

4th SHARE user conference
28-29 November 2013
Liège - Belgium

**GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SELF-
RATED HEALTH IN THE LATER LIFE
IN POST-SOCIALIST COUNTRY: DOES
SOCIAL COHESION MATTER?**

Rein Vöörmann, Jelena Helemäe
Tallinn University



Gender differences in SRH in post-socialist Estonia

Working-age population:

- East-West health divide:
gender differentials in SRH in the East are especially marked compared to the West
- Absence of gender gap in SRH in Estonia
- Similar patterns of influence of socio-economic factors on men's and women's SRH in Estonian neoliberal welfare regime and Finnish social democratic welfare regime
- Vulnerability explanation holds for Estonia (not for Finland):
in Estonia women suffer from low social cohesion and lack of economic resources to a greater extent than Estonian men

SHARE : Gender differences in SRH in post-socialist Estonia - Methodology

- **Ecological model:** *type of social cohesion* as influencing level and patterns of healths of aged population in given country
- **Type of social cohesion** is measured by (cf *Deindl et al 2013*)
 - Income inequality (Gini coefficient)
 - General social trust (mean of answers on question, whether most people can be trusted)
- **Estonia** as East *versus* social democratic **Denmark**
[on the backdrop of other post-socialist countries]

SHARE : Countries as Types of social cohesion

	Social cohesion		SRH in later life
	Income inequality:GINI	General social trust	Level of SRH
Estonia	HIGH 0.320	HIGH 5.309	HIGH
Poland	HIGH 0.305	Medium 3.856	HIGH
Hungary	Medium 0.272	Medium 4.151	HIGH
Czechia	LOW 0.256	Medium 4.448	Medium
Slovenia	LOW 0.246	Medium 4.115	Medium
Denmark	LOW 0.252	HIGH 6.922	LOW

Measures

The status of SRH

“Would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?”.

(0) at-least-good (excellent, very good) and good vs.

(1) less-than-good (fair and poor) health.

Social Networks

- structure - the number of people with whom respondents discussed important things;
- social support: (a) gifts, (b) help which the respondent given or received;
- network quality - overall satisfaction with relationships to social network members.

Economic resources

- perceived economic situation (“How household is able to make ends meet”)
- education
- employment.

Behaviour – ever smoked, physically active

Data analysis

Logistic regression analysis.

Dependent variable : The risk of **perceiving own health to be less-than-good**.

1. The impact of gender on SRH in pooled model for all six countries. Estonia is a point of reference.

Model : resident of country and gender, interaction country*gender

2. The impact of gender on SRH separately in each country:

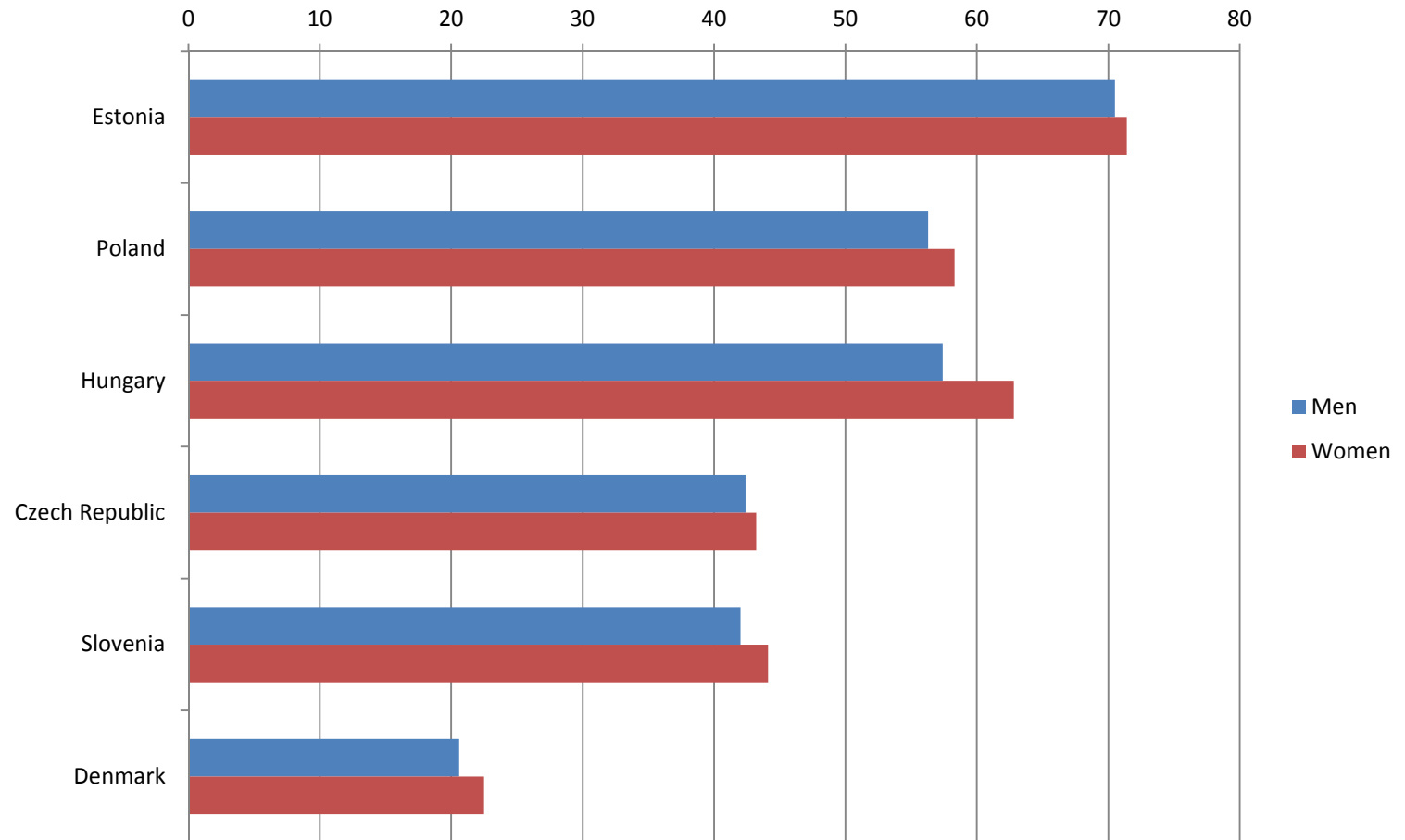
Gross effects – Model 1

Net effects - Model 2: Model 1 + Social Networks measures,

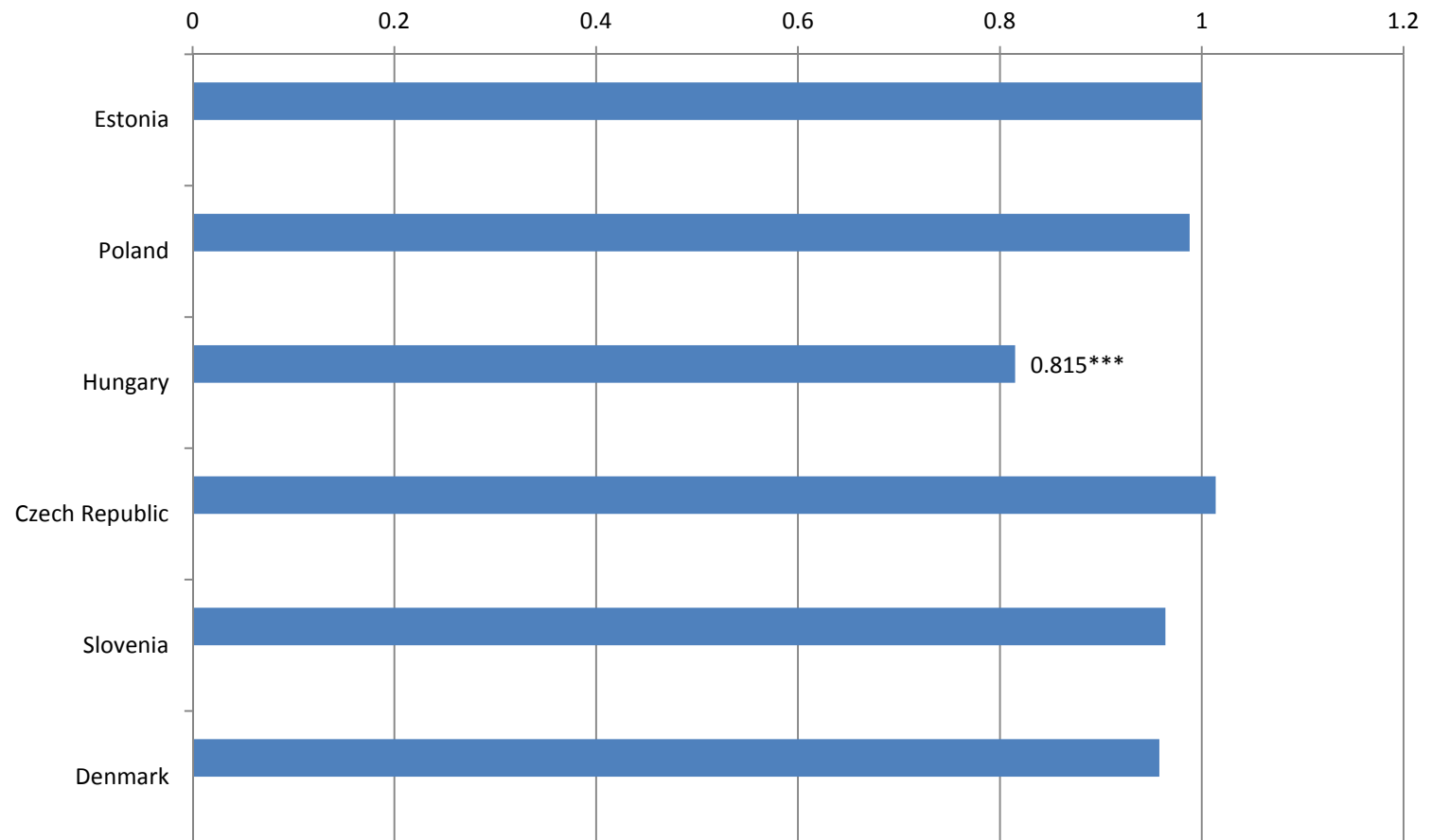
Model 3: M 2 + Economic resources + behavior

Gender-specific impact of Social Networks (interaction terms)

Gender differences in less-than-poor SRH by countries, %



Risk of having less-than-poor SRH: Men compared to women in selected countries (Estonia as referent in pooled model), interaction terms, odds ratios



Gender differences in SRH by countries

	Gender differences in SRH—odds		
	Gross: Gender gap: men vs women Model 1	Net: Controlled for Social network measures Model 2	Net: Controlled for SN and economic resources and behavior Model 3
Estonia	0.93**	0.95*	0.99
Poland	0.92*	0.95	1.02
Hungary	0.76***	0.77***	0.96
Czechia	0.94*	1.00	1.15***
Slovenia	0.90**	0.93	1.08
Denmark	0.89*	0.89*	1.07

Gender-specific impact on less-than-good self-rated health by countries

	Social Networks					
	Structure: size	Support: Gift given	Support: Gift received	Support: Help given	Support: Help received	Quality: Satisfaction
EE	1.09***			0.87**	1.26**	
PL	1.15***	1.65***	0.46***			
HU	1.10***	1.26*				1.05*
Cz		0.89*				0.96*
SI	0.92**	0.61***		0.76*		
DK				0.65***		

Summary: Gender differences in SRH by types of social cohesion

	Social cohesion		Gender differences in SRH		
	Income inequality: GINI	General social trust	Gross: Gender gap Model 1	Net: Controlled for Social network measures Model 2	Net: Controlled for SN and economic resources* Model 3
Estonia	HIGH	HIGH	Narrow	Narrow	
Poland	HIGH	Medium	Narrow		
Hungary	Medium	Medium	SOME	SOME	
Czechia	LOW	Medium	Narrow		SOME
Slovenia	LOW	Medium	Narrow		
Denmark	LOW	HIGH	Narrow	Narrow	

Conclusions

- ESTONIA vs DENMARK:
 - Patterns of gender differences in SRH are quite similar ,
 - substantial difference in economic inequality.
- ESTONIA vs OTHER post-socialist countries :
Variety of gender differences patterns
under different patterns of social cohesion.
- SN work in Estonia and Denmark in rather different ways to
produce at first glance similar results
- Social cohesion reveal itself also through the particularities of
welfare state?
 - Danish social-democratic versus Estonian neoliberal welfare state.