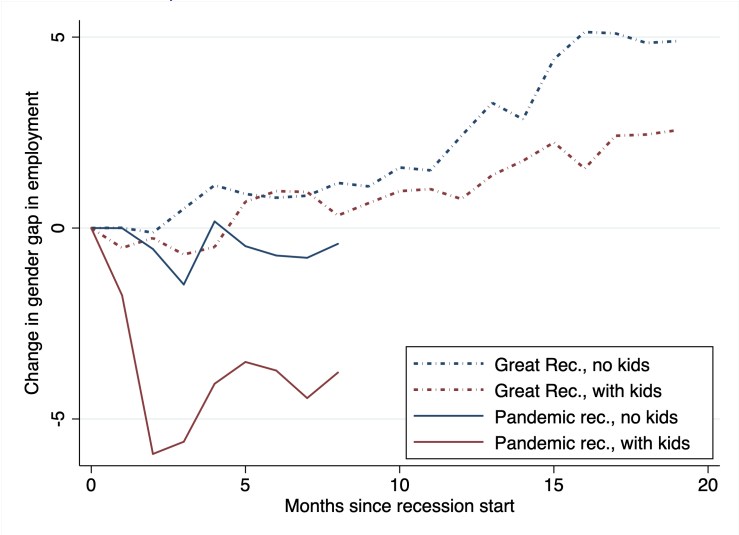


From Mancession to Shecession: Women's Employment in Regular and Pandemic Recessions

Titan Alon, Sena Coskun, Matthias Doepke, David Koll, and Michèle Tertilt



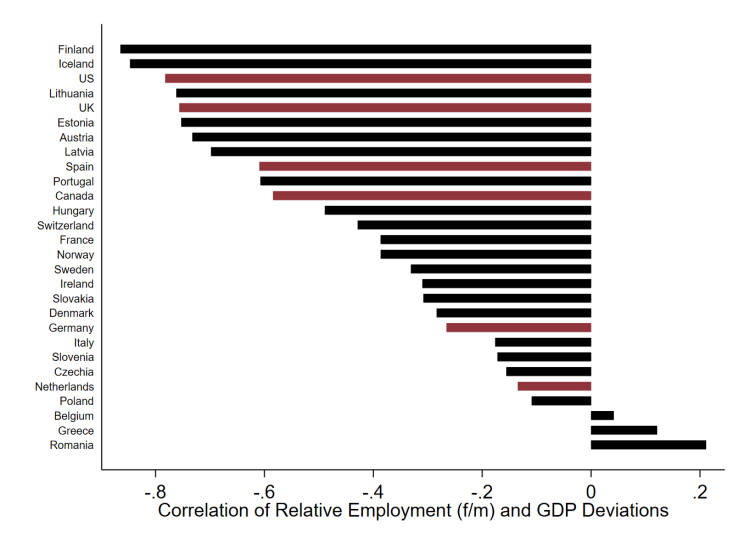
Women's versus Men's Employment in Great Recession versus Pandemic Recession (United States)



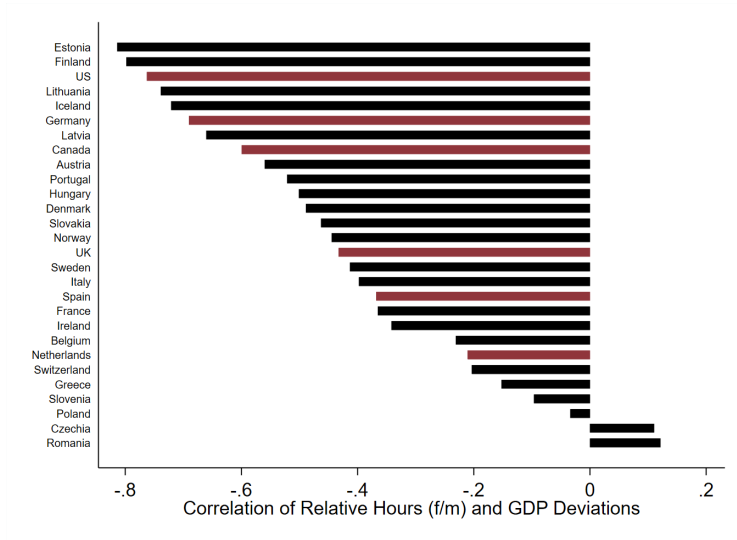
Questions:

- ▶ Are regular recessions “mancessions” in most countries?
- ▶ Is the pandemic recession a “shecession” in most countries?
- ▶ How much can be accounted for by industry/occupation and childcare?
- ▶ How does the pandemic affect workers’ productivity?
- ▶ What are the wider implications of the pandemic “shecession” during the recovery and beyond?

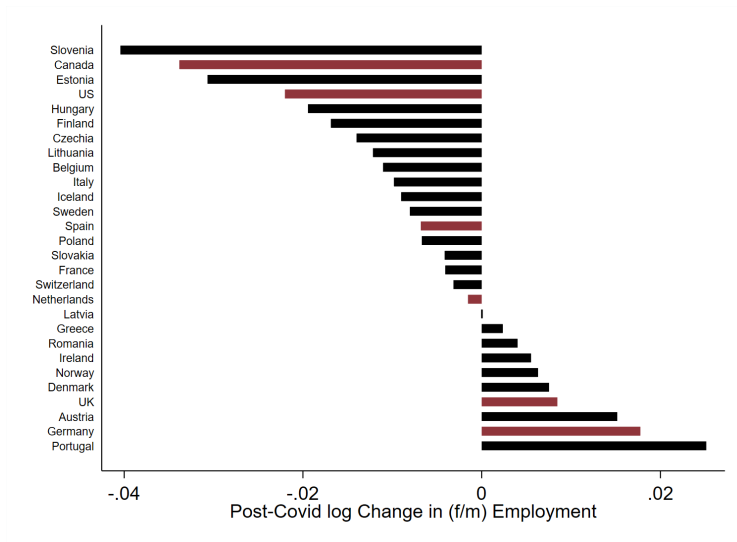
In Most Countries, Regular Recessions are Mancessions (Employment)



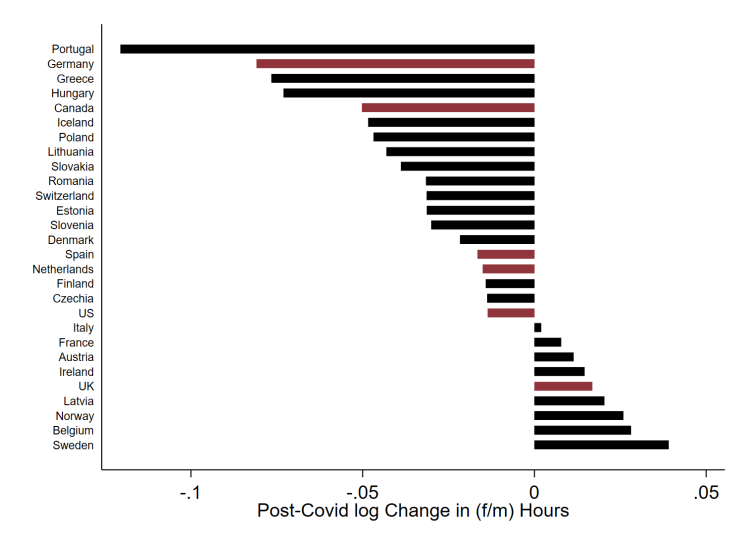
In Most Countries, Regular Recessions are Mancessions (Hours)



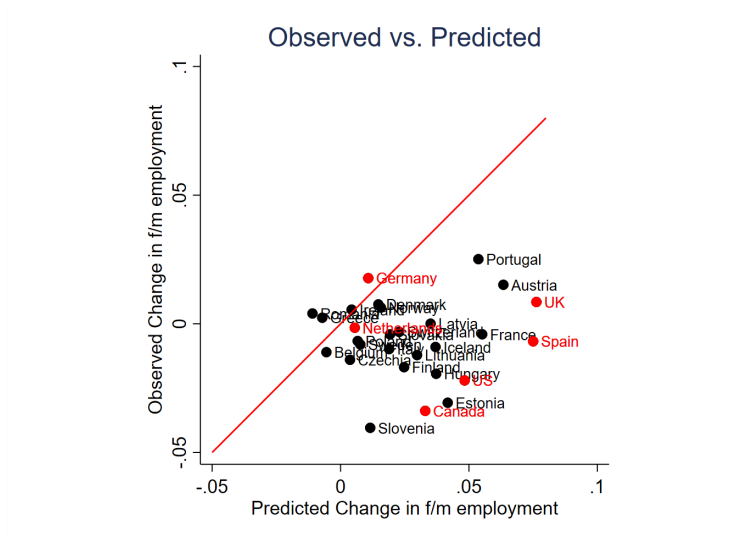
In Most Countries, the Pandemic Recession is a Shecession (Employment)



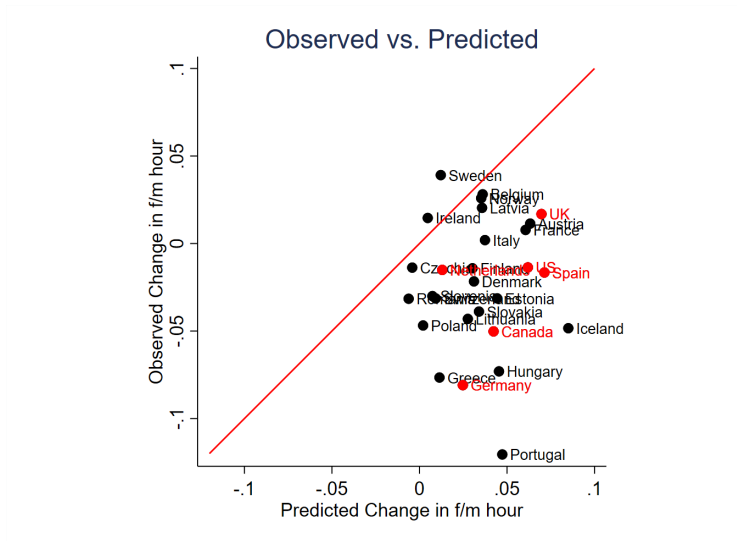
In Most Countries, the Pandemic Recession is a Shecession (Hours)



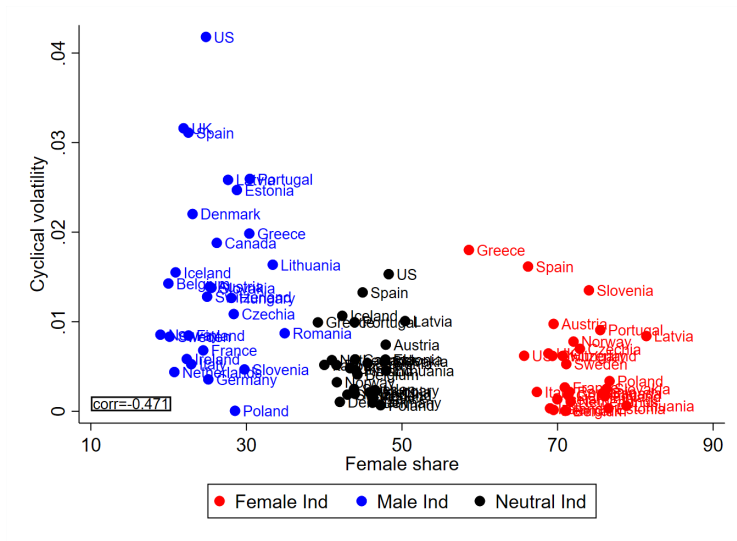
In Most Countries, the Pandemic Recession is a Shecession



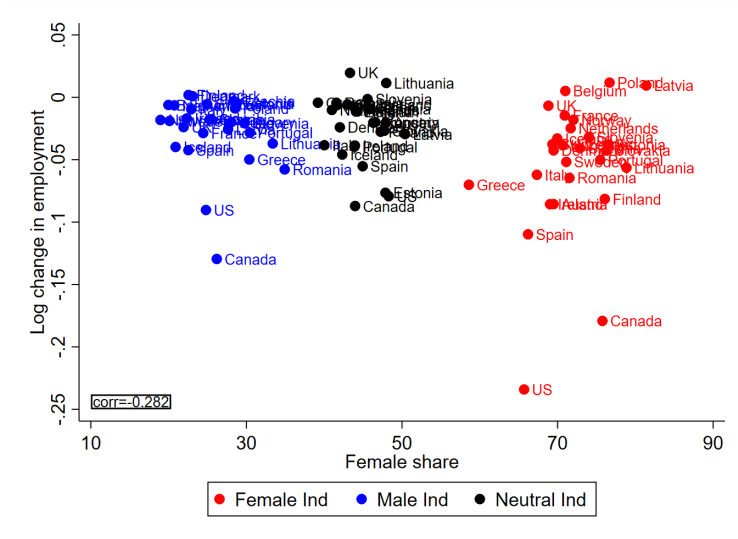
In Most Countries, the Pandemic Recession is a Shecession



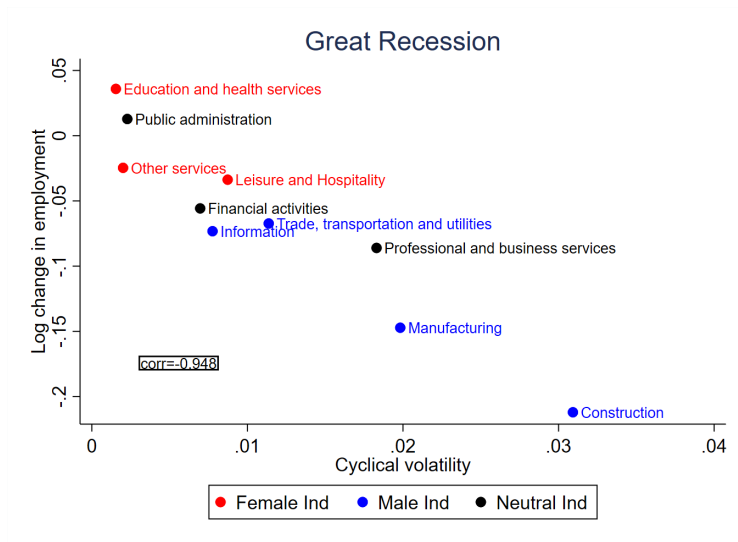
Industries Matter: Regular Recessions



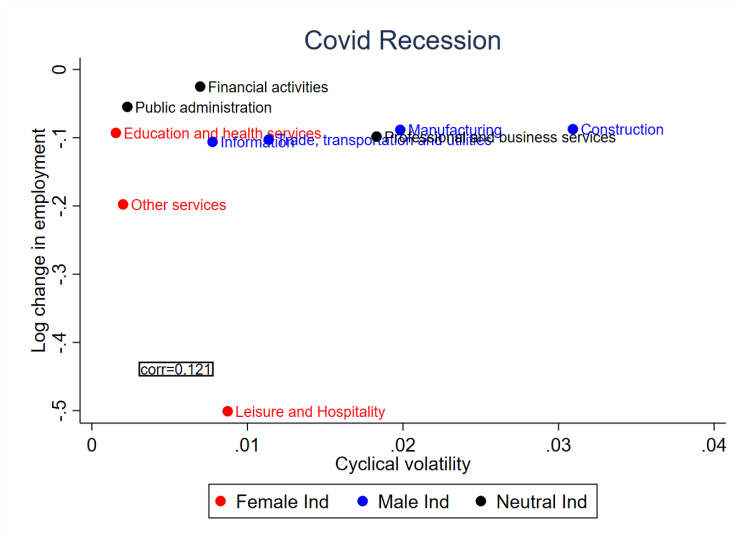
Industries Matter: Pandemic Recession



Industries Matter: Great Recession, United States



Industries Matter: Pandemic Recession, United States



Correlates of Pandemic Employment Changes Across Countries

Factors associated with larger overall employment declines across countries:

- ▶ School closures.
- ▶ Larger share of hospitality industry.
- ▶ Fewer jobs that can be done from home.

Lack of telecommutable jobs also associated with relatively larger declines in women's hours worked.

Micro Evidence from Six Countries

Labor force surveys from the United States, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

Baseline regression to measure **relative impact of the pandemic on women**:

$$y_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 F_i + \beta_2 D_t + \beta_3 F_i \times D_t + \beta_4 \mathbf{X}_{it} + \epsilon_{it}.$$

Regression to measure role of **industry/occupation distribution** and **childcare** in accounting for gender differences:

$$y_{it} = \theta_0 \mathbf{Kid}_{it} + \theta_1 F_i \times \mathbf{Kid}_{it} + \theta_2 \mathbf{Kid}_{it} \times D_t + \theta_3 F_i \times \mathbf{Kid}_{it} \times D_t \\ + \theta_4 \mathbf{Job}_{it} + \theta_5 \mathbf{Job}_{it} \times D_t + \theta_6 \mathbf{X}_{it} + \epsilon_{it}.$$

Impact of Pandemic on Women's Relative Employment

	USA	CAN	DEU	NLD	ESP	GBR
Overall employment decline	-6.34	-5.52	-0.28	0.67	-6.96	-0.13
w/ industry & occ controls (γ_3)	-1.09	-0.46				
	(0.00)	(0.02)				
pre-K kids ($\theta_{3,\text{pre-K}}$)	-0.81				0.10	
	(0.03)				(0.05)	
school age kids ($\theta_{3,\text{school}}$)	-1.79	-1.63				
	(0.00)	(0.00)				
no kids ($\theta_{3,\text{none}}$)	-0.95					
	(0.00)					

Impact of Pandemic on Women's Relative Hours

	USA	CAN	DEU	NLD	ESP	GBR
Overall hours decline	-36.17	-43.77	-52.18	6.91	-43.99	-42.20
w/ industry & occ controls (γ_3)	-5.20	-7.21	-22.38			
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.03)			
pre-K kids ($\theta_{3,\text{pre-K}}$)	-3.66	-5.58		-65.79		
	(0.08)	(0.00)		(0.01)		
school age kids ($\theta_{3,\text{school}}$)	-8.94	-11.55			-5.00	-6.31
	(0.00)	(0.00)			(0.03)	(0.12)
no kids ($\theta_{3,\text{none}}$)	-4.19	-4.64	-29.71			
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.02)			

Decomposing the Channels

For the United States, decompose total gender gap into factors due to childcare, industry/occupation, and other factors.

Outcome	Childcare Channel	Occupation/Industry Channel	Residual
Employment	13.7%	12.4%	73.9%
Hours	17.7%	19.8%	62.5%

Decomposing the Channels

For the United States, decompose total gender gap into factors due to childcare, industry/occupation, and other factors.

Outcome	Childcare Channel	Occupation/Industry Channel	Residual
Employment	13.7%	12.4%	73.9%
Hours	17.7%	19.8%	62.5%

Decomposition of hours changes for employed population:

Outcome	Childcare Channel	Occupation/Industry Channel	Residual
Hours	21.0%	50.5%	28.5%

Gender Gaps During the Great Recession (2007/12–2008/04)

	Hours		Employment	
	benchmark	work controls	benchmark	work controls
Basic gender gap (β_3/γ_3)	10.13 (0.00)	3.39 (0.00)	1.88 (0.00)	0.39 (0.01)
pre-K kids ($\delta_{3,\text{pre-K}}/\theta_{3,\text{pre-K}}$)	12.51 (0.00)	2.51 (0.09)	2.54 (0.00)	0.19 (0.44)
school age kids ($\delta_{3,\text{school}}/\theta_{3,\text{school}}$)	8.08 (0.00)	3.12 (0.01)	1.40 (0.00)	0.34 (0.10)
none ($\delta_{3,\text{none}}/\theta_{3,\text{none}}$)	10.37 (0.00)	3.64 (0.00)	1.92 (0.00)	0.44 (0.01)

More Heterogeneity

- ▶ In US and Canada, larger gender gaps among less educated.
- ▶ In US, no gender gap for workers without children and BA degree or higher.
- ▶ In US, similar gender gaps among white and Black workers.
- ▶ In Germany, larger gender gaps among workers with migration background.
- ▶ Much larger impact on single mothers; in US, accounted for by industry/occupation.

Working from Home

Virtually no gender gaps among workers who can work from home!

Hours worked during the pandemic in the United States:

	Women		Men	
	Non-Tele	Telecommute	Non-Tele	Telecommute
No or adult children	35.2	37.9	39.1	39.9
Pre-K children	30.0	35.2	40.3	40.4
Middle school children	32.5	36.6	40.5	41.5
High school children	34.1	36.8	40.6	41.4

Summary of Micro Evidence

Large impact on working mothers of school-age children confirms role of childcare channel.

Industry/occupation also matters; in United States, accounts for about 20 percent of impact on women.

Employment protection and furlough policies likely shape whether impacts show up in terms of employment or hours.

Also:

Hardly any gender gaps among those who can work from home!

Productivity when Working from Home



(Bonus question: who is on a work call right now?)

A Clash between Work and Childcare?

Working from home while looking after children, Netherlands, April 2020

	Home hours	Childcare/home work	Childcare/all work
Mothers, kids 1-5	9.9	59.4%	34.8%
Fathers, kids 1-5	17.2	49.5%	26.1%
Mothers, kids 6-14	11.1	76.0%	38.7%
Fathers, kids 6-14	15.4	58.5%	27.7%

Evidence from other studies (time use surveys, productivity in academia) also suggest a larger impact on the productivity of mothers working from home.

Women's Employment in a Pandemic Recession

The pandemic recession is a shecession (almost) everywhere.

Industry/occupation and childcare needs are the main (but not the only) explanations.

Policies such as furloughing schemes matter a lot.

Ability to work from home greatly mitigates impact of pandemic on working women.

Women's Employment in a Pandemic Recession

The pandemic recession is a shecession (almost) everywhere.

Industry/occupation and childcare needs are the main (but not the only) explanations.

Policies such as furloughing schemes matter a lot.

Ability to work from home greatly mitigates impact of pandemic on working women.

All of this ...

→ ... matters for shape of recession and recovery.

→ ... matters for evolution of gender equality in the labor market.