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Europeans' gender equality values and cultural orientations.

Where do Italians stand?

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Abstract

This contribution offers a comparative analysis of attitudes towards gender roles (GRA) in the domestic and public domains and their relation to cultural orientations.

Using the novel alignment method, the factor means of GRA have been estimated while assessing for their measurement equivalence across the whole set of 34 countries included in the final release of EVS 2017. The results address the necessity of considering the multidimensionality of this concept. The country ranking showed that several countries support egalitarian gender roles in the public and domestic domains differently. In some cases, support for gender equality in the public sphere was expressed alongside traditional views in the private sphere, displaying, therefore, ambivalence between attitudes in these two domains.

The Pearson correlations between GRA and the cultural values scores (Schwartz 2006) show that societies that emphasize the importance of the collective and status quo tend to support more traditional gender roles, both in the public and in the domestic domain. However, this relationship is stronger and clearer in the public domain.

These findings suggest that the shift towards more egalitarian societies risks being slowed down if policies favor female economic and political participation but neglect the promotion of equality in the household.

In contrast to the European context, the specificity of the Italian case will be pointed out.

Keywords

gender equality; gender role attitudes; cultural orientations; measurement equivalence