	(0.0337)
Benevolent sexism x male x age 61+	-0.0329	-0.0119	-0.0476
	(0.0276)	(0.0364)	(0.0326)
Control variables			
Secondary education	-0.0104	0.0222	-0.0455***
	(0.0124)	(0.0163)	(0.0145)
Tertiary education	0.00183	0.126***	-0.121***
	(0.0144)	(0.0190)	(0.0170)
Middle income	0.0255**	0.0438***	-0.00546
	(0.0112)	(0.0147)	(0.0132)
High income	0.0695***	0.179***	-0.0516***
	(0.0132)	(0.0173)	(0.0156)
Employed	-0.00994	0.00980	-0.0352**
	(0.0118)	(0.0156)	(0.0139)
religion	0.0985***	0.0914***	0.0984***
	(0.00976)	(0.0129)	(0.0115)
race	-0.0400**	0.0377*	-0.129***
	(0.0158)	(0.0208)	(0.0185)
Lives in a city	-0.0422***	-0.0383***	-0.0474***
	(0.00966)	(0.0127)	(0.0114)
_cons	2.350***	2.476***	2.284***

	(0.0322)	(0.0423)	(0.0376)
N	28961	29499	29794

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.0$

Table 10a: OLS regression results for H4

	(1) all_policies	(2) legal	(3) workplace
Modern sexism	0.158***	0.109***	0.201***
	(0.0201)	(0.0268)	(0.0236)
Gender: male	0.301***	0.403***	0.195***
	(0.0263)	(0.0350)	(0.0310)
Two-way interaction term:			
Male x modern sexism	-0.0230	-0.0308	-0.00757
	(0.0290)	(0.0387)	(0.0342)
Age: 29-44	0.0575**	0.0666**	0.0502*
	(0.0234)	(0.0312)	(0.0275)
Age: 45-60	0.131***	0.170***	0.0931***
	(0.0226)	(0.0302)	(0.0267)
Age: 61+	0.178***	0.229***	0.124***
	(0.0225)	(0.0299)	(0.0264)
Two-way interaction term:			
Modern sexism x age 29-44	-0.0365	-0.00763	-0.0586**
	(0.0245)	(0.0327)	(0.0289)
Modern sexism x age 45-60	-0.0403*	-0.0126	-0.0642**
	(0.0240)	(0.0320)	(0.0283)
Modern sexism x age 61+	-0.0302	-0.0147	-0.0486*
	(0.0232)	(0.0309)	(0.0272)
Two-way interaction term:			

Male x age 29-44	-0.0022	-0.0478	0.0431
	(0.0319)	(0.0426)	(0.0377)
Male x age 45-60	-0.0522**	-0.133**	0.0312
	(0.0311)	(0.0415)	(0.0367)
Male x age 61+	-0.0914**	-0.201***	0.0244
	(0.0303)	(0.0404)	(0.0358)
Three-way interaction term			
Modern sexism x male x age 29-44	0.0696*	0.0572	0.0795*
	(0.0358)	(0.0478)	(0.0423)
Modern sexism x male x age 45-60	0.0658*	0.0355	0.0960**
	(0.0352)	(0.0469)	(0.0416)
Modern sexism x male x age 61+	0.0373	0.0445	0.0374
	(0.0340)	(0.0453)	(0.0400)
Control variables:			
Secondary education	0.00261	0.0374**	-0.0334**
	(0.0127)	(0.0169)	(0.0149)
Tertiary education	0.0477***	0.170***	-0.0731***
	(0.0147)	(0.0195)	(0.0173)
Middle income	0.0423***	0.0581***	0.0156
	(0.0115)	(0.0153)	(0.0135)
High income	0.0908***	0.194***	-0.0212
	(0.0135)	(0.0179)	(0.0159)
Employed	-0.00557	0.0138	-0.0311**
	(0.0120)	(0.0160)	(0.0142)
religion	0.0791***	0.0733***	0.0800***
	(0.00989)	(0.0132)	(0.0117)
race	-0.0314*	0.0426**	-0.116***
	(0.0162)	(0.0215)	(0.0190)
Lives in a city	-0.0395***	-0.0350***	-0.0437***
	(0.00984)	(0.0131)	(0.0116)

cons	2.396***	2.516***	2.327***
	(0.0333)	(0.0443)	(0.0389)
N	27159	27536	27749

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 11a: Ordinal logistic regression results for H1

	Coefficient	Standard error
Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child:		
Male	0.3675***	0.0598
Age: 29-44	0.1913***	0.0523
Age: 45-60	0.3814***	0.0507
Age: 61+	0.4548***	0.0498
Male x 29-44	-0.087	0.0734
Male x 45-60	-0.1704**	0.0715
Male x 61+	-0.2129***	0.0688
Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men		
Male	1.0007***	0.0605
Age: 29-44	0.0748	0.0528
Age: 45-60	0.2263***	0.0513
Age: 61+	0.3977***	0.0505
Male x 29-44	-0.14*	0.0739
Male x 45-60	-0.2979***	0.072
Male x 61+	-0.5118***	0.0695
Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace		
Male	0.2496***	0.0619
Age: 29-44	0.3465***	0.0539

Age: 45-60	0.476***	0.0525
Age: 61+	0.5425***	0.0517
Male x 29-44	-0.1066	0.0753
Male x 45-60	-0.1019	0.0736
Male x 61+	-0.0586	0.071
Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same		
Male	0.6459***	0.0618
Age: 29-44	0.0232	0.0546
Age: 45-60	0.0769	0.053
Age: 61+	0.192***	0.052
Male x 29-44	0.0848	0.0755
Male x 45-60	0.0494	0.0737
Male x 61+	-0.0265	0.071

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 12a: Ordinal logistic regression results for H2

	Coefficient	Standard error
Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child		
Hostile sexism	0.0699	0.0573
Male	0.3737***	0.0615
Age: 29–44	0.2003***	0.0541
Age: 45–60	0.3925***	0.0524
Age: 61+	0.4401***	0.0517
Male x 29–44	-0.094	0.0755
Male x 45–60	-0.1817*	0.0736
Male x 61+	-0.2294**	0.0711

Hostile sexism x Male	0.0876	0.0817
Hostile sexism x 29–44	0.0261	0.0701
Hostile sexism x 45–60	0.0966	0.0693
Hostile sexism x 61+	-0.0243	0.0675
Hostile sexism x Male x 29–44	-0.0379	0.1015
Hostile sexism x Male x 45–60	-0.1396	0.1003
Hostile sexism x Male x 61+	0.0984	0.0978
Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men		
Hostile sexism	0.2568***	0.0585
Male	0.9556***	0.0622
Age: 29–44	0.0315	0.0546
Age: 45–60	0.1787**	0.053
Age: 61+	0.3381***	0.0524
Male x 29–44	-0.0794	0.0759
Male x 45–60	-0.2515**	0.0741
Male x 61+	-0.4662***	0.0717
Hostile sexism x Male	0.1064	0.082
Hostile sexism x 29–44	-0.032	0.0711
Hostile sexism x 45–60	-0.0531	0.0705
Hostile sexism x 61+	-0.1246	0.0688
Hostile sexism x Male x 29–44	-0.0601	0.1019
Hostile sexism x Male x 45–60	-0.1111	0.1008
Hostile sexism x Male x 61+	0.0951	0.0985
Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace		

Hostile sexism	0.2079**	0.0602
Male	0.1975**	0.0639
Age: 29–44	0.3282***	0.0558
Age: 45–60	0.4487***	0.0542
Age: 61+	0.5286***	0.0537
Male x 29–44	-0.0541	0.0777
Male x 45–60	-0.0613	0.0758
Male x 61+	-0.0341	0.0735
Hostile sexism x Male	0.067	0.0846
Hostile sexism x 29–44	-0.1196*	0.0725
Hostile sexism x 45–60	-0.0593	0.0719
Hostile sexism x 61+	-0.0446	0.0705
Hostile sexism x Male x 29–44	0.1732*	0.1044
Hostile sexism x Male x 45–60	0.1146	0.1034
Hostile sexism x Male x 61+	-0.1145	0.1009
Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same		
Hostile sexism	0.3444***	0.0612
Male	0.5804***	0.0635
Age: 29–44	-0.0105	0.0563
Age: 45–60	0.0359	0.0547
Age: 61+	0.1503	0.0539
Male x 29–44	0.1472	0.0776
Male x 45–60	0.1167	0.0757
Male x 61+	0.0334	0.0733
Hostile sexism x Male	0.1395	0.0851
Hostile sexism x 29–44	-0.2096**	0.0742
Hostile sexism x 45–60	-0.2768***	0.0733

Hostile sexism x 61+	-0.2943***	0.0717
Hostile sexism x Male x 29–44	0.0549	0.1051
Hostile sexism x Male x 45–60	-0.044	0.1039
Hostile sexism x Male x 61+	-0.0575	0.1015

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 13a: Ordinal logistic regression results for H3

	Coefficient	Standard error
Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child		
Benevolent sexism	-0.041	0.0398
Male	0.3855***	0.0611
Benevolent sexism x Male	-0.0692	0.0594
Age: 29–44	0.1815**	0.054
Age: 45–60	0.373***	0.0524
Age: 61+	0.4573***	0.0511
Benevolent sexism x 29–44	-0.0443	0.0483
Benevolent sexism x 45–60	-0.0332	0.0471
Benevolent sexism x 61+	0.0404	0.0455
Male x 29–44	-0.0694	0.0749
Male x 45–60	-0.1525**	0.073
Male x 61+	-0.2107**	0.0702
Benevolent sexism x Male x 29–44	0.0505	0.0726

Benevolent sexism x Male x 45–60	-0.0019	0.071
Benevolent sexism x Male x 61+	-0.0242	0.0685
Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men		
Benevolent sexism	-0.0025	0.0402
Male	1.0131***	0.062
Benevolent sexism x Male	-0.0861	0.0594
Age: 29–44	0.0657	0.0547
Age: 45–60	0.2097***	0.0531
Age: 61+	0.3855***	0.052
Benevolent sexism x 29–44	-0.0454	0.0485
Benevolent sexism x 45–60	-0.0646	0.0474
Benevolent sexism x 61+	-0.0461	0.046
Male x 29–44	-0.1299	0.0755
Male x 45–60	-0.2754***	0.0737
Male x 61+	-0.4961***	0.0711
Benevolent sexism x Male x 29–44	0.0139	0.0726
Benevolent sexism x Male x 45–60	-0.0557	0.071
Benevolent sexism x Male x 61+	0.0093	0.0687
Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace		
Benevolent sexism	-0.057	0.0413
Male	0.2668***	0.0635
Benevolent sexism x Male	0.0341	0.0608
Age: 29–44	0.3526***	0.056

Age: 45–60	0.464***	0.0546
Age: 61+	0.5387***	0.0534
Benevolent sexism x 29–44	-0.0309	0.0495
Benevolent sexism x 45–60	-0.0768	0.0484
Benevolent sexism x 61+	-0.079	0.047
Male x 29–44	-0.097	0.0771
Male x 45–60	-0.081	0.0753
Male x 61+	-0.0363	0.0727
Benevolent sexism x Male x 29–44	-0.0394	0.0738
Benevolent sexism x Male x 45–60	-0.0419	0.0723
Benevolent sexism x Male x 61+	-0.0514	0.07
Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same		
Benevolent sexism	0.0645	0.0418
Male	0.6224***	0.0632
Benevolent sexism x Male	0.0227	0.0611
Age: 29–44	0.0085	0.0564
Age: 45–60	0.0747	0.0548
Age: 61+	0.1762**	0.0534
Benevolent sexism x 29–44	-0.0648	0.0505
Benevolent sexism x 45–60	-0.023	0.0493
Benevolent sexism x 61+	-0.0719	0.0477
Male x 29–44	0.1172	0.077
Male x 45–60	0.0667	0.0752
Male x 61+	0.0283	0.0725
Benevolent sexism x Male x 29–44	-0.0635	0.0744

Benevolent sexism x Male x 45–60	-0.1725**	0.073
Benevolent sexism x Male x 61+	-0.1563**	0.0704

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 14a: Ordinal logistic regression results for H4

	Coefficient	Standard error
Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child		
Modern sexism	0.066	0.0489
Male	0.3428***	0.064
Modern sexism x Male	0.0066	0.0711
Age: 29–44	0.1827**	0.0571
Age: 45–60	0.3598***	0.0551
Age: 61+	0.4176***	0.0545
Modern sexism x 29–44	0.0421	0.0604
Modern sexism x 45–60	0.0332	0.0589
Modern sexism x 61+	0.0332	0.0565
Male x 29–44	-0.0793	0.0782
Male x 45–60	-0.1645**	0.0761
Male x 61+	-0.2005**	0.0739
Modern sexism x Male x 29–44	0.0113	0.0888
Modern sexism x Male x 45–60	0.0031	0.087
Modern sexism x Male x 61+	0.0229	0.0835

Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men		
Modern sexism	0.3116***	0.0498
Male	0.8993***	0.0647
Modern sexism x Male	-0.141**	0.0719
Age: 29–44	-0.0136	0.0575
Age: 45–60	0.1095**	0.0557
Age: 61+	0.2567**	0.0552
Modern sexism x 29–44	-0.0703	0.0612
Modern sexism x 45–60	-0.092	0.0598
Modern sexism x 61+	-0.1105*	0.0574
Male x 29–44	-0.0789	0.0786
Male x 45–60	-0.2247**	0.0766
Male x 61+	-0.426***	0.0746
Modern sexism x Male x 29–44	0.1669*	0.0894
Modern sexism x Male x 45–60	0.1201	0.0876
Modern sexism x Male x 61+	0.1487*	0.0843
Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace		
Modern sexism	0.3911***	0.0518
Male	0.1303**	0.0664
Modern sexism x Male	0.0138	0.0746
Age: 29–44	0.2495***	0.0587
Age: 45–60	0.3691***	0.0569
Age: 61+	0.3983***	0.0565
Modern sexism x 29–44	-0.1686**	0.063
Modern sexism x 45–60	-0.1174*	0.0615

Modern sexism x 61+	-0.103*	0.0594
Male x 29–44	-0.0212	0.0804
Male x 45–60	-0.0306	0.0784
Male x 61+	0.0253	0.0764
Modern sexism x Male x 29–44	0.1734*	0.0921
Modern sexism x Male x 45–60	0.057	0.0905
Modern sexism x Male x 61+	-0.0104	0.087
Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same		
Modern sexism	0.4253***	0.052
Male	0.5528***	0.0659
Modern sexism x Male	-0.0658	0.074
Age: 29–44	-0.0828	0.0591
Age: 45–60	-0.0539	0.0572
Age: 61+	0.0308	0.0566
Modern sexism x 29–44	-0.1446**	0.0639
Modern sexism x 45–60	-0.2023**	0.0623
Modern sexism x 61+	-0.1866**	0.0598
Male x 29–44	0.1687**	0.0802
Male x 45–60	0.1032	0.0782
Male x 61+	0.0404	0.0761
Modern sexism x Male x 29–44	0.1353	0.092
Modern sexism x Male x 45–60	0.2485**	0.0903
Modern sexism x Male x 61+	0.1458	0.0867

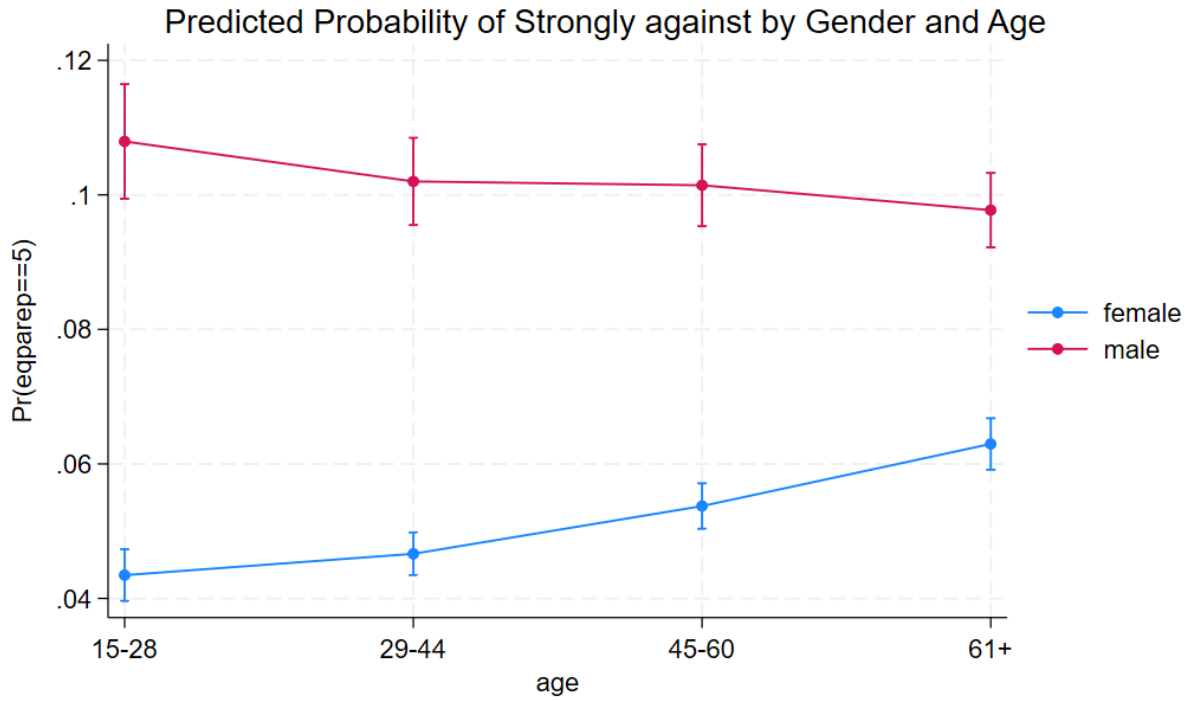
Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 15a: Summary statistics

VARIABLE	OBS.	MEAN	STD. DEV.	MIN	MAX
ALL POLICIES	36.942	2,30	0,79	1	5
WORKPLACE POLICIES	38.488	2,11	0,92	1	5
LEGAL POLICIES	37.890	2,51	1,05	1	5
HOSTILE SEXISM	36.900	3,03	0,72	1	5
MODERN SEXISM	35.833	2,53	0,88	1	5
BENEVOLENT SEXISM	39.335	3,46	1,05	1	5
GENDER	40.156	0,47	0,50	0	1
AGE					
15-28	39.886	0,14	0,35	0	1
29-44	39.886	0,23	0,42	0	1
45-60	39.886	0,27	0,45	0	1
61+	39.866	0.36	0,48	0	1
EDUCATION					
PRIMARY	39.889	0,23	0,42	0	1
SECUNDARY	39.889	0,50	0,50	0	1
HIGHER	39.889	0,27	0,44	0	1
INCOME					
LOW	31.726	0,27	0,44	0	1
MIDDLE	31.726	0,45	0,50	0	1
HIGH	31.726	0,28	0,45	0	1
EMPLOYMENT	40.156	0,54	0,50	0	1
RELIGION	39.879	0,37	0,48	0	1
RACE	39.765	0,91	0,29	0	1
LIVES IN A CITY	40.073	0,31	0,46	0	1

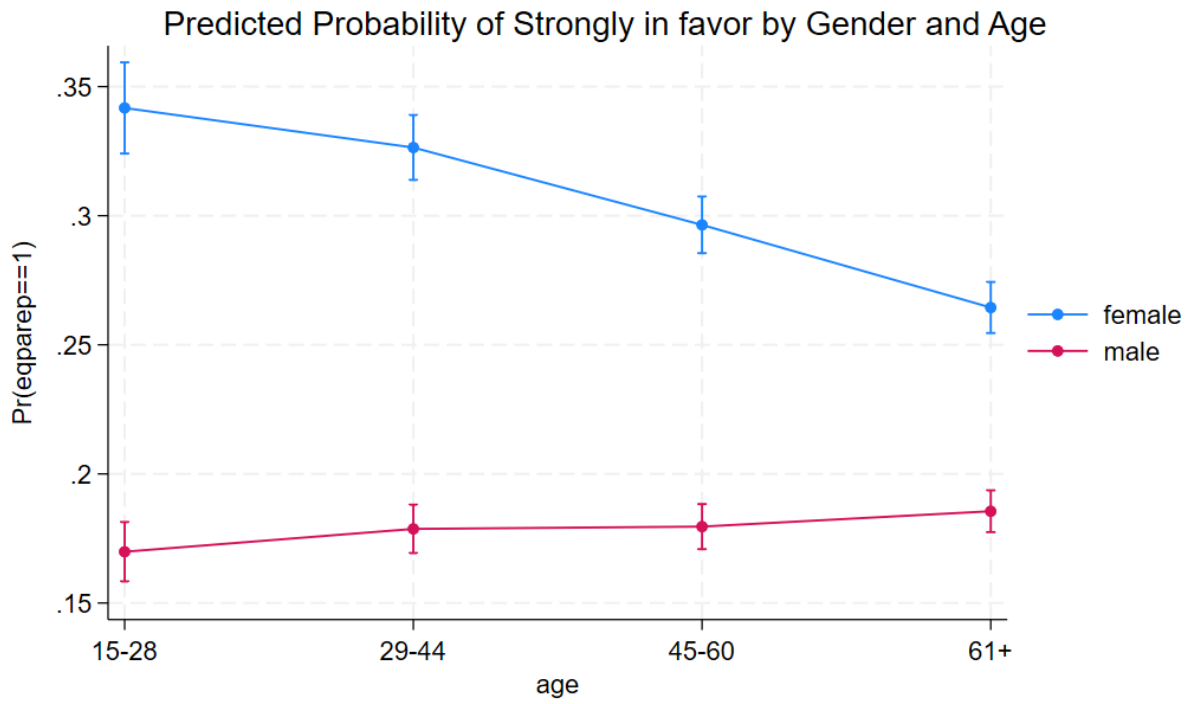
Robustness tests

Figure 13a: H1 ordinal logistic regression: Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men. Predicted probability of being strongly against



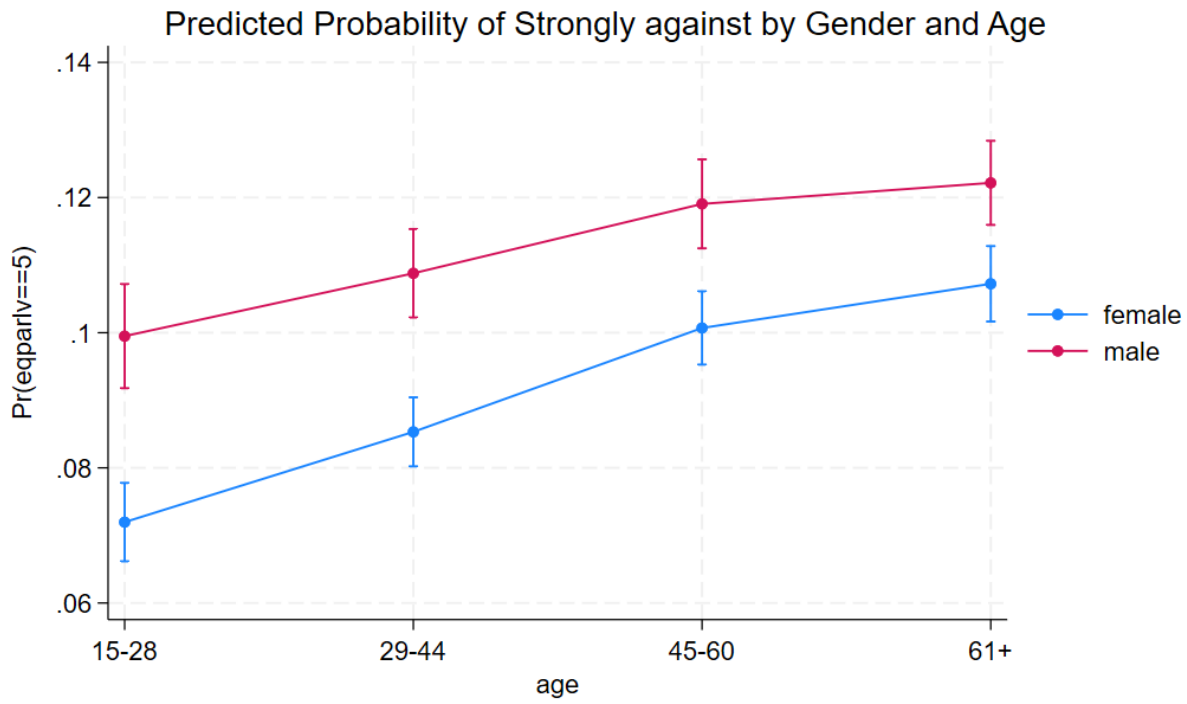
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) to the policy of dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men, based on ordinal logistic regression. The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 14a: H1 ordinal logistic regression: Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



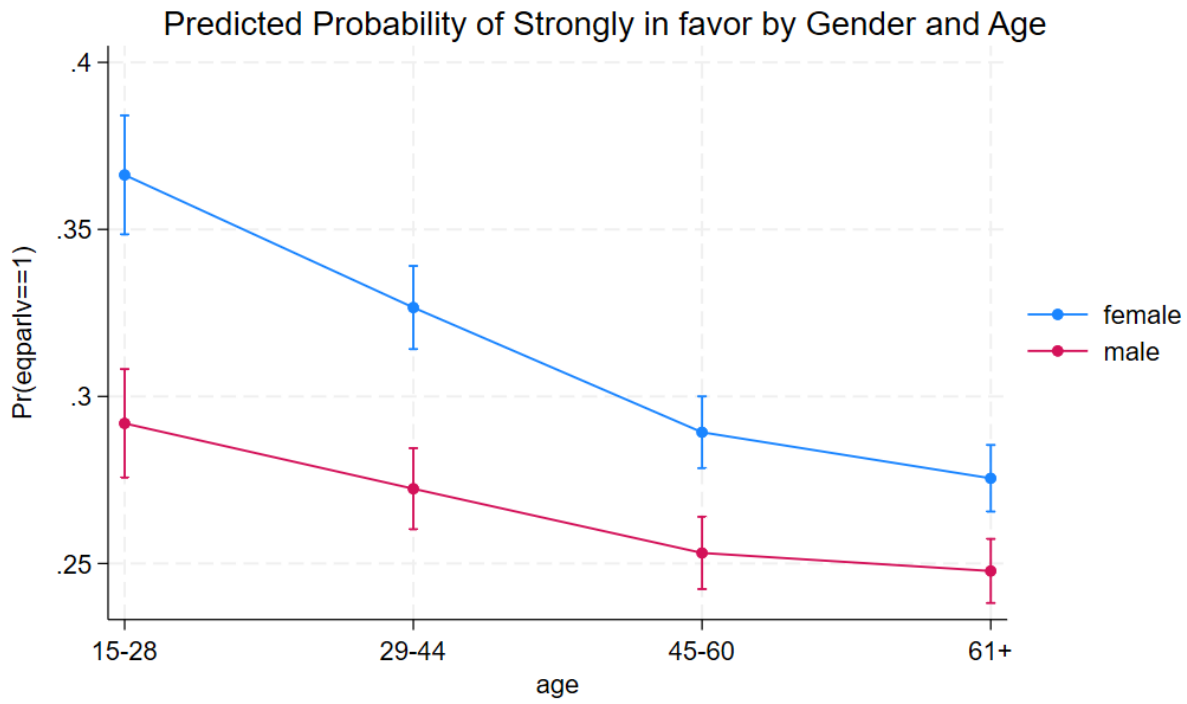
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men, based on ordinal logistic regression. The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 15a: H1 ordinal logistic regression: Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



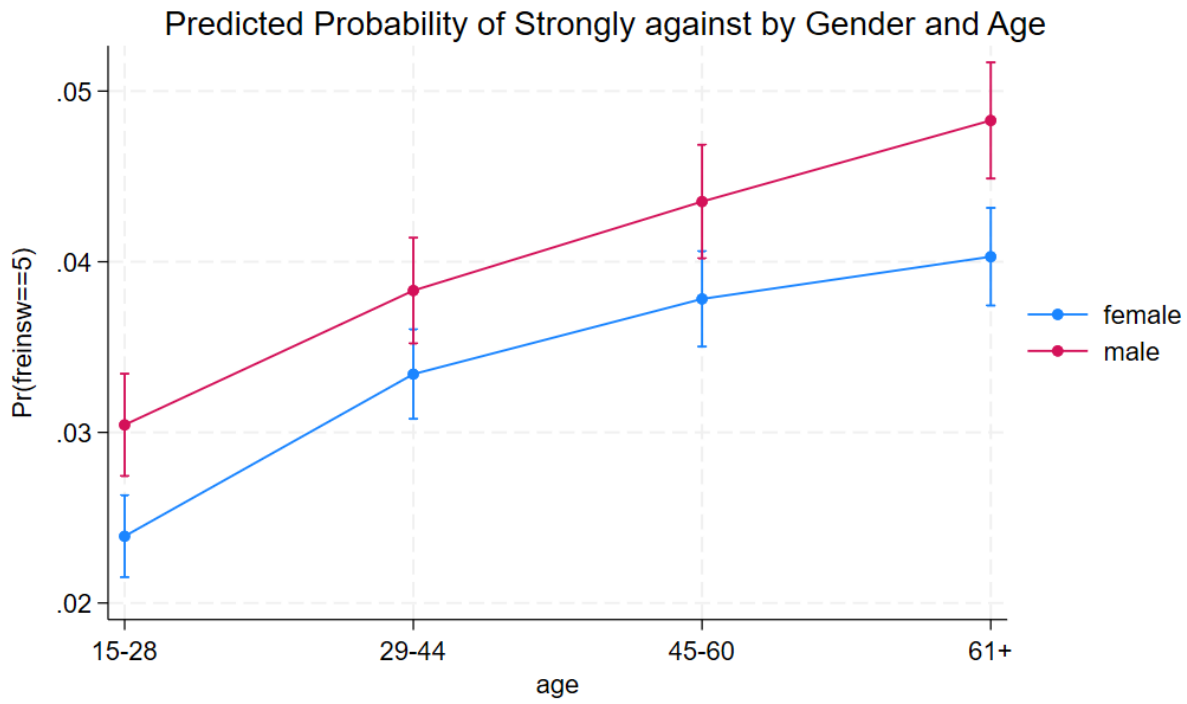
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) to the policy require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, based on ordinal logistic regression. The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 16a: H1 ordinal logistic regression: Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor



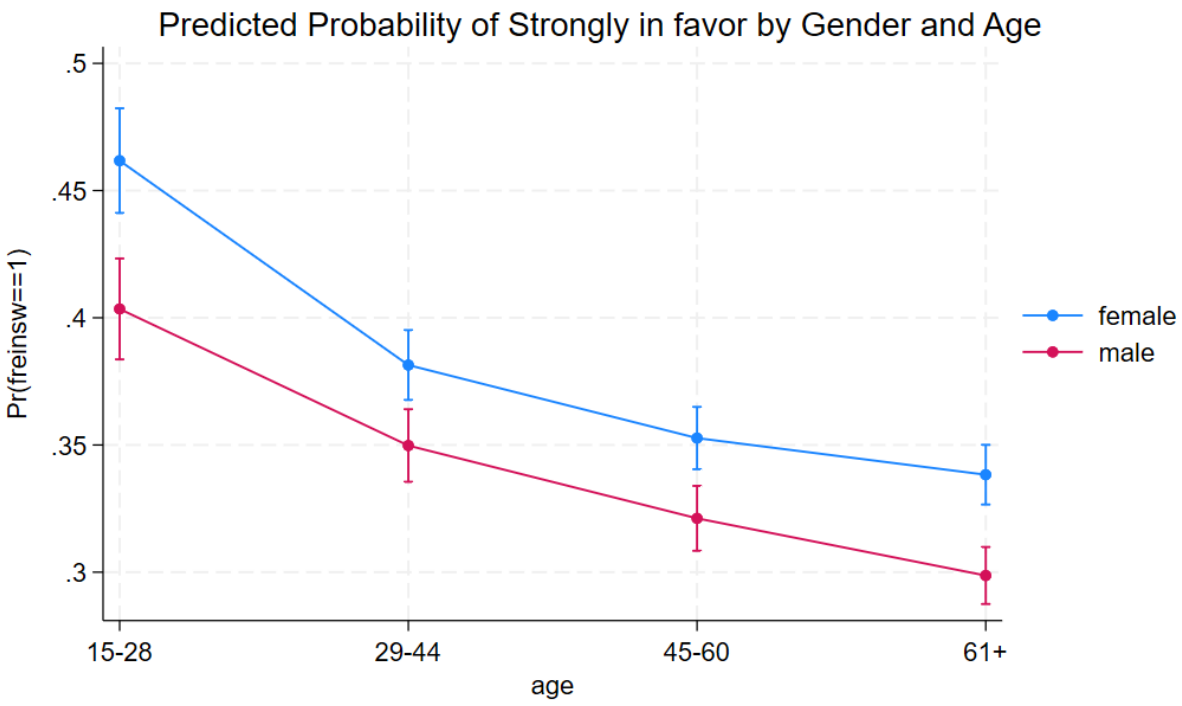
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, based on ordinal logistic regression. The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 17a: H1 ordinal logistic regression: Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



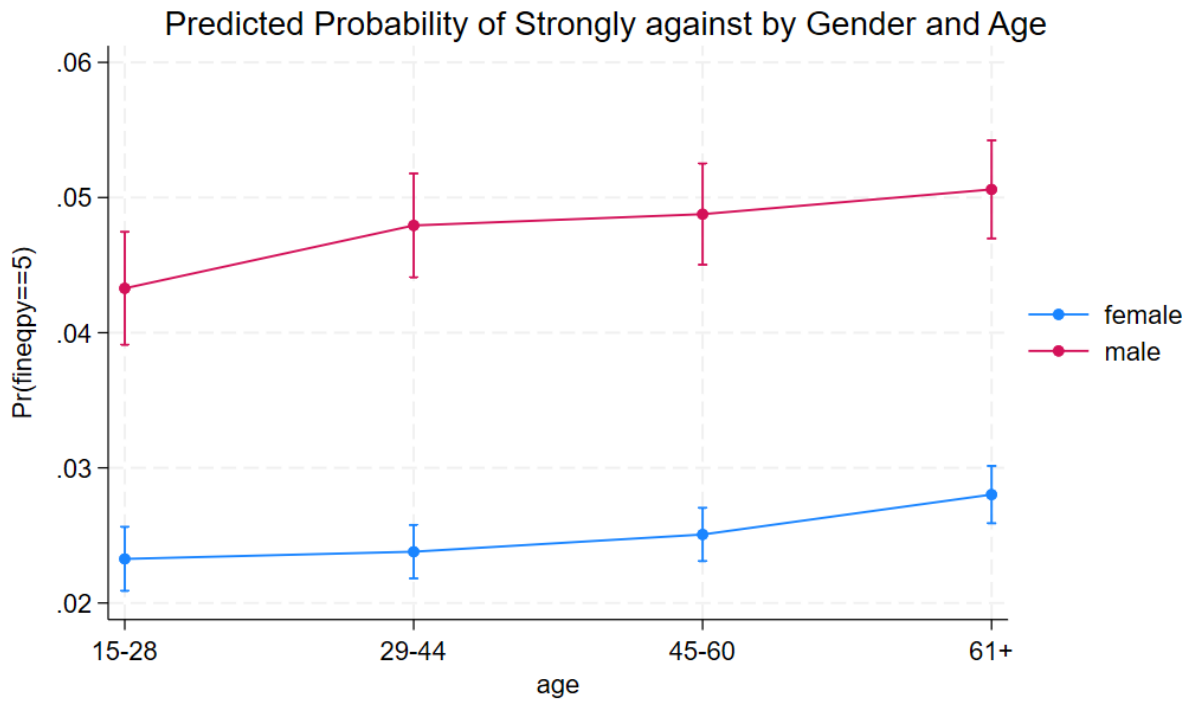
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) to firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace., based on ordinal logistic regression. The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 18a: H1 ordinal logistic regression: Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



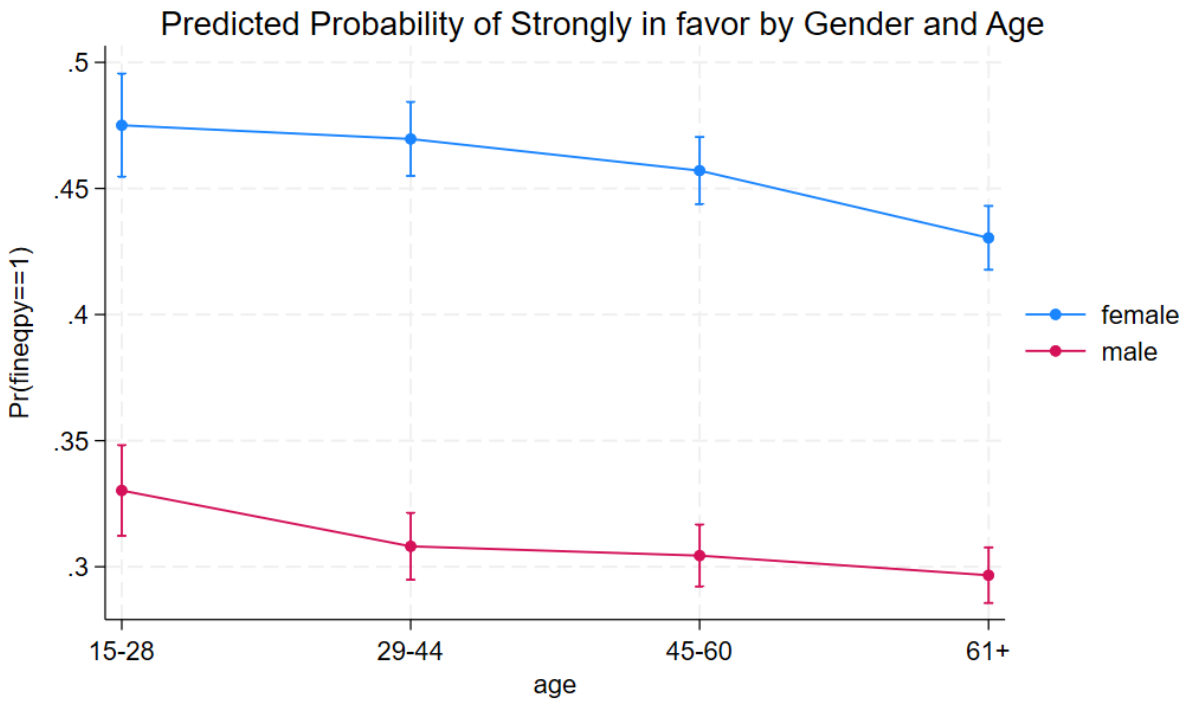
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace., based on ordinal logistic regression. The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 19a: H1 ordinal logistic regression: Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



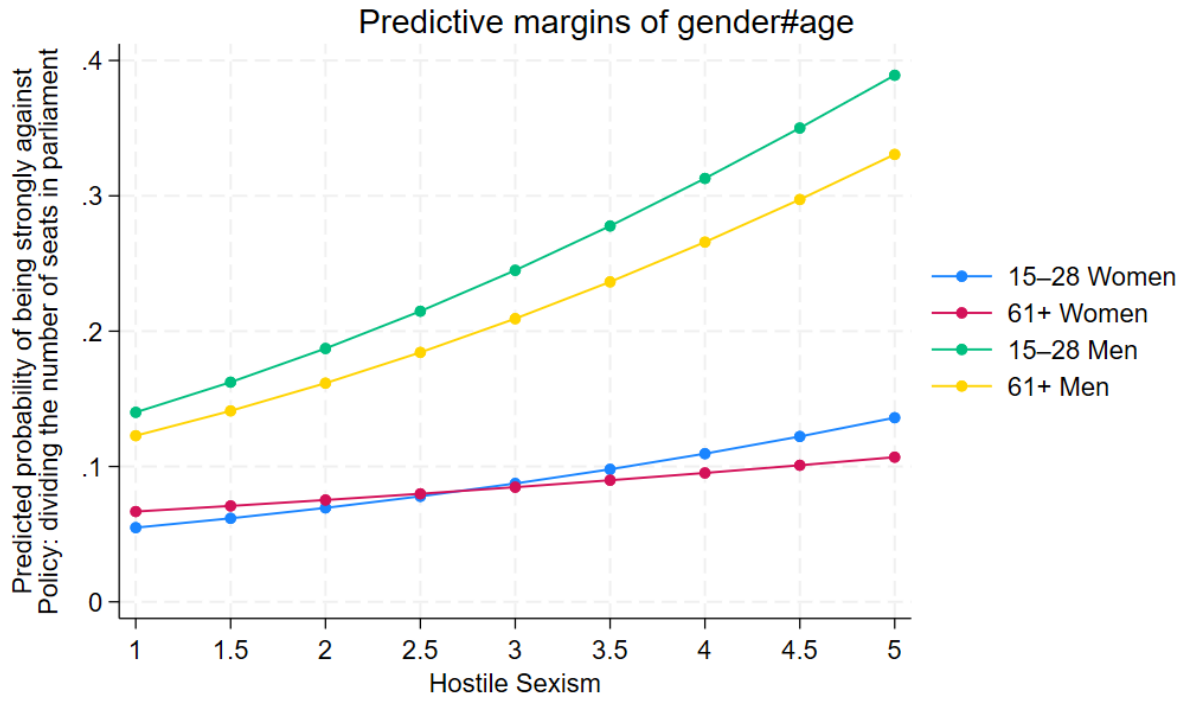
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same, based on ordinal logistic regression. The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 20a: H1 ordinal logistic regression: Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



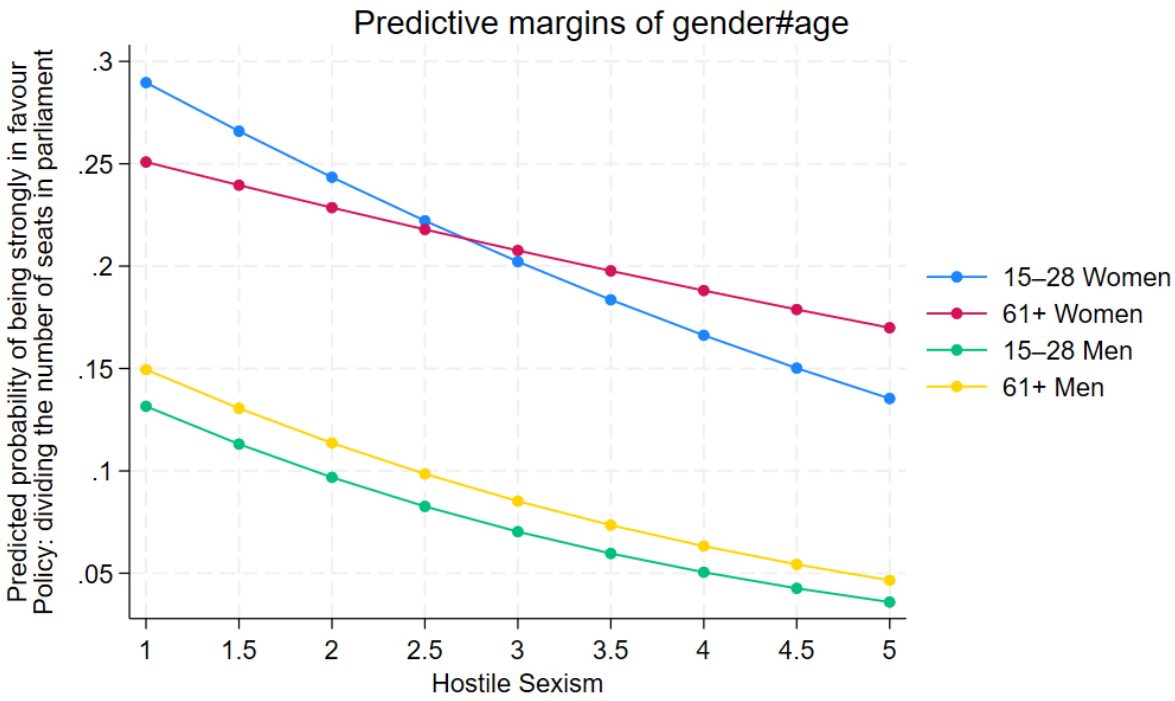
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same, based on ordinal logistic regression. The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 21a: H2 ordinal logistic regression: Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



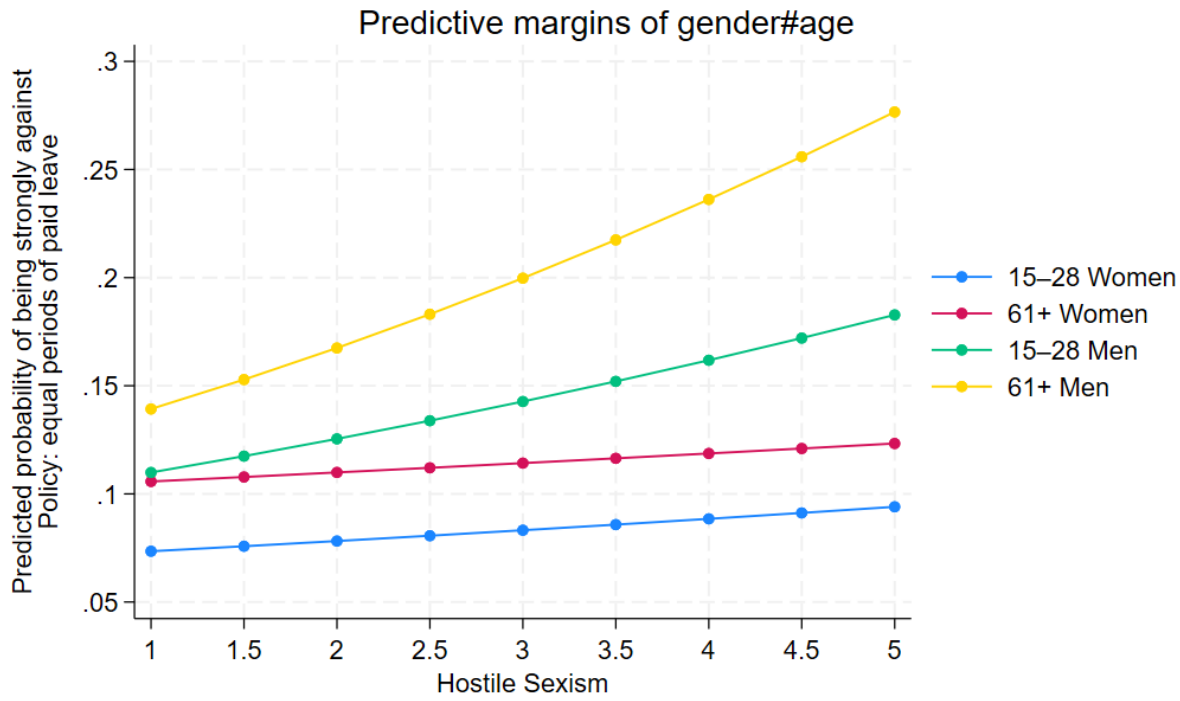
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three-way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 22a: H2 ordinal logistic regression: Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



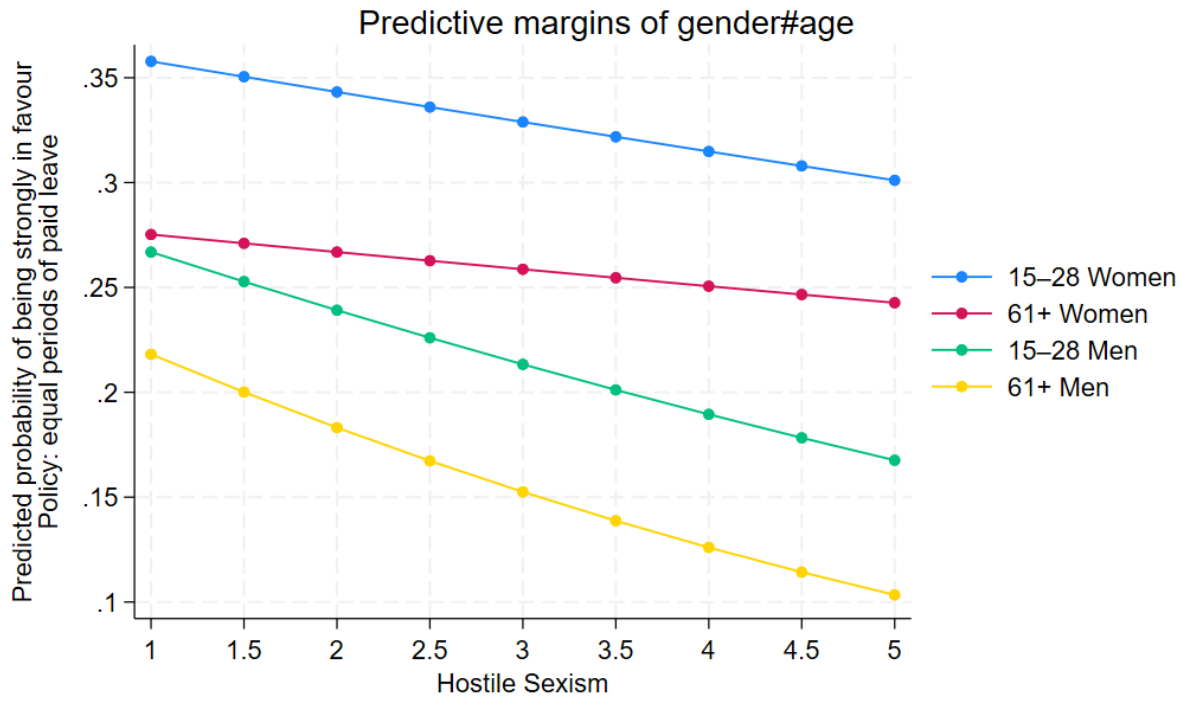
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three-way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 23a: H2 ordinal logistic regression: Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



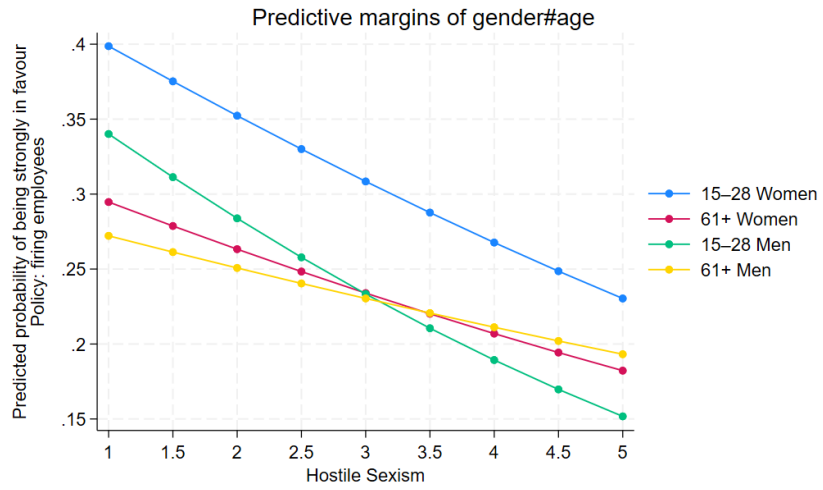
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 24a: *H2 ordinal logistic regression: Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.*



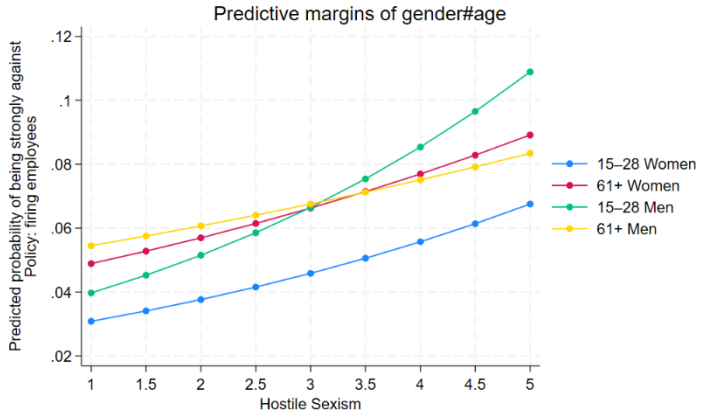
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 25a: H2 ordinal logistic regression: Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



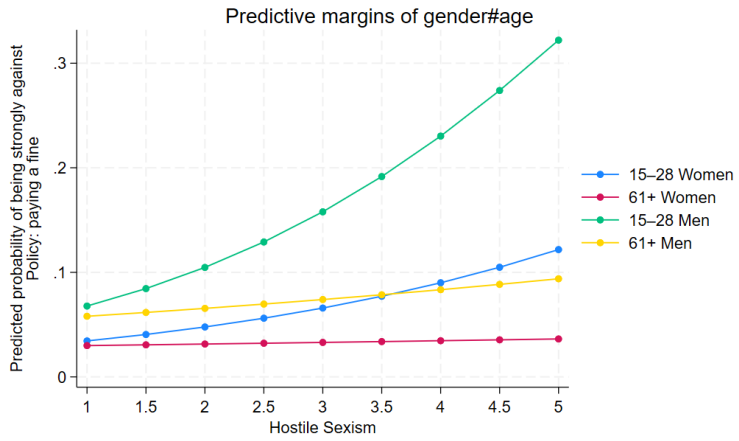
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 26a: H2 ordinal logistic regression: Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace. Predicted probability of being strongly in against.



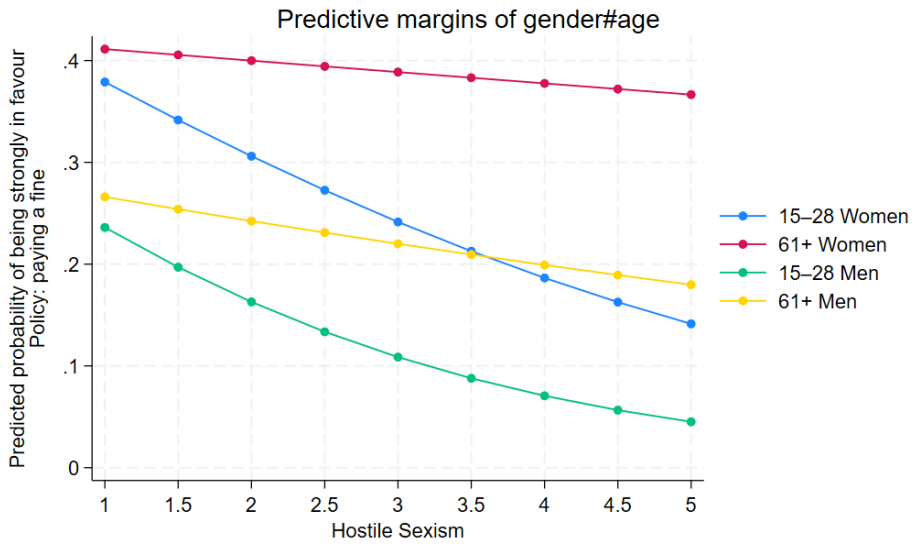
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 27a: H2 ordinal logistic regression: Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

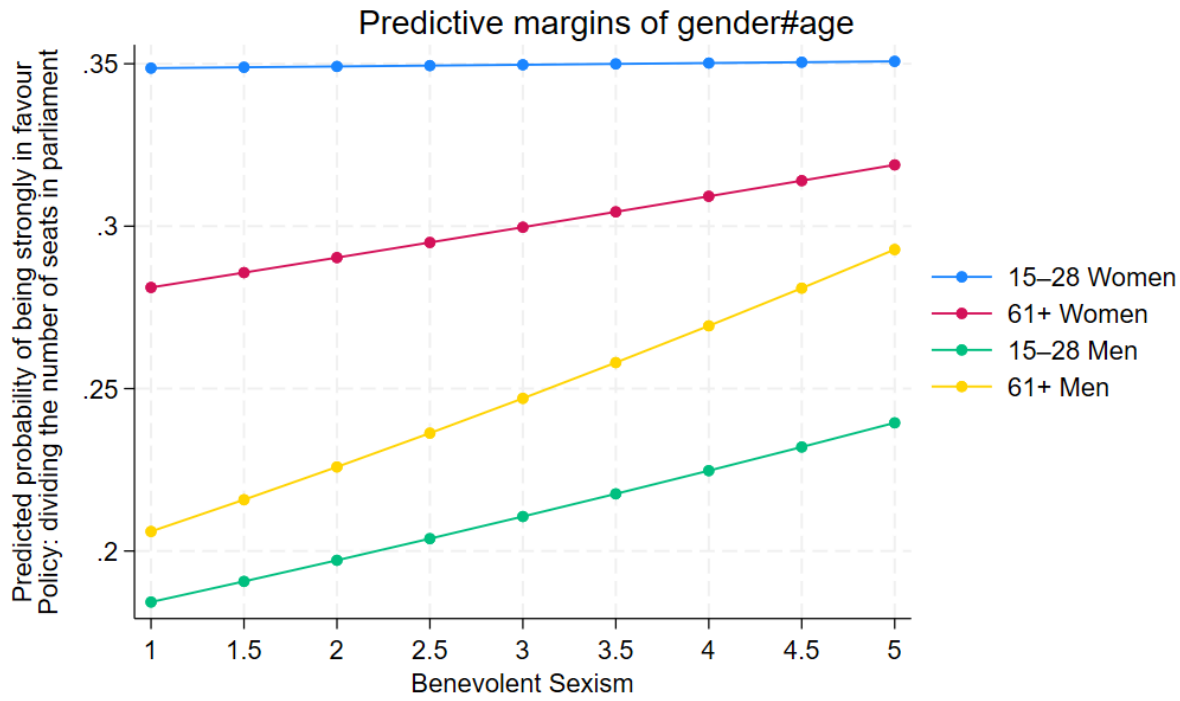
Figure 28a: H2 ordinal logistic regression: Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

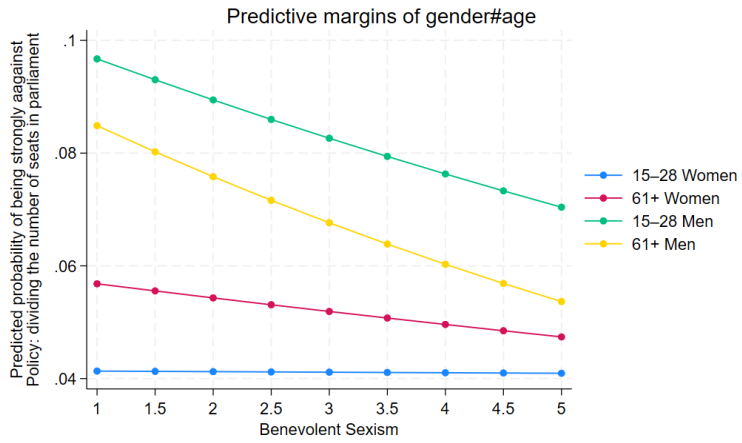
Benevolent sexism

Figure 29a: H3 ordinal logistic regression: Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



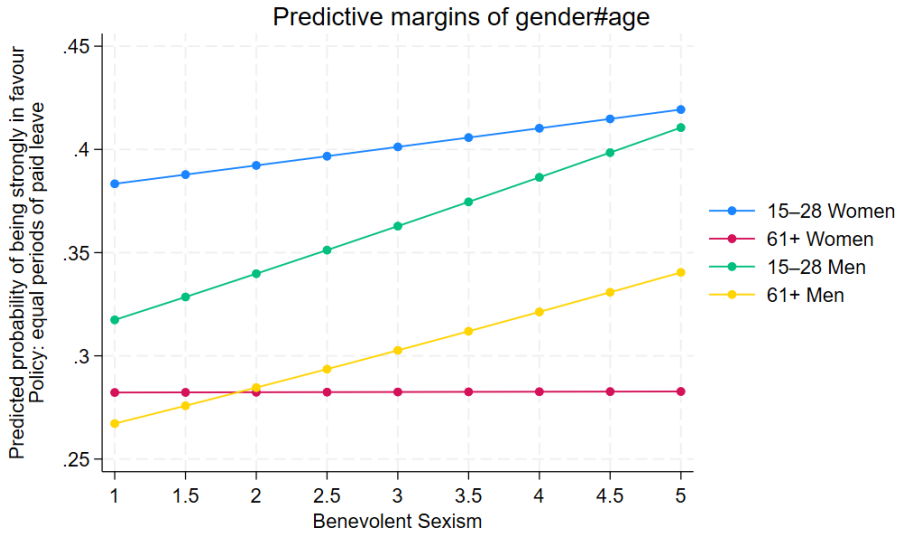
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Benevolent sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 30a: H3 ordinal logistic regression: Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



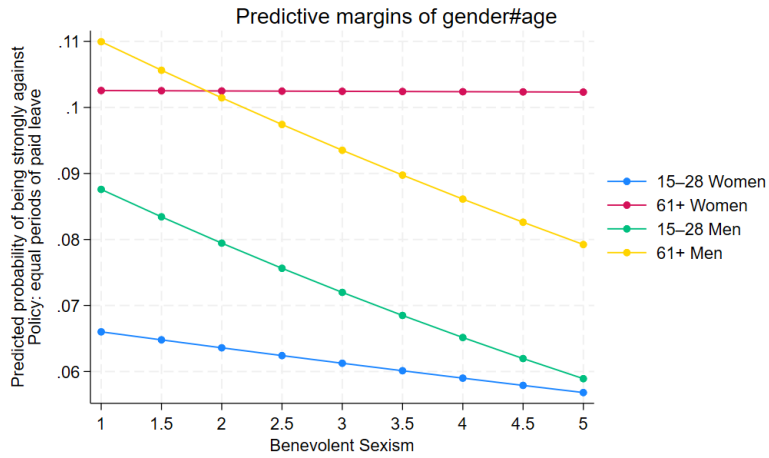
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Benevolent sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 31a: H3 ordinal logistic regression: Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



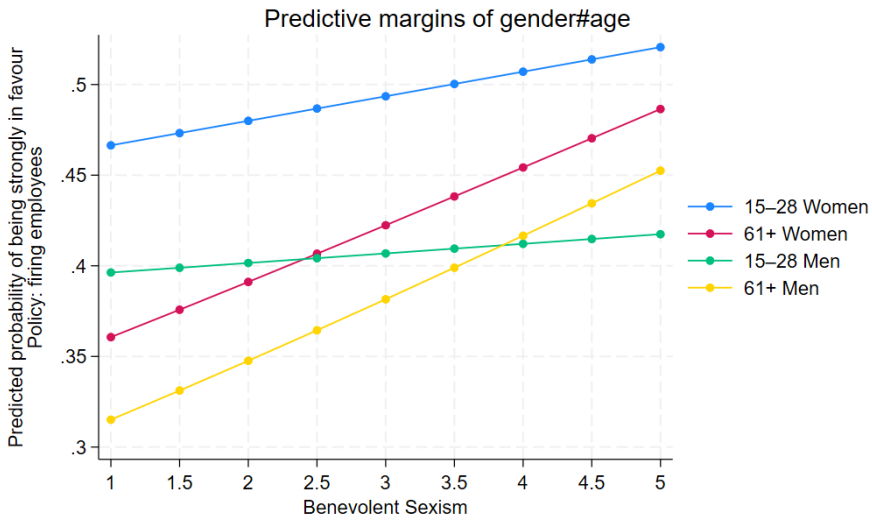
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Benevolent sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 32a: H3 ordinal logistic regression: Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



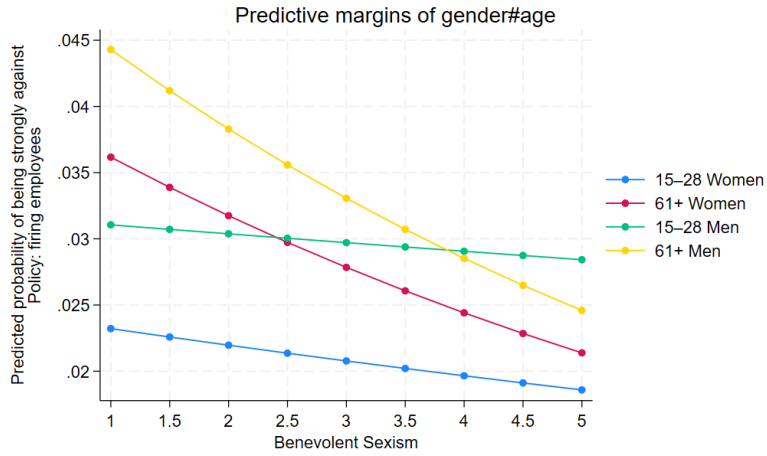
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Benevolent sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 33a: H3 ordinal logistic regression: Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



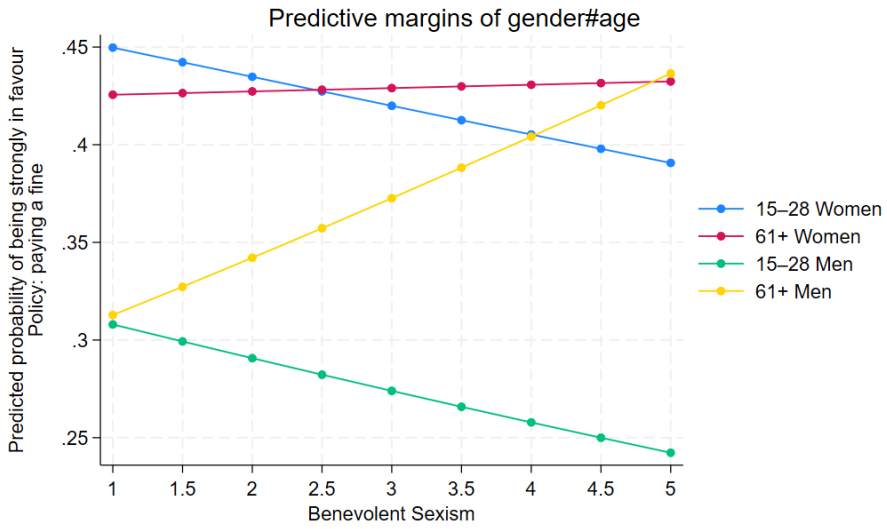
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Benevolent sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 34a: H3 ordinal logistic regression: Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



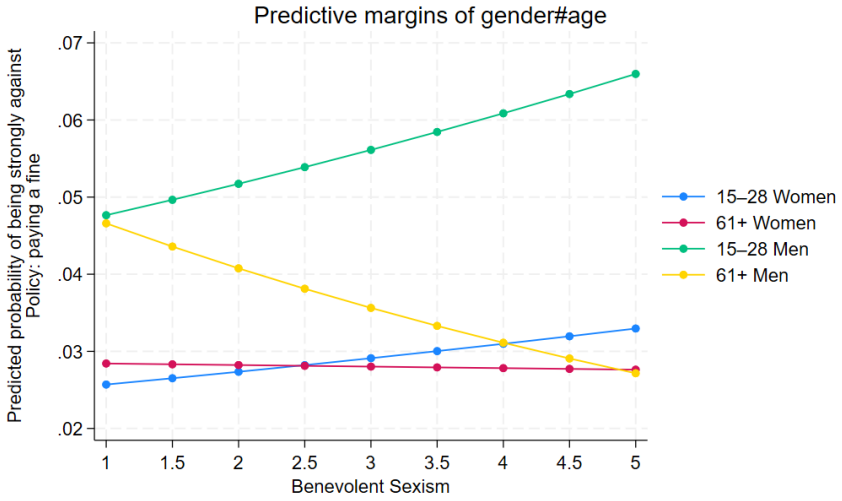
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Benevolent sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 35a: H3 ordinal logistic regression: Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



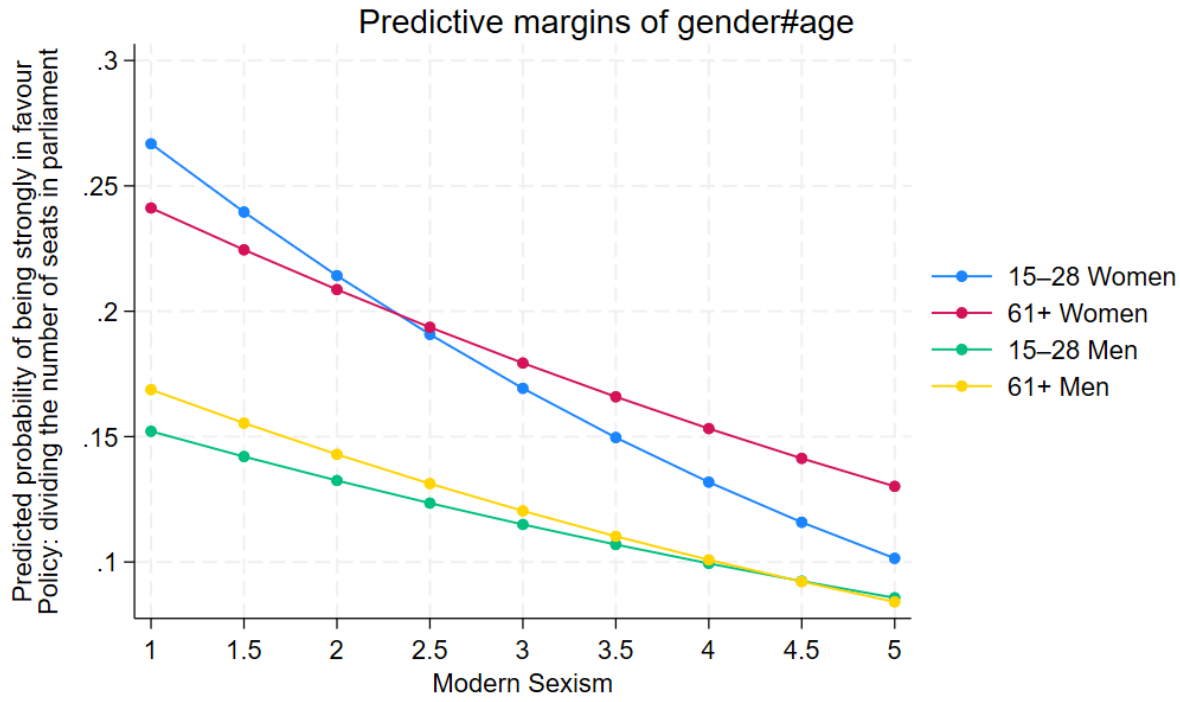
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Benevolent sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 36a: H3 ordinal logistic regression: Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



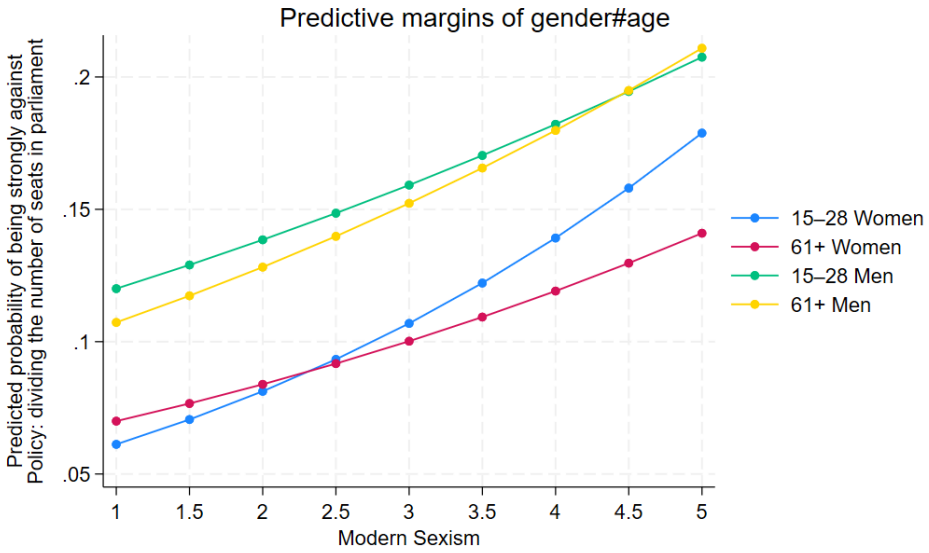
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Benevolent sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 37a: H4 ordinal logistic regression: Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



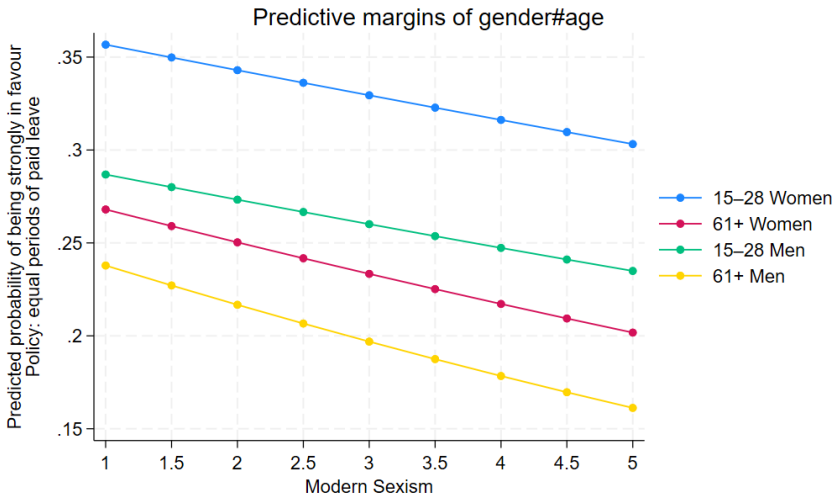
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three-way interaction term (Modern sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 38: H4 ordinal logistic regression: Dividing the number of seats in parliament equally between women and men. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



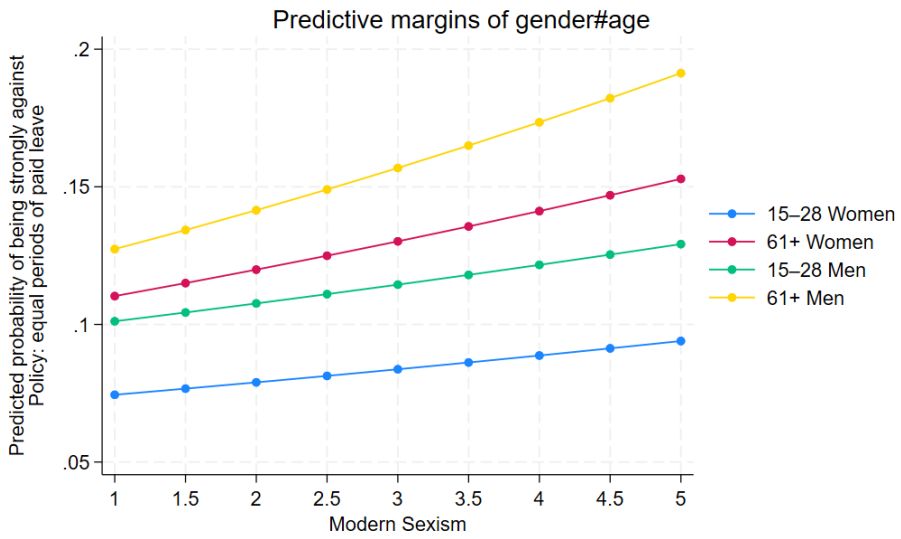
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Modern sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 39a: *H4 ordinal logistic regression: Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.*



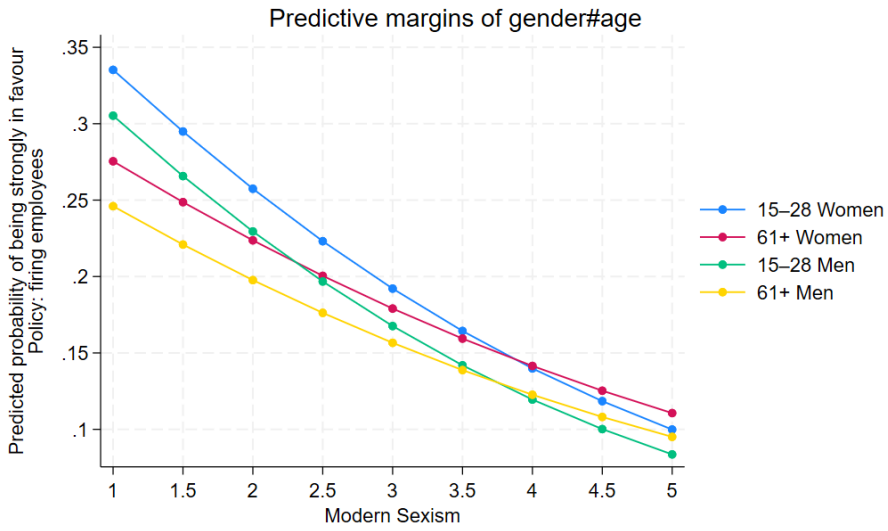
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Modern sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 40a: *H4 ordinal logistic regression: Require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child. Predicted probability of being strongly against.*



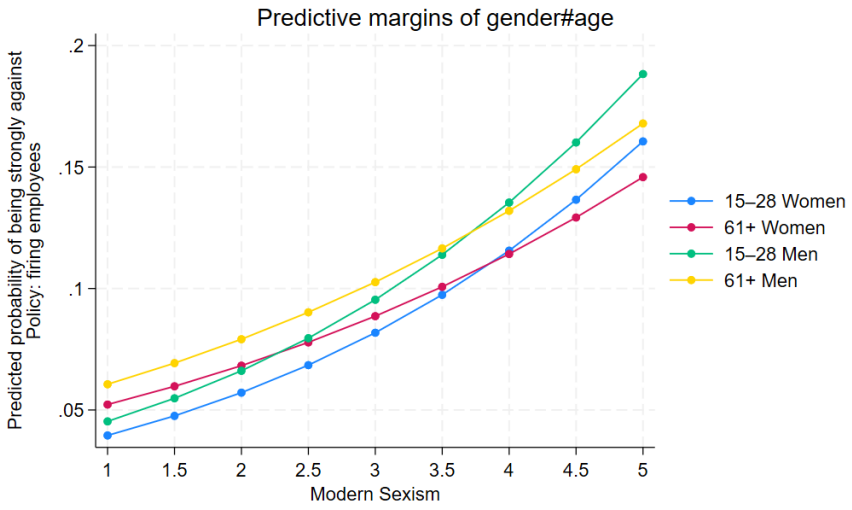
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of require both parents to take equal periods of paid leave to care for their child, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Modern sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 41a: *H4 ordinal logistic regression*: F*iring employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.*



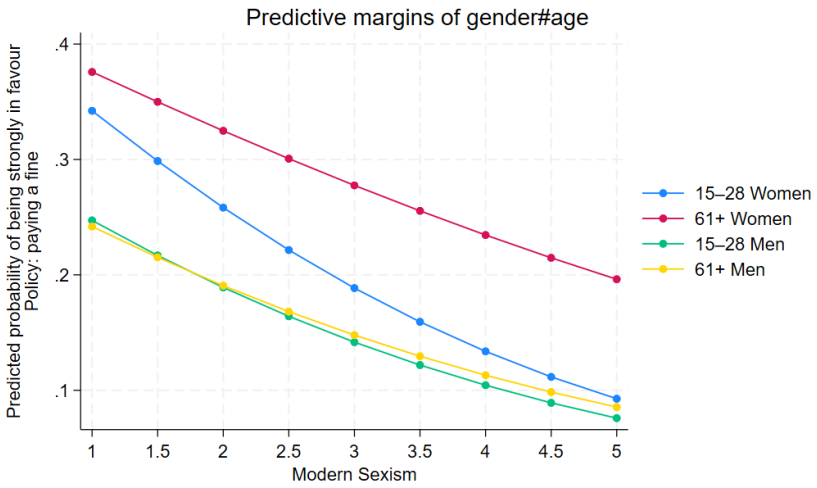
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Modern sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 42a: H4 ordinal logistic regression: Firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace. Predicted probability of being strongly against



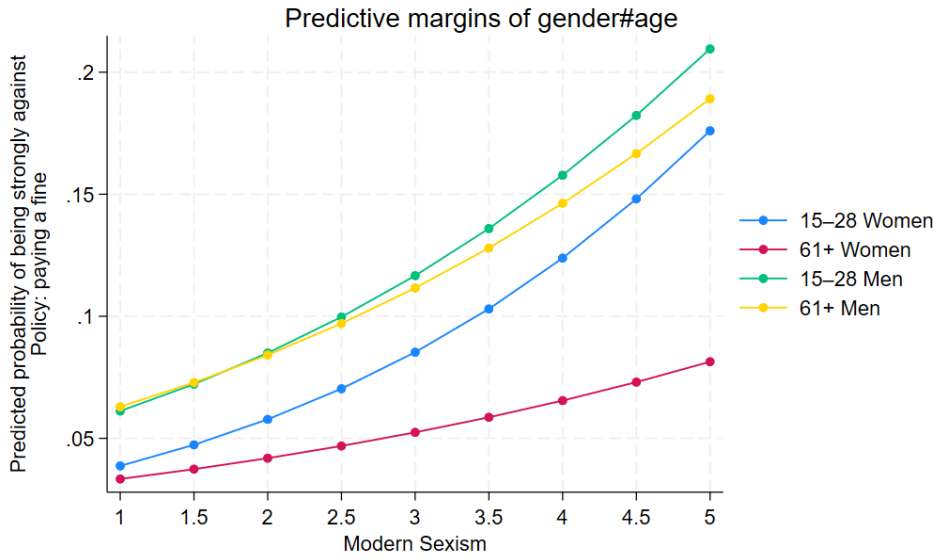
Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of firing employees who make insulting comments directed at women in the workplace, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Modern sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 43a: H4 ordinal logistic regression: Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same. Predicted probability of being strongly in favor.



Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Modern sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

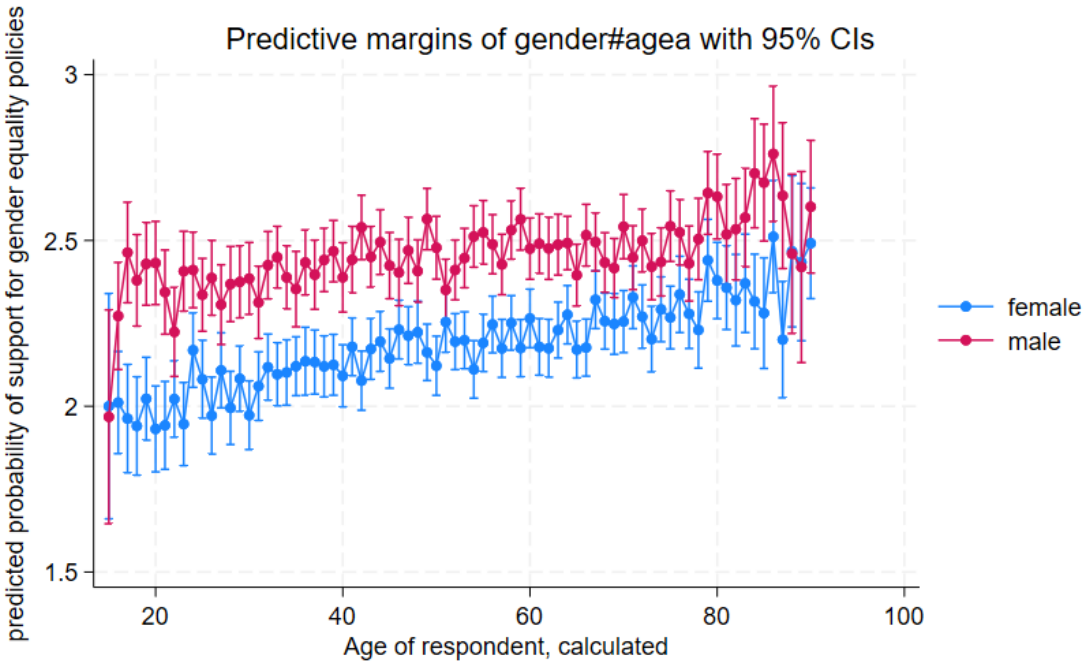
Figure 44a: H4 ordinal logistic regression: Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same. Predicted probability of being strongly against.



Note. Predicted probability of being strongly against (scale number 5) and of being strongly in favor (scale number 1) to the policy of Making businesses pay a fine when they pay men more than women for doing the same, based on ordinal logistic regression with a three way interaction term (Modern sexism x gender x age). The results are shown by gender and age group. The error bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

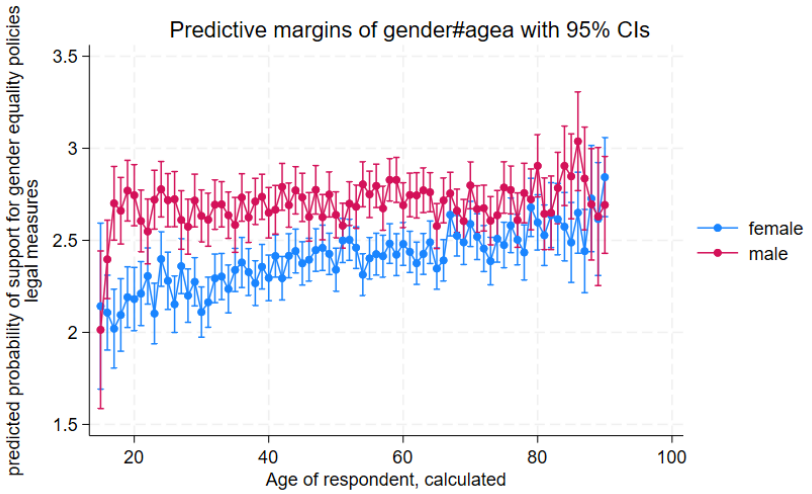
Continuous measure of age

Figure 45a: Check for sensitivity of the age categories: all policies



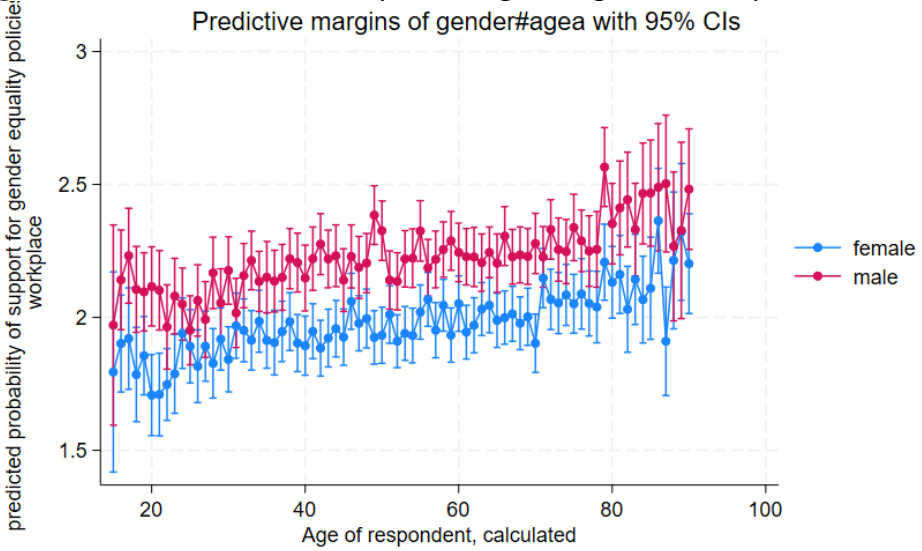
Note. Predicted probability of support for gender equality policies by respondent age and gender, based on OLS regression with a continuous age variable and interaction with gender. Confidence interval shown at the 95% level.

Figure 46a: Check for sensitivity of the age categories: legal measures



Note. Predicted probability of support for gender equality policies by respondent age and gender, based on OLS regression with a continuous age variable and interaction with gender. Confidence interval shown at the 95% level.

Figure 47a: Check for sensitivity of the age categories: workplace



Note. Predicted probability of support for gender equality policies by respondent age and gender, based on OLS regression with a continuous age variable and interaction with gender. Confidence interval shown at the 95% level.

OLS regression for the hostile sexism question: Women seek to gain power by getting control over men

Figure 48a: Separate hostile sexism questions, Women seek to gain power by getting control over men

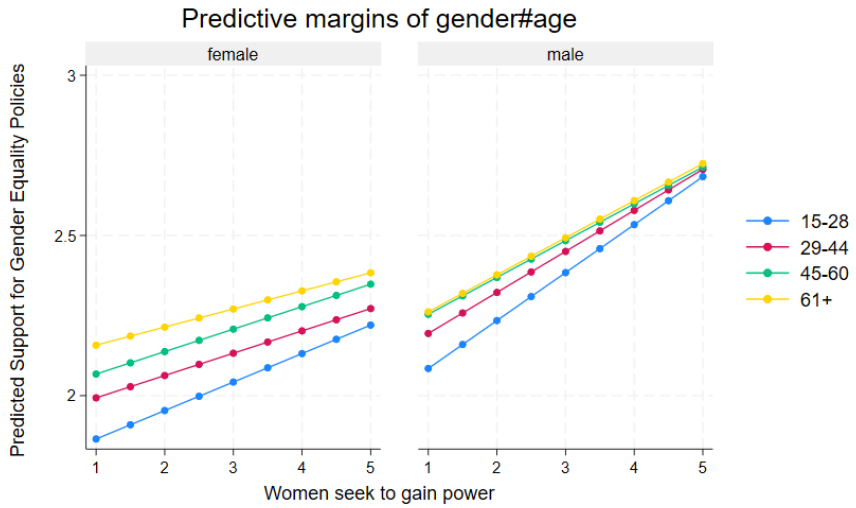


Figure 49a: Separate hostile sexism question, legal.

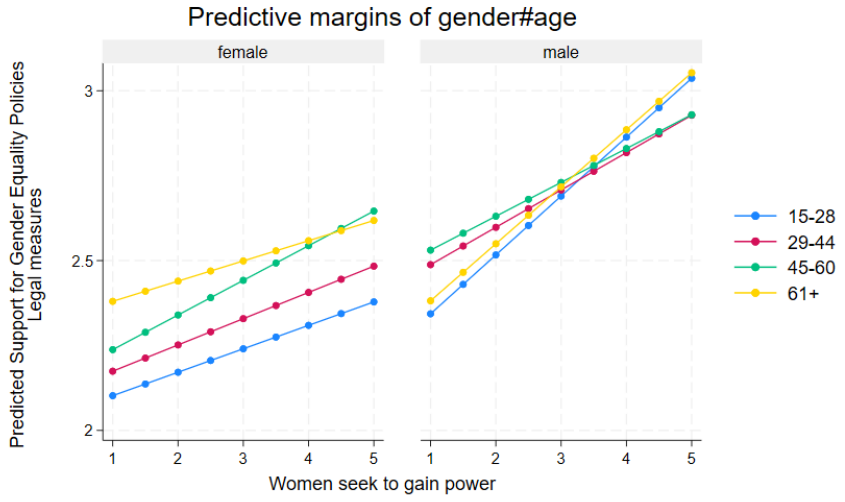
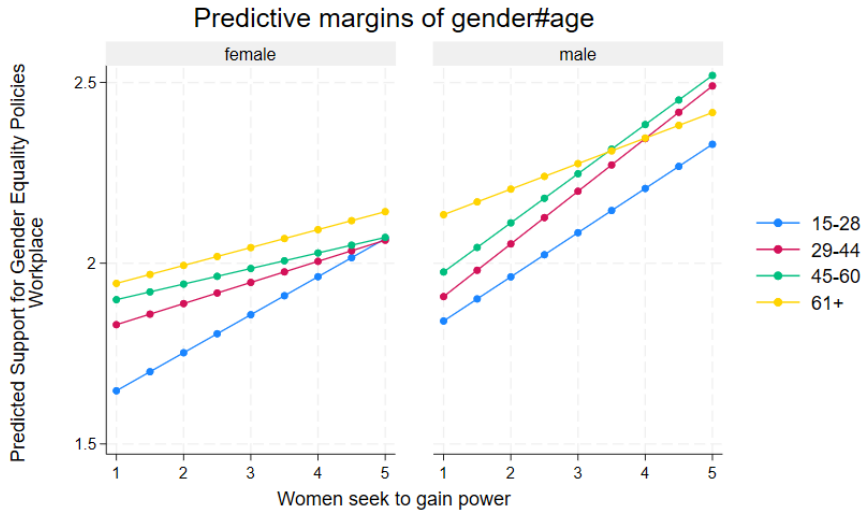


Figure 50a: Separate hostile sexism questions, workplace.



Note. *Predicted support for gender equality policies by level of hostile sexism, plotted separately by gender and age group. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). Higher values on the y-axis indicate lower support. The plot shows predicted values with 95% confidence intervals, adjusted for education, income, employment, religion, race, living in a city and country fixed effects.*

OLS regression for the hostile sexism question: Women get easily offended.

Figure 51a: Separate hostile sexism questions, Women get easily offended

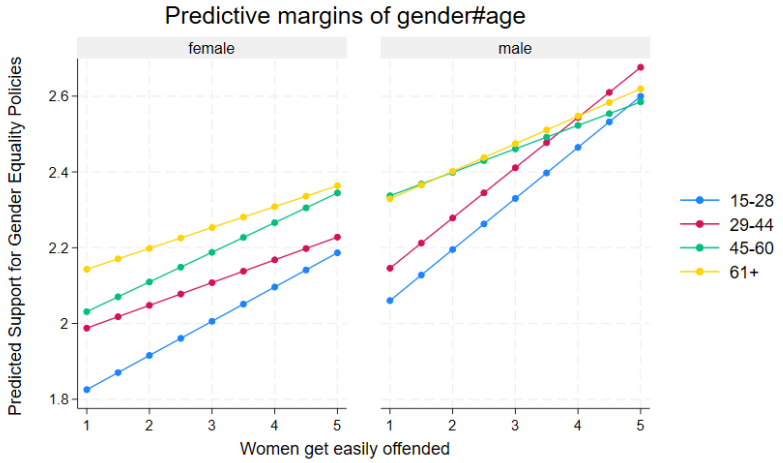


Figure 52a: Separate hostile sexism questions, legal.

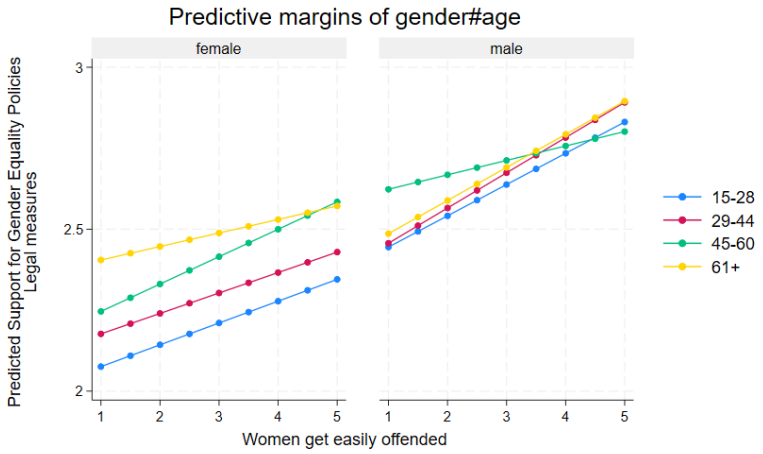
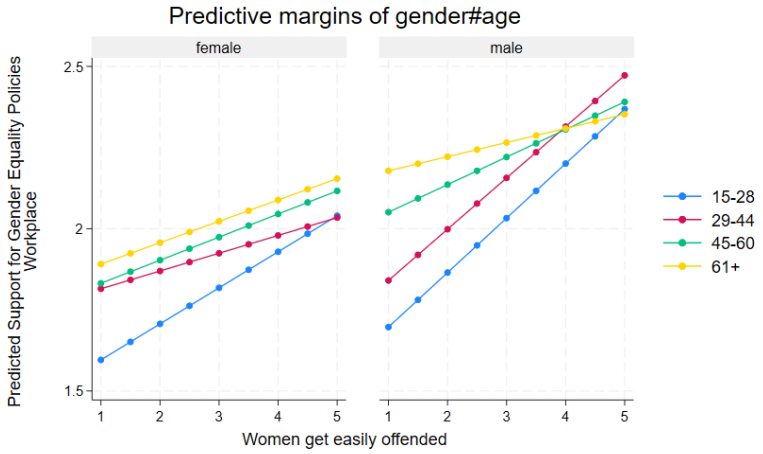


Figure 53a: Separate hostile sexism questions, workplace.



Note. Predicted support for gender equality policies by level of hostile sexism, plotted separately by gender and age group. Results are based on an OLS regression with a three-way interaction term (hostile sexism x gender x age). Higher values on the y-axis indicate lower support. The plot shows predicted values with 95% confidence intervals, adjusted for education, income, employment, religion, race, living in a city and country fixed effects.