

# Counting Women's Work and the Care Economy

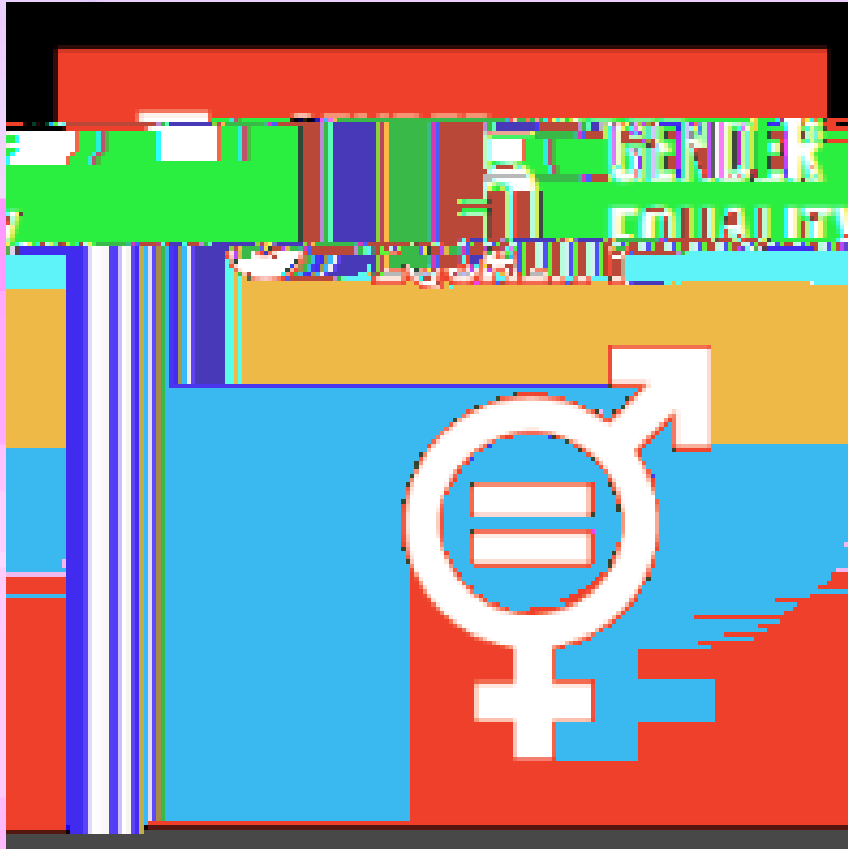
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21 July 2021

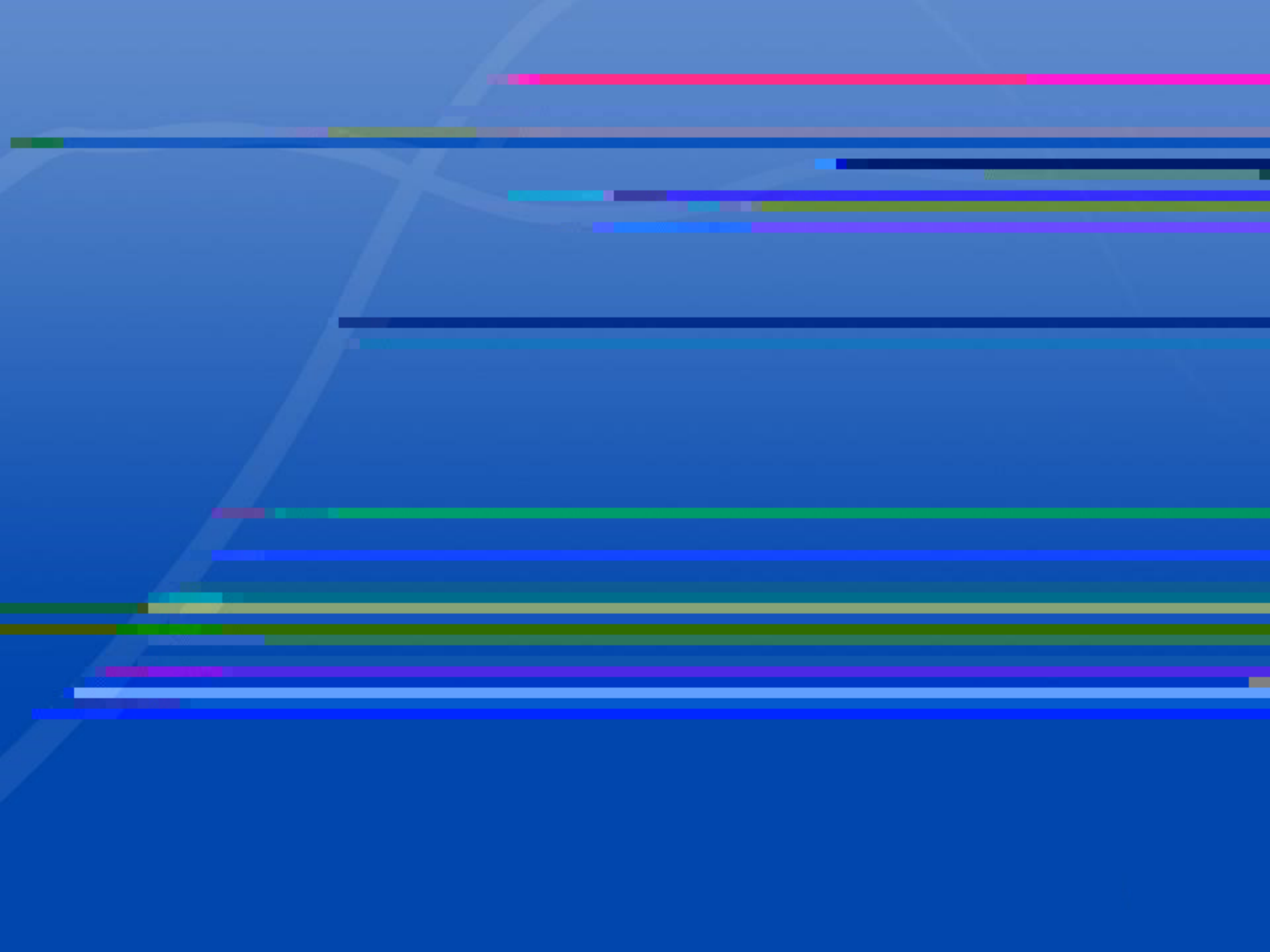
United Nations DESA (online)

EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON POPULATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
IN PARTICULAR SUSTAINED AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

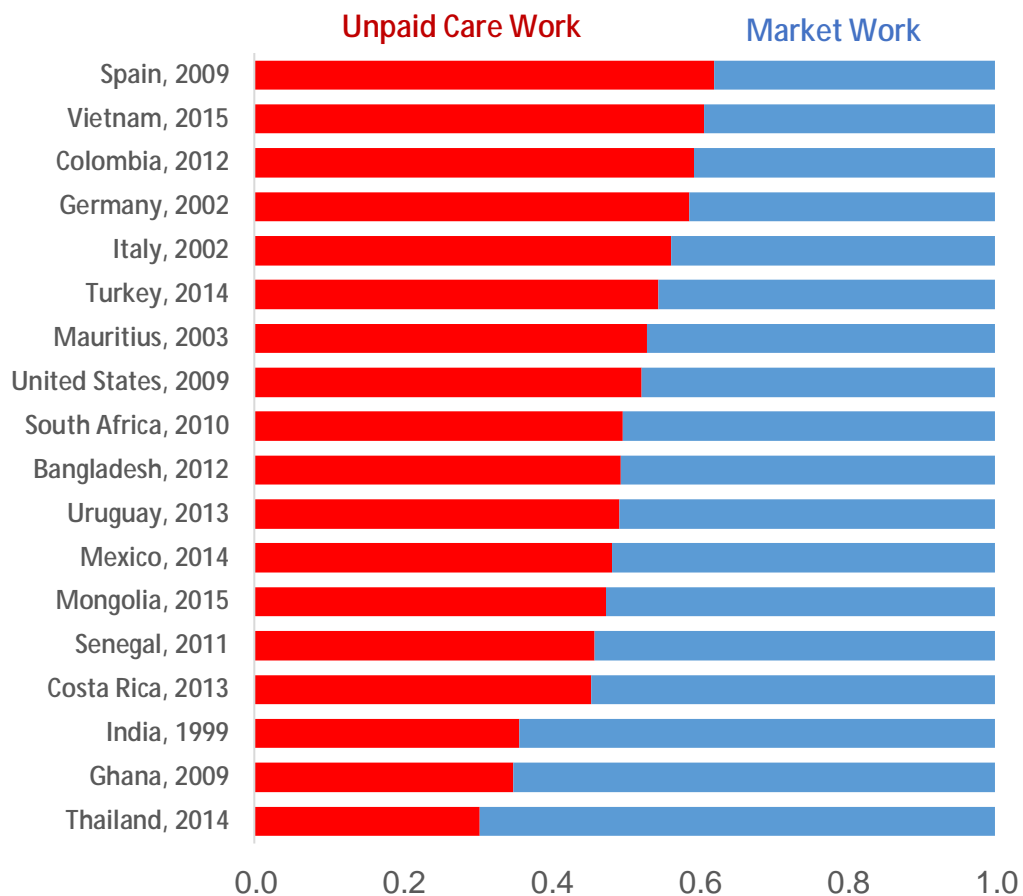
# Women's Work and SDGs



- 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

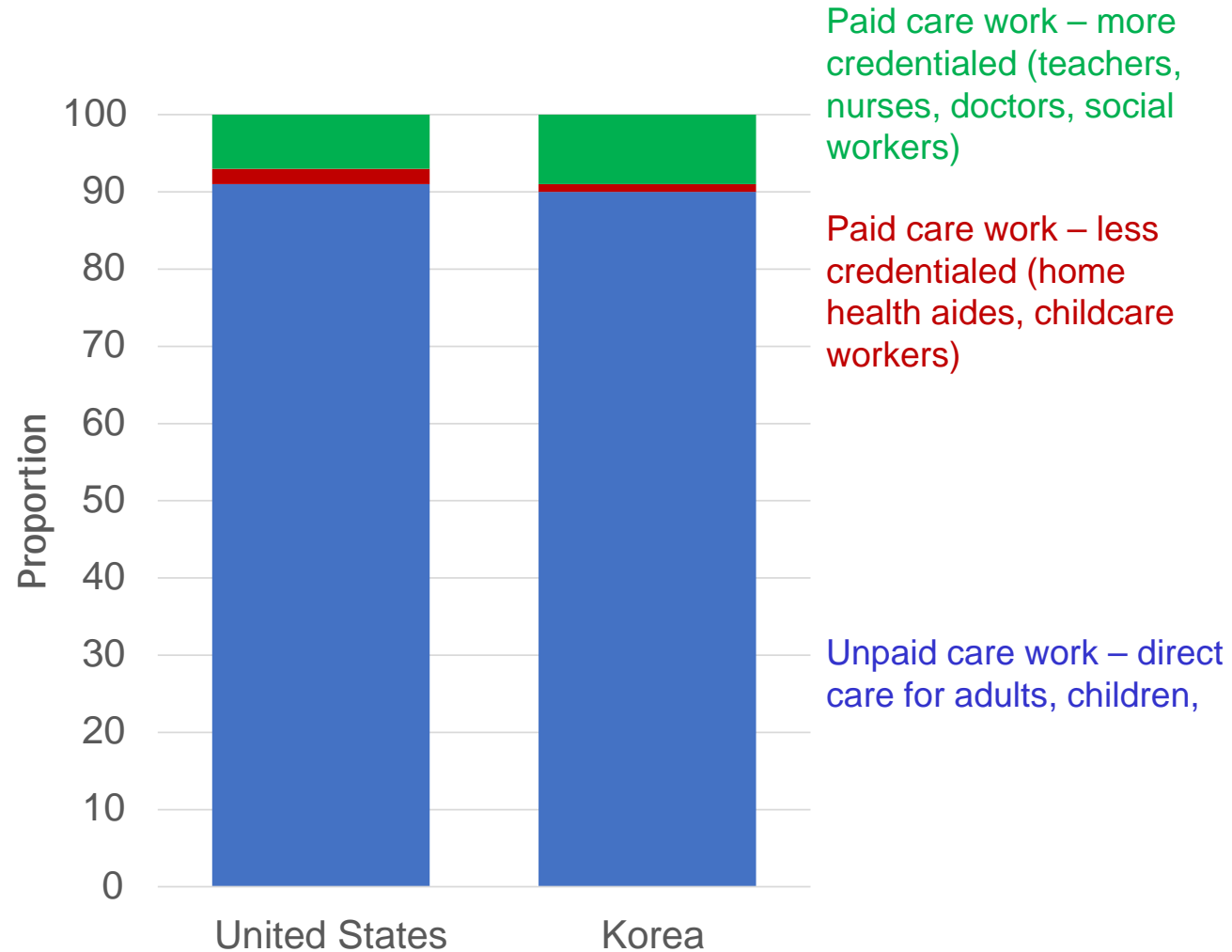


# It is big



Source: Results from national time use surveys, compiled by Counting Women's Work, [www.countingwomenswork.org](http://www.countingwomenswork.org)

# Most of it is unpaid



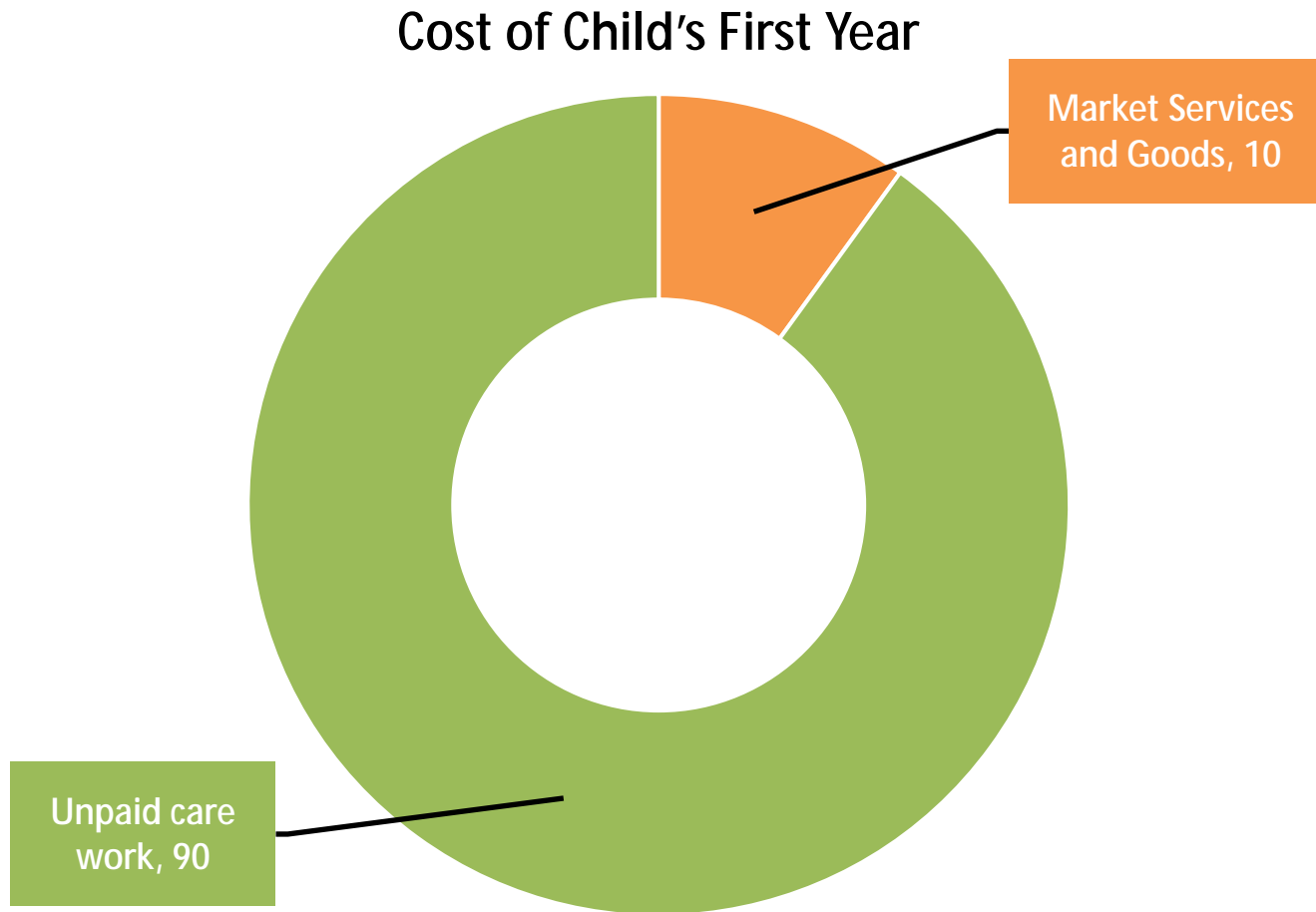


# Variability in age patterns of care

Average work hours/week by age, **women (solid)** and **men (dashed)**



# Unpaid Care Work Creates Our Future

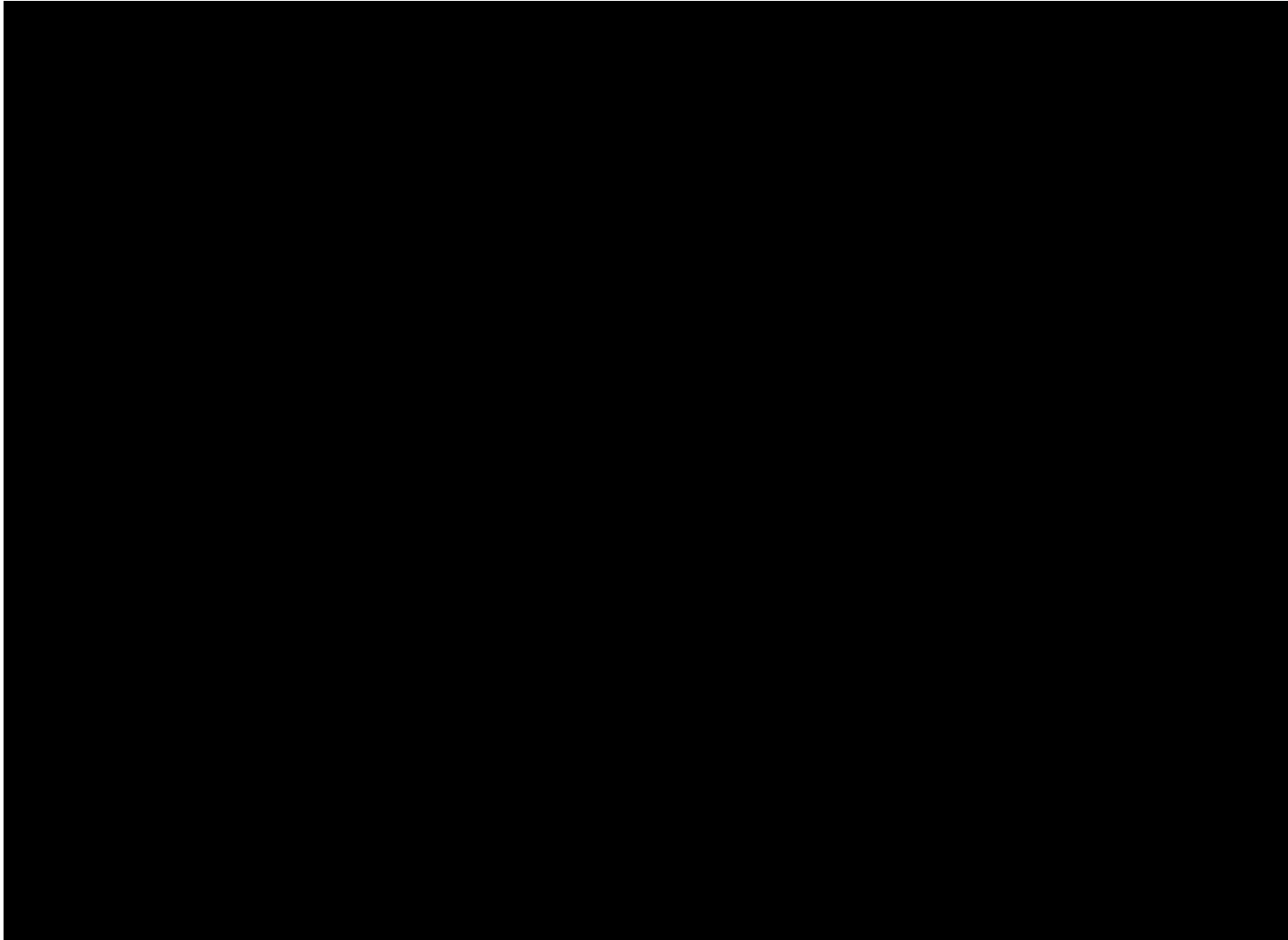


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# Who is care “expensive”?

Average hours/week in net UCW time consumed  
(consumption less production)



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older  
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Why should we care about these  
empirical findings?

What do they mean for policy?

# Implications of findings and policy responses

- Unpaid + feminized = policy blindspots
  - Pandemic is example of how we did not plan for impacts on the care economy; economic recovery slowed because care economy still impacted
  - Underinvestment in infrastructure

# Implications of findings and policy responses

- Unpaid care work is a social good, not a “burden”
  - Relative size of inputs to young children stresses importance of care
  - But want to share responsibilities more equitably so women are not disadvantaged
- What to do?
  - Subsidize unpaid care work
  - Invest more in developing the paid care economy
  - Structuring family policy to involve fathers more

# Implications of findings and policy responses

- Policies to increase fertility must reckon with the full cost of children
  - Costs of raising children including UCW time
  - Opportunity costs
- What to do?
  - More money and paid care provision
  - Enhance women's ability to raise children and work (e.g. longer school days)
  - Recognize opportunity cost issues (pension credits, labor force re-entry support)