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The Flip Side of Marital Specialization
Evidence from a French Administrative Database**

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Document de travail



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Inégalités économiques entre hommes et femmes après le divorce : le revers de la spécialisation conjugale

Résumé

Les conséquences économiques d'un divorce peuvent être très différentes pour les deux ex-époux et de nombreuses études étrangères mettent en évidence une baisse importante du niveau de vie des femmes et une stabilité voire une hausse de celui des hommes. Pour éclairer cette question dans le contexte français, nous utilisons les données fiscales de l'impôt sur le revenu et de la taxe d'habitation relatifs aux couples qui ont divorcé ou rompu leur PACS en 2009. En les comparant avec des couples aux caractéristiques identiques avant séparation et qui, eux, sont restés mariés, nous montrons que le divorce est à l'origine d'une perte de niveau de vie moyenne de 19 % pour les femmes, nettement supérieure à celle des hommes (2,5 %). Nos résultats montrent que ce n'est pas le nombre d'enfants qui a l'effet le plus important sur ces variations mais que ce sont les différences de revenus et d'activité entre époux avant la séparation, celles-ci pouvant résulter des choix de spécialisation du couple pendant le mariage. Les transferts publics jouent un rôle important, de même que les transitions sur le marché du travail. Ainsi, on observe un retour massif sur le marché du travail des ex-époux qui étaient sans activité un an avant le divorce, principalement des femmes. L'existence de transferts publics et les ajustements professionnels atténuent fortement sans toutefois compenser totalement la différence de pertes de niveaux de vie entre les hommes et les femmes.

Mots-clés : Divorce, niveaux de vie, inégalités homme femme, pension alimentaire, famille monoparentale, offre de travail

Gender Inequality after Divorce: The Flip Side of Marital Specialization Evidence from a French Administrative Database

Abstract

If divorce has large consequences on both ex-spouses, its economic impact may be very different for each partner. It is well-documented that women generally experience a large decrease of their living standards after union dissolution, whereas men's living standards are often presented as stable or increase. Thanks to a very rich administrative dataset on French couples who broke up their marriage in 2009, matched with identical still married spouses, we interestingly show that both women and men support a loss in average, but still of larger magnitude for women (19%) than for men (2.5%). Results show that the number of children only plays a minor role in the explanations of the large women's impoverishment. The share of couple's resources each spouse provides before divorce, resulting mainly from marital specialization, is the main driver. Child support payments, public transfers and the massive labor market reentry of inactive women mitigate but do not cancel post-divorce gender inequalities.

Keywords: Divorce, living standards, gender inequalities, child support payment, alimony, lone parents, labor supply

Classification JEL : J12, J16, K36, I38

1 Introduction

Divorce has large consequences on both ex-spouses, but its economic impact may be very different for each partner. It is well-documented that women generally experience a large decrease of their living standards, with a higher risk of entering poverty after union dissolution, whereas men's living standards are often presented as stable or higher on average. By raising both poverty and gender inequality, divorce carries important welfare issues. These post-divorce gender inequalities are often explained by mothers being more likely the custodial parents. Having their children at home most of the time, the custodial parents generally bear more expenses and have less opportunity to return to or to remain on the labor market on a full-time basis. However, living arrangements for children raised by divorced or separated parents have changed dramatically over last decades. In many countries, a growing share of separated parents adopts more equal arrangements such as shared custody. Could we expect this trend of a more equal share of children costs to reduce gender inequalities in living standards?

To answer this, we need to look deeper into the components of living standards of divorcees and how they change following divorce. Several factors play a significant role and might interact with the custodial parent status. Four main components can be distinguished. The first one is composed of earnings and replacement income. These labor market resources are related to both past and current situations. The marital specialization could have created or increased an unbalanced sharing of labor market incomes between partners. Women who withdrew from the labor market or reduced significantly their working hours during marital life earn less than men at the moment of divorce. This marital specialization effect is possibly amplified by additional gender wage discriminations. After divorce, women can decide to reenter the labor market or increase their working hours.

Secondly, public transfers (such as housing allowances, minimum welfare, lone parent allowance, family allowance...), that mostly benefit to poorest divorcees, can reduce the income loss shock due to divorce, and thus the risk of poverty. The third element is

private transfers between former spouses. Generally given by the non-custodial parent to the custodial one, the child support participates to balance the child(ren) expenses between the two parents. A spousal alimony could also partly compensate the unbalance sharing of incomes after divorce, which is due to different marital investments decided during the union.

Finally, the size of the household could also play a role. The number and age of children living in the household after the divorce and the time they spend with each parent could affect the living standards.

Why women are poorer than men after divorce? Which component of living standard plays the bigger role in the variation observed? What is divorce responsible for? Answering these questions is difficult because of the interrelationships of these four determinants in such a way that it is challenging to know which one might be the main responsible of women's poverty after divorce. Another difficulty arises as, generally, not all of them are simultaneously observed in data sources. More specifically there is a lack of data on private transfers between former partners. A last issue is to assess a causal effect of divorce, which requires to go beyond the classical but sometimes misleading before-after comparison of living standards. Thanks to a very rich administrative dataset on 92,000 couples who split from marriage or civil partnership in 2009, this article measures and analyses the variations in living standards for both spouses, the role of the different components and more specifically the labor market behavior. We focus on individuals who do not repartner or cohabit the year following divorce. By matching these divorcees to still married spouses who are identical to them on a large range of characteristics, and using a difference-in-differences approach, we are also able to further assess a causal effect of divorce on living standards and on labor market behavior of men and women after divorce.

Our findings confirm that French women still support larger losses on average than men after divorce (respectively -19% compared to -2.5%). Contrary to the common belief, they also suggest that the custodial status plays only a minor role in the explanations of

the large women’s impoverishment. The before-after divorce living standard variations are similar whatever the number of children. The higher losses of large families are compensated by higher public transfers and welfare benefits in France. On the contrary, the differences in earnings between partners while married, partly due to the marital specialization process, are by far the major determinant of gender inequalities after divorce, only partially compensated by an increase in labor force participation.

2 Previous studies

The literature on the economic consequences of divorce is quite extensive. To sum it up in one sentence, it emphasizes the gendered economic consequences of union dissolution, showing generally a worsening of women’s living standards after separation, whereas those of men remain stable or increase.

The first studies on the variation of living standards following divorce were done in the US. According to [Duncan and Hoffman \(1985\)](#), on the “Panel Study of Income Dynamics”, women experience a decrease in their adjusted income by about 25% following divorce and men experience an increase by about 3%. [Peterson \(1996\)](#) concludes that women experience a decrease by 27% of their adjusted income while men experience an increase by 10%. But he highlights that for ten percent of women (and 9% of men), the decrease reaches 73% or more, emphasizing the necessity to look not only at the median or average variation but to consider also its distribution. Other assessments on American data agree upon a significant decrease in the living standard of women following divorce (table [A.1](#)). However, the magnitude of the variation in living standard they report differ. This ranges from 10% ([Hoffman \(1977\)](#) and [Duncan and Hoffman \(1985\)](#)) to 36% ([Bianchi, Subaiya, and Kahn \(1999\)](#)). [Holden and Smock \(1991\)](#) or [McKeever and Wolfinger \(2001\)](#) surveys report the same order of magnitude (from 10% to 40%).

Outside US, works on Canadian and European data come to the same range of conclusion. Regarding France, on the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) and the 1994-2000 period, [Uunk \(2004\)](#) reports one of the highest variation among European countries

with a 30% decrease in women's adjusted median income following divorce. Considering all couple dissolutions, not only divorces, and on more recent data (2003-2005, French part of SILC), [Jauneau and Raynaud \(2009\)](#) also report comparable figures with a median decrease in living standard following a separation of 31% for women remained alone after the separation.

For men, the interest in the economic consequences of divorce came later and the results so far are more ambiguous. The question is more about the sign of the variation than on the magnitude of the effect (table [A.1](#)). Most studies found a significant improvement in living standard following divorce ([Finnie \(1993\)](#), [Bianchi, Subaiya, and Kahn \(1999\)](#), [Smock \(1993\)](#) and [Smock \(1994\)](#) who found particularly large variations ranging from +47 to +93%). Some studies conclude rather to a stability ([Jarvis and Jenkins \(1999\)](#), [Poortman \(2000\)](#), [Kalmijn and Alessie \(2008\)](#)) whereas few of them find a deterioration ([Burkhauser, Duncan, Hauser, and Berntsen \(1991\)](#), [McManus and DiPrete \(2001\)](#), [Jauneau and Raynaud \(2009\)](#)).

The difference in these results might come from factors of different nature.

First, of course both period and institutional aspects can participate to explain country-specific results. Welfare systems are more or less generous towards lone parents and public transfers differ from one country to another. This is the point highlighted by [Uunk \(2004\)](#) who focuses on the differences in European welfare systems. He reports that the economic consequences of divorce are lower in countries where social welfare and public childcare are the most important.

Furthermore, both the child alimony decisions and their recovery rate are very country-specific and might drive differences in private transfers. Regarding the definition of living standards, the role of private - in particular spousal and child support payments, and public transfers in balancing the negative consequences of divorce for women (or conversely in making the situation worse for men) has been rarely explored. There are only a few studies that compare income variations before and after taking private and public trans-

fers into account. On German and American data, [Burkhauser, Duncan, Hauser, and Berntsen \(1991\)](#) show that following divorce, once private transfers included, women's living standards in the US decrease by 37% without public transfers and by 24% with them, while in Germany the decrease reaches 44% including or not public transfers. On Dutch data, [Poortman \(2000\)](#) shows that the decrease in the living standard of women excluding private and public transfers is about 65% and 31% if these transfers are included (for men respectively -18% and +4%). Using data from the 1994-2000 ECHP survey, [Uunk \(2004\)](#) compares the short-term economic consequences of divorce for women across 14 Member States of the European Union. He shows that women in the European Union differ in the income changes they experience at divorce. The income decline is less important in countries with a high level of public childcare provision and higher social welfare payments, especially for lone parents. To our knowledge, the article from [McManus and DiPrete \(2001\)](#), focused on men, is the only one distinguishing the role of public and private transfers. They compare three income measures: total income before taxes and government transfers; household income including taxes and public transfers; household income after support payments and including taxes and public transfers and subtracting support payments. White men who contributed less than 60% to the former couple's household income experience an important living standard decline following separation (from 16% to 43% depending on the male share of pre-disruption income). The effects of taxes and transfers reduce their losses (the decrease then equals 12 to 34%). But this mitigation of the decrease by public transfers is offset by the negative effects of support payments. White men who contributed 80% or more to pre-disruption income -best representing the traditional male breadwinner model, experience a significant increase in their living standard (by about 22%). Including taxes and transfers reduces this gain by around a quarter. Finally deducting support payments from their income reduces their gain in standard living following separation to a statistically non-significant 1 percent.

Measurements of living standards might be also a crucial issue that might contribute to explain the heterogeneity of results even within the same country (and sometimes

with the same database). The magnitude of the effects might depend on the definition of living standards. The sources of income included (private and public transfers), the choice of the equivalence scale, of the indicator used (variation in the mean/median living standard, median/mean variation in the living standards, see table A.1) or on the sub-population studied (for example Black/White in the US) differ according to the studies. Of course, for an event such as divorce, the difficulty to have the two partners in the survey sample and the small size of the sample may lead to inference issues (table A.2).

The reliability of the before-after estimator is also of concern. These estimators are now well-known for being sensitive to the economic trend and to selection bias. Two recent works from [Bedard and Deschênes \(2005\)](#) and [Ananat and Michaels \(2008\)](#) have used instrumental variables to compute a causal effect of divorce. To deal with the problem of selection into divorce and separation, they use the sex of the first child as an instrument. The instrumentation stems from the following result: when the first-born is a girl, the couple is more likely to divorce. [Bedard and Deschênes \(2005\)](#) find a positive gain for women at separation. With the same dataset, [Ananat and Michaels \(2008\)](#) show evidence of a strong decrease in standards of living for women at the bottom of the distribution and a strong increase for those at the top. However, only a local interpretation can be made of these findings. The results hold for the “compliers” ie for the couples who break up when the first-born is a girl and who don’t if it is a boy. Even though internal validity seems acquired, we face here the usual external validity problem. Another kind of method has been considered by [Ongaro, Mazzuco, and Meggiolaro \(2008\)](#) on Italian data and [Aassve, Betti, Mazzuco, and Mencarini \(2007a\)](#) on European data. They design a “control group” composed of couples who don’t divorce and who have similar characteristics as the divorced couples before the separation. Though neither of these studies computes variation in living standards, they both conclude to a deterioration in women’s economic situation.

3 Data

As mentioned above, the magnitude of the effects might depend on the definition of living standards. In particular, up to now, spousal and child support payments have received relatively scant attention in the economic and demographic literature, doubtless for lack of suitable data. As rare studies conclude to, these private transfers may however represent a significant amount of household post-divorce income. Ignoring them could lead to an overstatement of the income decline of women, and symmetrically to an overstatement of income increase for men (Kalmijn and Alessie (2008)). Besides, when information on support payments is available in surveys, the custodial parent (in most cases the mother) more often declares the amount received than the non-custodial parent (the father) does. This could possibly lead to an unequal picture (Jarvis and Jenkins (1999)) when comparing men and women living standards.

Another explanation of the differences in the results regarding economic consequences of divorce in the literature could be the size of the samples used. Indeed, most studies rely on panel data and the relatively low occurrence of the event “divorce” or “separation” between two yearly waves of a panel survey induces a small sample size (Table A.2). Besides, attrition is often important in survey panel data, because of the likelihood to move after the separation. These moves may not be random since the decision to move or not after a divorce might be linked to financial constraints.

New administrative data, recently available in France, enable us to overcome these three main difficulties. We use the exhaustive database of French income tax returns and local residence tax returns. Data coming from tax returns are supposed to be more reliable than data reported in surveys, in particular because part of them are directly filed by employers for example. Besides, the data set gives information about the paid amount for child and spouse support. These transfers being tax deductible, the incentive to report them on the tax return form is pretty high.

For the year 2009, from this income tax returns database of French residents, we extract a population composed of the divorcees and of partners who broke a Pacs¹ (the French civil union contract). We restrict our sample to the couples who do not have formed union in 2008 neither in 2009 in order to focus on couples who have lived together for at least one year.² Once excluded tax returns with missing data, we obtain a sample composed of 126,250 couples who were married (in 2008) and of 9,800 who were linked by a Pacs (in 2008)³, for which we recover at least one of the former partner the year following the divorce. This sample size has to be compared with the comparable official statistics regarding the number of divorces and ends of Pacs in France in 2009 (table B.1). Our sample covers at least 95% of the total of divorces and more than 55% of the ends of Pacs which took place in 2009 in France. We then match data before divorce (2008) with data one year after divorce (2010), which leads to a little loss of individuals (7.2%). Consequently we compute weights to take into account a potential differential attrition bias (see appendix B for more details on the construction of the dataset and the computation of weights). This big sample size is one of the significant advantages of our database.

We then exclude from our sample individuals who either (re)marry, (re)pacs or cohabit (with at least another adult in 2010) the year after the break up. They represent roughly 30% of separated individuals. This choice has been made to observe only individual resources, not biased from those that would bring a potential new partner in case of repartnering. Of course, it is also for the sake of simplicity, because the observable situations we observe with cohabitation after divorce covers very different situations. People could live in the same dwelling with either a new partner, a relative such as a parent, or a friend, and no information about income pooling. It is then very difficult to estimate living standards in case of new cohabitation. Finally, as we are interested in labor supply after divorce, we focus on individuals aged between 20 and 55 years old. The upper age

¹For another reason than marriage or death of one partner.

²Another reason is the difficulty to disentangle tax returns when several events occur the same year.

³Partner linked by a Pacs, the French civil partnership, have to fill a joint tax return as married couples do.

limit has been set to 55 because in France, pre-retirement and retirement for some specific occupations can start at that age. Our final sample includes 56,500 men and 64,600 women who experienced either a divorce or a Pacs break-up in 2008 and for whom we get information from the income tax and the local tax residence returns in 2008 and 2010.

These income tax return do not collect data on family and welfare benefits as they are not taxable, but the rich information available on income, family and housing situation allows to calculate them, assuming that divorcees ask for their welfare benefits (see below). We compute them using information on family composition (number, age of household children, child(ren) custody arrangements) also available on the income tax file and information about the dwelling that is reported in the local tax returns. We compute four types of family benefits (allocations familiales, allocation de rentrée scolaire, complément familial, prestation d'accueil du jeune enfant (Paje)), housing allowances (allocation logement) for renters, and minimum income benefit (RMI in 2008 and RSA in 2010). Due to the lack of information⁴, we do not compute Family Support Allowance (Allocation de Soutien Familial). We assume here a 100 % take-up of these social and welfare benefits. We know that non take-up can be important, especially for minimum income benefit (RMI/RSA), inducing an overestimation of some of these benefits⁵ and also then of the living standards. However, the situation of divorce generally involves that people are more likely to meet and thus receive advices from the lawyers, the social worker or family mediators and to be informed about available public benefits especially when they have children. For this reason, we tend to believe that the take-up rate is probably high for this population. These benefits are especially important for single families.

Of course, and it is an intrinsic limit of such administrative datasets, no other information than those needed by the fiscal administration is available. We do not know anything

⁴The entitlement of this benefit is linked to the non-payment of child support. In our data, when no child support is received, it is not possible to distinguish between a non-payment or no child support decided in the divorce judgment.

⁵An important feature for the short-term consequences of separation is that welfare benefits could be a bit higher than the years after : the minimum income benefit is increased the year following separation and means-tested condition is assessed on the income of two years ago. That means for example that child support received the year following divorce is not included in the means-tested conditions but will be two years after.

about the education level for instance.

4 Framework & methods

4.1 Measuring the effects of public and private transfers on standards of living

To compare standards of living before and after divorce, we use three definitions of living standards including components step by step to assess their possible balancing effects. First we calculate living standards before any transfer, then living standards with private transfers only and, lastly, total living standards (ie with all transfers).

All living standards correspond to incomes divided by the number of consumption units⁶ to take into account the economies of scale resulting from the household size (see below). For the living standard before any transfer, the relevant income is the gross income. It includes labor market and replacement incomes (such as wage, self-employment income, unemployment benefits or public and private pensions⁷) and asset/capital incomes subject to tax. In the tax returns, these incomes are pre-tax and pre-transfer incomes.

To compute living standard with private transfers, we add to gross income the child support payments reported by both receiver (generally the custodial parent) and payer (generally the non-custodial parent). The receivers are required to report these transfers as income. For givers, these payments are deducted from taxable income, which gives a strong incentive to report them.

At last, to compute total living standard, we calculate disposal income. It corresponds to the sum of gross incomes, public transfers (net of taxes) and private transfers.

⁶As a benchmark, we use the “OECD modified equivalence scale”. We also test our results with other equivalence scales.

⁷very rare given the age range of the population we study.

4.2 The loss of economies of scale is not the whole story: the role of income sharing

Family composition changes a lot after a marital disruption and depends on which spouse is awarded child(ren) custody. In most cases, mothers are more likely to be the custodial parent, even if the percentage of shared custody has been recently increasing. Then to obtain comparable living standards for men and women, household composition (and more particularly whether post-divorce households include or not children) is taken into account using the “OCDE- modified equivalence scale”. This scale assigns a value of 1 to the household head, 0.5 to each additional adult member or child aged 14 and over and 0.3 to each younger child. In case of shared custody, the child(ren) weights are simply divided between both parents. Other equivalence scales such as the square root household size scale have also been tested to check the sensitivity of our results to this choice.

Furthermore, divorce also involves a loss of economies of scale. Some common costs such as housing were shared before divorce and are not any more afterwards. While a lot of attention has been paid to this loss of economies of scale due to the change in family composition, less attention has been paid to the role of pre-divorce incomes and, more specifically, to the share of earnings provided by each spouse. It turns out to be a main determinant of the changes in living standard, however.

To better understand its role, let us present a simple theoretical framework in which we consider a couple with N children less than 14 years old and earnings R , the living standard of each married partner is $R/(1.5+0.3N)$ according to the OECD modified equivalence scale. After divorce, living standard for a custodial mother will be $(1-\alpha)R/(1+0.3N)$ where α stands for the share of income earned by the husband before the divorce.⁸ The living standard for the non-custodial parent will consequently be αR . We can then decompose the variation of living standards in the two following components: the change

⁸For the sake of simplicity, we assume here that there is no change in earnings before and after divorce, letting aside any variation in incomes or social benefits.

in living standard due to the end of family live, and the change of custodial status (from non-custodial to custodial).

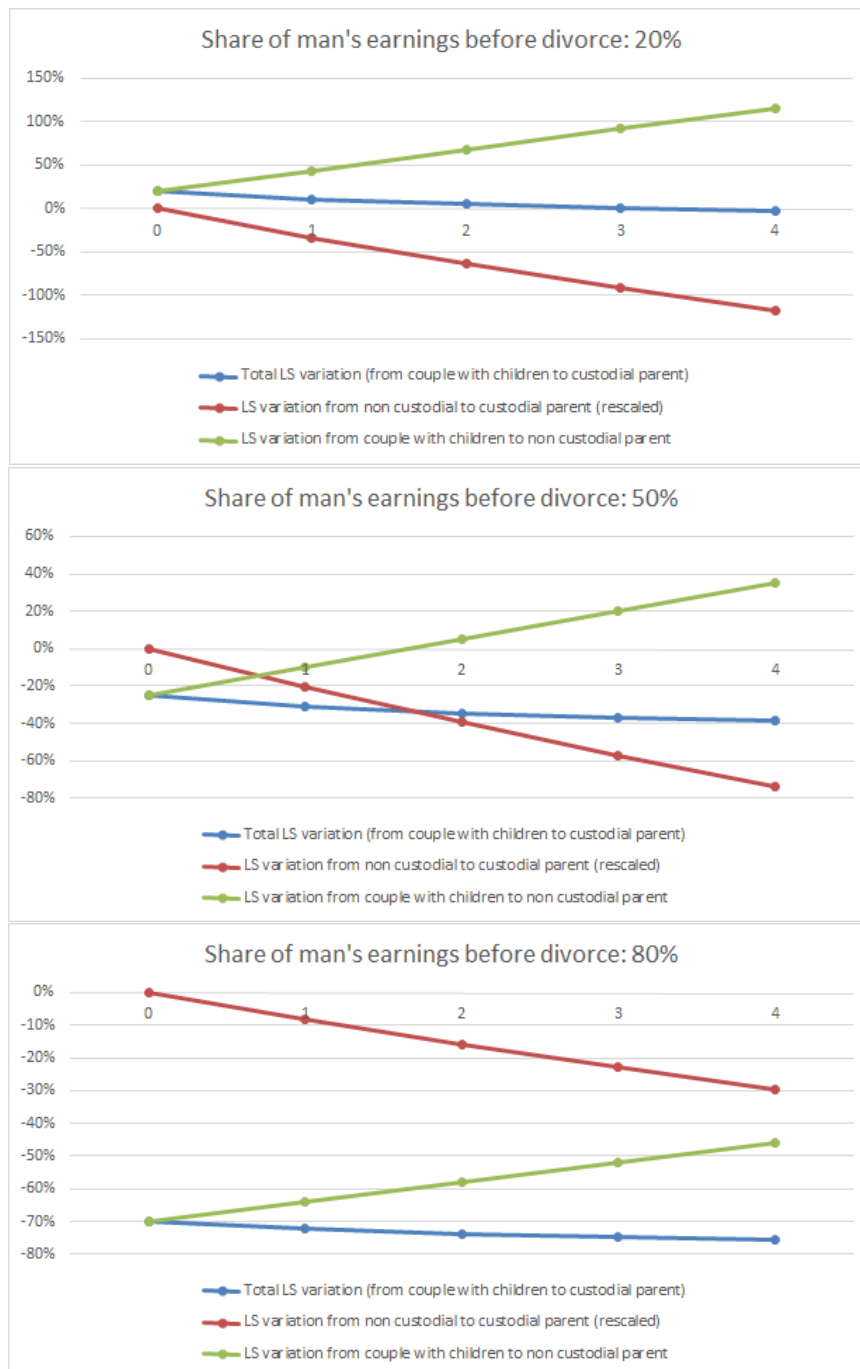
$$\underbrace{\frac{(1-\alpha)R}{1+0.3N} - \frac{R}{1.5+0.3N}}_{\frac{R}{1.5+0.3N}} = \underbrace{\frac{(1-\alpha)R}{1+0.3N} - (1-\alpha)R}_{\frac{R}{1.5+0.3N}} + \underbrace{\frac{(1-\alpha)R - \frac{R}{1.5+0.3N}}{\frac{R}{1.5+0.3N}}}_{\frac{R}{1.5+0.3N}} \quad (1)$$

From couple with children	From non-custodial	From couple with children
To custodial parent	To custodial parent	To non-custodial parent
.	(rescaled)	

For a fixed share of income provided by the husband (hereafter called “income sharing”), the total variation in living standard appears to be little influenced by the number of children (see also figure 1). However, the comparison of the total variation in living standard with three different income sharings α shows the crucial importance of this parameter. While a woman who earns as much as her husband before the divorce ($\alpha=0.5$) will face a decrease from -31% with one child to -39% with 4 children, a woman who earns less than 20% of the total income before divorce will face a decrease from -72% with one child to -75% with 4 children. On the contrary, if she was the first provider of income in the couple, the variation will go from 11% with one child to -2% with 4 children.

It is quite clear from this simple theoretical example that the magnitude of living standard variation due to family size is really weaker than the one due to the income sharing. The flat gradient for the number of children appears to be due to the fact that both large effects of being alone (from couple with children to non-custodial parent) and of being a custodial parent (from non-custodial parent to custodial parent) compensate each other. This decomposition, though not taking into account variations nor in incomes neither in public and private transfers, highlights the fact that income sharing is a key parameter of any analysis of variation in living standard, relatively to family composition.

Figure 1: Decomposition of variations in living standards (LS) according to the number of children for several man's share of earnings before divorce



4.3 The “pure” effect of divorce on living standards: a matching approach

The comparison of living standard before and after divorce describes the changes for divorcees but does not guaranty that these changes are due to the divorce. They might have

occurred anyway for this population. In recent studies, a topic of interest is to go further and assess a proper effect of divorce on living standards. This question raised because divorcees may be a selected population (in terms of income, marital specialization, age, number of children, ...) and thus its specific characteristics have to be taken into account in order to evaluate the real effect or the “causal” effect of separation on living standard. This is the usual problem of selection, widely detailed in the public policy evaluation literature.

Why could we face this problem? For instance if people tend to divorce more when they are on a negative trend of income⁹, then we could observe a decrease in the living standard and a part of the observed decrease would not be due to the divorce but would be the consequence of this negative trend. Another example is age: if divorce occurs more often for young people and if, compared to the rest of the population, young people face more difficulties on the job market, we could conclude that divorce leads to dramatically decrease living standard when those decreases are partly reflecting the difficulties young people encountered on the job market.

To deal with these possible selection problems, we use a matching approach. Initially developed by [Rosenbaum and Rubin \(1983\)](#), this method is now widely used in the public policy evaluation literature. Two recent studies used it on the field of divorce ([Ongaro, Mazzuco, and Meggiolaro \(2008\)](#), [Aassve, Betti, Mazzuco, and Mencarini \(2007b\)](#)). The idea of matching is the following: once taken into account a set of characteristics, the event studied (here: divorce) becomes randomly distributed among the populations whose characteristics are identical. In this population, some people will divorce (the “treated group” as called in the public policy evaluation literature) and some won’t (the “control group”). This assumption is called the Conditional Independence Assumption (CIA). Several matching methods exist and share all the same purpose: to create a control group (from a given population of “non treated” people) as close as possible to the treated one. As a matching method, we chose a “nearest-neighbor” approach.¹⁰ It consists in selecting

⁹Which is a plausible assumption since the effect of unemployment is generally negative for instance.

¹⁰Without replacement.

in the whole population of married people who don't divorce in 2009 couples with the same characteristics ("twins") as the divorce couples.¹¹

The CIA assumption is of course more credible when treated and control groups are similar on an important range of characteristics but it remains a strong assumption because unobservable heterogeneity can remain. If unobservable characteristics are linked with the probability of divorcing, then estimators will be biased.¹² To overcome this issue, we use a difference in differences method applied to a matching method (DID-Matching approach). This two-step method has been widespread since Heckman, Ichimura, and Todd (1997) proposed it in order to relax the CIA assumption. This consists of computing for each group (treated and control) the difference between the outcomes in 2010 and 2008 and then subtracting these differences. In this situation, if unobservable characteristics are time-invariant, they are ruled out and the estimator is not biased anymore. More precisely, we estimate

$$\ln(Y_{i,t}) = X_{i,0}\beta_0 + \mathbb{1}_{\{t \geq 1\}} * X_{i,0}\gamma + T_{i,t} * X_{i,0}\beta + a_i + e_{i,t} \quad (2)$$

where $Y_{i,t}$ stands for the living standard in period t for individual i , $t = 0, 1$, t the period (0 for the year before divorce, 1 for the year following divorce), $X_{i,0}$ for the couple characteristics the year before divorce (number of children, share of income provided by man, quintile of income), $T_{i,t}$ the treatment status (equal to 1 in period 1 for the "treated" group - the divorcees, and 0 otherwise), a_i is a fixed effect corresponding to unobserved time-constant characteristics and $e_{i,t}$ is the idiosyncratic error term. In the DiD set up, thanks to the first difference, the unobserved characteristics are ruled out:

$$\ln(Y_{i,1}) - \ln(Y_{i,0}) = X_{i,0}\gamma + T_{i,1} * X_{i,0}\beta + (e_{i,1} - e_{i,0}) \quad (3)$$

¹¹To evaluate the difference between still-married couples and divorced one, we use a propensity score approach by computing for each couple a probability to divorce. Then, each divorced couple is matched with the married couple whose propensity score is the closest of his own. Propensity score is evaluated with a logit model.

¹²Since the treated and the control groups may then differ for these characteristics not taken into account.

It highlights the fact that if divorcees and married people differ in unobserved characteristics, it would not bias our result as long as those differences are constant between the two periods.

To assess mean changes in living standards (our main specification) we don't estimate directly equation (3) with an ordinary least squares regression. Had we run an OLS regression, we would have interpreted $\exp(\hat{\beta}_{OLS}) - 1$ as the effect of the characteristics $X_{i,0}$ on the change in living standard. But it is an approximation.¹³ To avoid this approximation, we run a non-linear regression model:

$$\frac{Y_{i,1}}{Y_{i,0}} = \exp[X_{i,0}\gamma + T_{i,1} * X_{i,0}\beta + (e_{i,1} - e_{i,0})] \quad (4)$$

In this context, β corresponds to the vector of proportional changes.

To estimate median changes in living standard (presented in the robustness checks section E), we use the log-specification since for each quantile $\tau : Q_\tau(\ln(X)) = \ln(Q_\tau(X))$, and so this specification does not suffer from the same approximation problem.

The more characteristics are identical between the treated and the control groups, the more credible the assumption is that they have the same propensity to divorce. Since we are able to choose a twin in the whole population of married (thanks to exhaustive fiscal data), we can find a neighbor similar on a lot of characteristics available in the database. Regarding professional situations, we use the previous trends in income and the different kind of incomes each partner earns (wages, overtime work, unemployment benefits, pensions, self-employment profits, ...) that also enable us to take into account potential differences in behavior between occupations. We control for the residential area, ownership status and type of home. Regarding family characteristics, the date of marriage is not available. We use the age of both partners and the number and age of children, these are expected to be a good proxy for the marriage duration. We make the divorcees and their still-married 'twins' similar on demographic characteristics (age of man and woman, age of their child(ren), number of children), housing situation (homeownership, kind of

¹³Since by Jensen's Inequality, $\exp(E(\ln(Y_1/Y_0))) \neq E(Y_1/Y_0)$.

home: house or apartment) and living area (Paris, Parisian area “Ile de France”, and elsewhere). They are also matched on similar economic and professional characteristics such as all incomes separately for man and woman (labor income, unemployment benefits, pensions, self-employment incomes), ¹⁴ whether they were unemployed for a long period (more than one year), previous man’s and woman’s earnings two and three years before.

Since we intend to assess changes in living standard for different subsamples, we follow the recommendation by Dehejia (2005) and match each subsamples separately in order to ensure our matching process is as accurate as possible. Our subsamples are defined by combining gender (man and woman), number of children (0, 1, 2, 3 or more) and share of individual earnings¹⁵ provided by men relatively to total earnings of the couple, before divorce (3 shares: more than 60%, between 40 and 60% and less than 40%). So we match the divorced couples from each of these 24 subsamples with married couples who do not divorce in 2009.

In practice, this stratification offers two main advantages. First, it leads (by construction) to a perfect matching on the modality of the share of man, of the number of children for each gender, two determinants of our analysis. Second, since the empirical specification of the propensity may change for each subsample, it is then less parametric and takes better into account the heterogeneity of the behaviors than a global propensity score that would have been computed at a more aggregated level.

In order to assess the quality of the matching, we check the overlapping assumption and the balance of covariates. Some results and graphs presented in the appendix show that the overlapping assumption is very well verified and several methods (differences in means, standardized differences and comparison of distribution) prove that the covariates are well balanced. Full results on the matching quality are available on request.

Eventually, to compute standard errors and knowing that bootstrap is not an available

¹⁴Self-employment incomes are also detailed between profits from commercial and non-commercial occupations and farm profits.

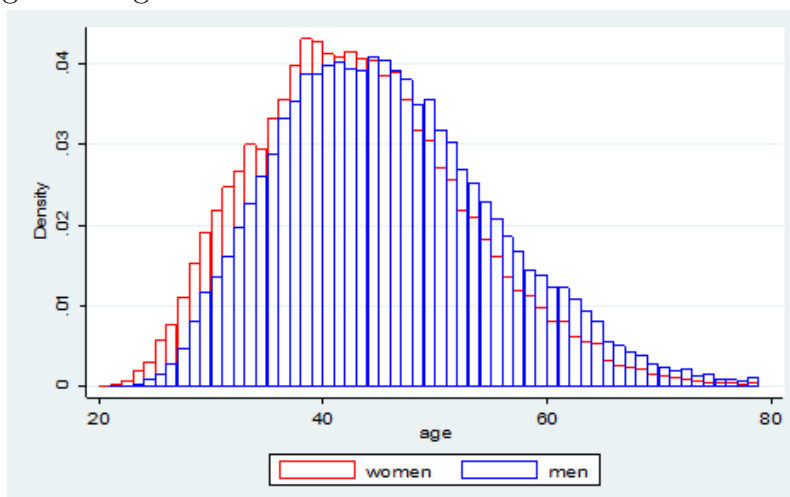
¹⁵We then take into account labor and replacement incomes but not capital incomes since it is not possible to individualize them from the tax return.

option in our DID-matching situation, we use the subsampling method (*cf.* for instance Politis, Romano, and Wolf (1999), Romano and Shaikh (2012)).

5 Sample description of 2009 divorcees

Divorced women are younger than men because of the traditional age gap between spouses, two years on average (figure 2). For women, the riskier ages range from 40 to 50 years old.

Figure 2: Age distribution of divorced women and men in 2009



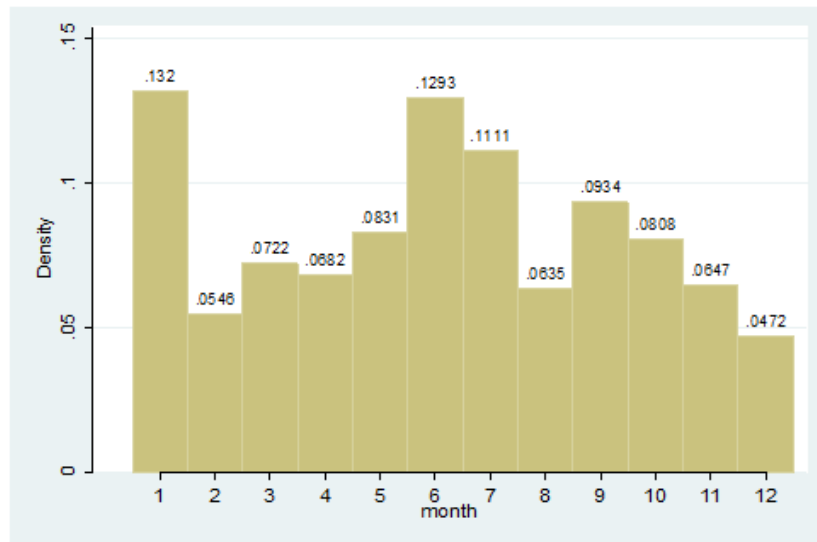
Source: French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

We also observe seasonal effects for divorce (figure 3). This seasonality is well-known for marriages (or forming a new civil partnership). It results from both a preference for marrying in summer rather than in winter, and also from some fiscal incentives¹⁶ for couples to marry at the middle of the calendar year (June and July) rather than at the beginning or at the end of the year (see Leturcq (2012) for instance for “Pacs couples”). Indeed, up to 2011, people could make three different tax returns the year they get married or divorced (one tax return for the income corresponding to their couple’s life and two distinct tax returns for the period they were single/divorced). If their income is quite regular over the year, it is optimal, regarding minimizing tax paid, to marry/divorce around the middle of the year. It is very interesting to note that fiscal incentives are also at

¹⁶These fiscal incentives exist in 2009 but have been suppressed in 2011.

play for divorce. More divorces are also observed in January. Divorcees might be allowed by the fiscal administration to fill separate tax returns when the divorce procedure has begun but the court has not yet granted the judgment of divorce. In this case, the date of divorce is by default set to “the first of January” by the fiscal administration.

Figure 3: Seasonality of divorce: frequency by month, year 2009



Source: French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

As shown in table 1, 29% of divorcees were childless couples, 26% have one child, 31% two children and 13% a larger family. Concerning the child’s place of residence, the mother is the custodial parent in 73% of cases, the father in 15% of cases and around 10% of divorced parents chose equally shared custody.

For custodian mothers, the median monthly amount of alimony paid by the father to the mother is 150 € per child. The first quartile is 100 € and the third quartile states at 250 €. It represents a significant share of mother’s total income, roughly 13%.

Table 1: Households composition: number of children and child custody

	Frequency (%)
Number of children	
< 18 y.o. one year before divorce	
0	29
1	26
2	31
3	11
4	2
5+	0.5
Child(ren) residence	
(at child level)	
Primary the mother	76
Primary the father	9
Equally shared	15

6 Results

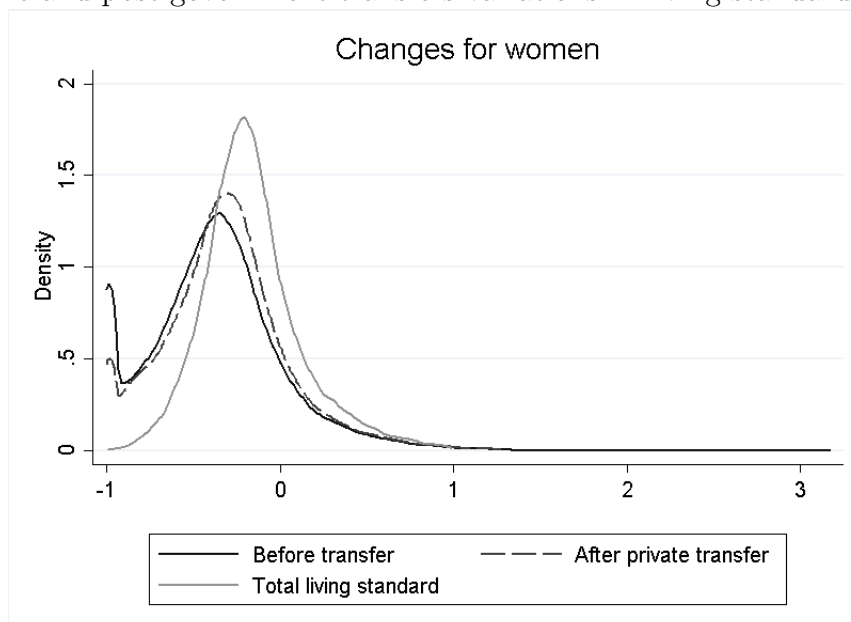
6.1 Changes in living standard by gender and number of children

To assess how divorce is related to changes in living standards, we compute the mean percentage change in living standard: $(Y_{i,t+1} - Y_{i,t-1})/Y_{i,t-1}$, where $Y_{i,t-1}$ is the living standard of individual i in $t - 1$, the year before divorce, divorce occurs in t , and $t + 1$ stands for the year after divorce. We will also use the word variations in the rest of the article to qualify these percentage changes in living standards.

Figures 4 and 5 describe the distributions of living standards variations after divorce respectively for women and men, considering the three income measures we defined previously. As noted above in the literature review, different indicators could lead to different results in the magnitude of the variations. For example, we could have used the percentage change of the mean in living standard $(\bar{Y}_{t+1} - \bar{Y}_{t-1})/\bar{Y}_{T-1}$. This choice would have led to less negative variations for women and to less positive ones for men. In these figures, the black curve is the variation of living standards before any transfers. For women, the mass point at -100% (figure 4) reflects that a significant proportion of women do not earned any labor or capital income incomes at all after divorce (mainly those who opted

for a traditional model of specialization and were housewives during marriage). As expected, the addition of private transfers shifts the distribution to the right (dotted curve). Custodial mothers receive a child support payment that increases their living standards. Public transfers play an even bigger role in reducing the negative effects of divorce on living standards (grey curve). Having custody of the children, few resources and being single result in women receiving family and welfare benefits (especially minimum income and housing allowances). After adding public transfers, no woman has a null income anymore and the dispersion in the living standards changes has narrowed. However, 77% of women have a loss of their living standards with the mode of the distribution at -20%.

Figure 4: Pre and post-government transfers variations in living standards for women



Lecture: Changes in living standards

Source: Divorced women sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

For men, the story is different. First of all, usually, as they are net payers of child support, the inclusion of private transfers involves a reduction of their income. The distribution of variations of living standards is shifted to the left (dotted curve, figure 5). Public transfers and more specifically tax income lead to another shift on the left: when not the custodial parents (the more frequent post-divorce arrangement is the primary custody to the mother), they do not benefit from any family benefits and from the tax deduction associated with the care of the children. So all in all, adding private and public transfers

Figure 5: Pre and post-government transfers variations in living standards for men



Lecture: Changes in living standards

Source: Divorced men sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Lecture: On the X-axis, 0 indicates that these individuals experience no variation in their living standards. -1 means a loss of all the income (100% of loss)

mitigates the negative economic consequences of divorce for women while for men, it reduces their living standards variations. More than half of them (53%) face a loss in their living standards.

Looking at women and men distributions on the same graph is another way to highlight the effects of these transfers. Considering the first income measurement without any transfers, we observe that the distributions of changes in living standards for men and women do not share a large common support (figure 6). Women's distribution is skewed to the left (meaning large living standards losses) while the men's curve is more symmetrically distributed around 0, reflecting almost as many losses than gains. Women seem to support the largest part of the loss in economies of scale. Once both public and private transfers are taken into account, the two distributions are getting closer and are "tightened" around the mode. Transfers seem to offset large variations (either negative or positive ones). The proportion of women experiencing an increase in their living standards after divorce is still clearly much lower than the men's one. The gender gap

remains but is definitively less pronounced (figure 7).

Figure 6: Distribution of before-after living standard variations, according to gender - transfers excluded



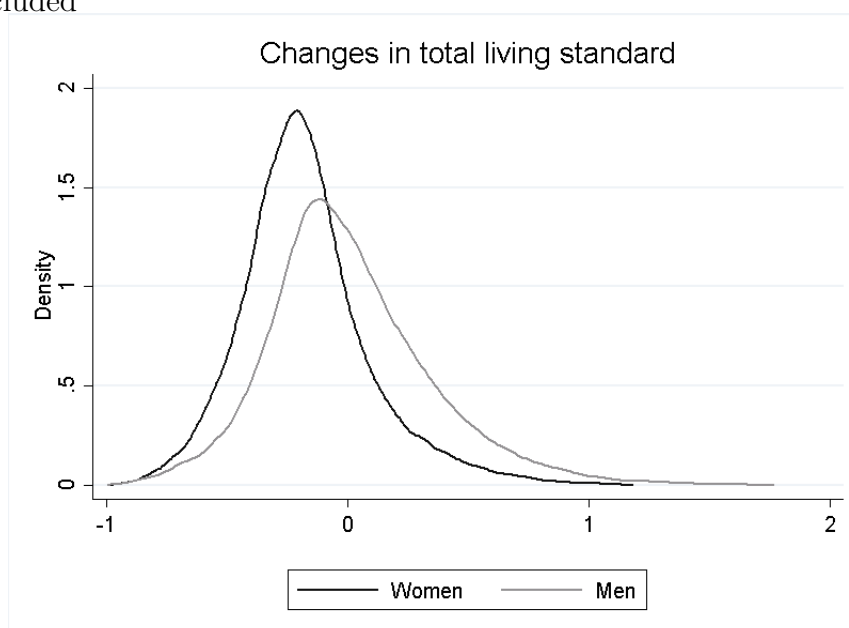
Source: *Divorcees sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009*

Women experience on average a 35% decrease in their living standards when measured without any transfers, while men experience a 24% increase. Taking into account private transfers moderates the gender gap: the loss for women is -29% and the gain for men reduces to 15%. Finally after including public transfers and taxes, the mean loss of women reaches 14.5% and the changes in men's living standard of men is rather low: +3.5% (figure 8). For men, our results are close to previous results for France.¹⁷ Our result for women is a less pronounced loss than the one found by Uunk (2004) and Jauneau and Raynaud (2009) (that were respectively - 32% and -31%). They also go in the same direction as those found in other developed countries. In France as elsewhere, women seem to support the main losses after divorce.

So far, we compared living standards for divorced people before and after divorce. But to assess the proper effect of divorce we should compute the difference between the living

¹⁷On more limited samples, Jauneau and Raynaud (2009) found a change of -6% whereas we find, after matching, that men's living standard decrease by 3%.

Figure 7: Distribution of before-after living standard variations, according to gender - transfers included



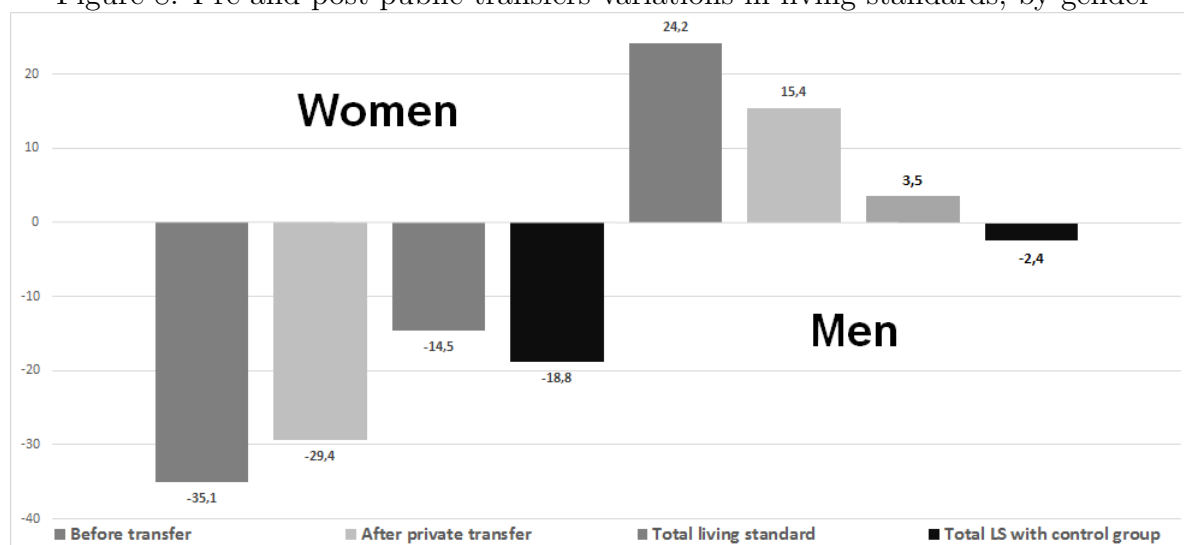
Source: Divorcees sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Lecture: On the X-axis, 0 indicates that these individuals experience no variation in their living standards. -1 means a loss of all the income (100% of loss)

standards before divorce and the living standard the divorcees would have reached if they had remained married over the period. We do so by comparing their situation with still married couples with similar characteristics (cf. section 4.3). The situation for both women and men worsens. The loss in living standards for women decreases from -14.5% to -19%. It means that if divorced women had remained married, their income would have increased in the following two years and not just remained stable as it is assumed when computing the before-after estimator. For men, compared to the before after estimator, it leads to a sign change. Comparing divorced men with their still married counterparts, their living standards variation from positive becomes negative and states about -2.5%. In other words, during the divorce period, the still married men encountered an increase in their living standards that divorcees did not.

For women, the loss with private transfers (but before public transfers) is sharply rising with the number of children (figure 9). When public transfers are added, the picture changes. Public transfers offset the increasing loss with family size for women and changes in their total living standards do not depend on the number of children anymore.

Figure 8: Pre and post-public transfers variations in living standards, by gender



Source: Divorced women and men samples from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

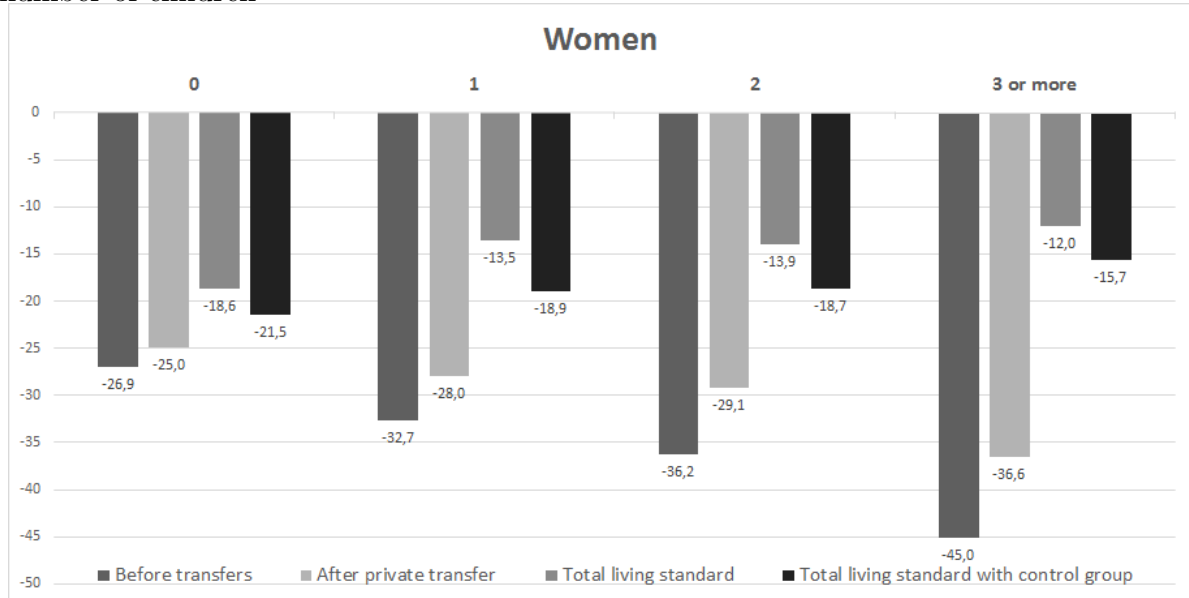
For men, the picture is reversed. Before any transfers, an increasing gradient in gain appears with the number of children (figure 10). This increase is largely mechanical. Men are less likely to have children custody. So, after divorce (if we do not take into account private transfers), they do not share their income anymore. Remind that living standards already take into account the current household composition, and whether the children stay with the mother or father after divorce.

Private transfers reduce notably the gain. Public transfers play an even bigger role through two channels. The mothers receives family benefits as soon as she has child custody. Divorced men are not going to benefit anymore from the tax deduction for children (quite important for three children and over) called “quotient familial”. Indeed, after divorce, men have generally to pay more taxes since they do not have any dependent children at home anymore.

The conclusion about the effect of the number of children for women remains when compared with married “twins”: the loss in living standards is more pronounced but does not vary much with the number of children. For men with 1 or 2 children, what appears as an increase in living standards turns out to be a significant decrease (table D.1, column (8)). Eventually, men appear to experience losses in living standard except

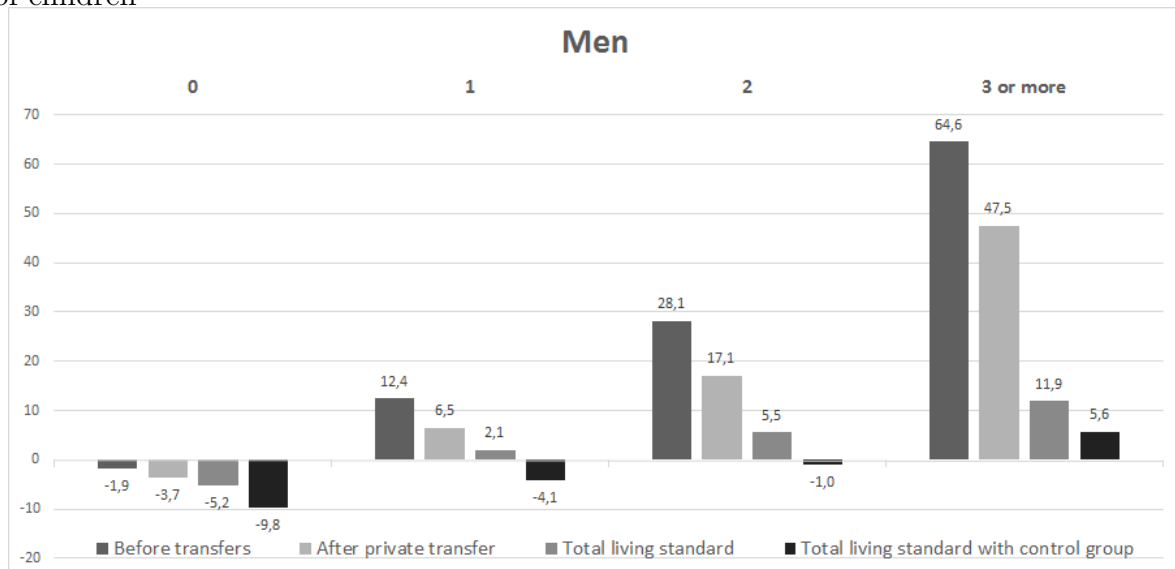
when they have 3 children or more. But even in that case, the before-after gain of 12% is divided by 2.

Figure 9: Pre and post-public transfers variations in living standards for women, by number of children



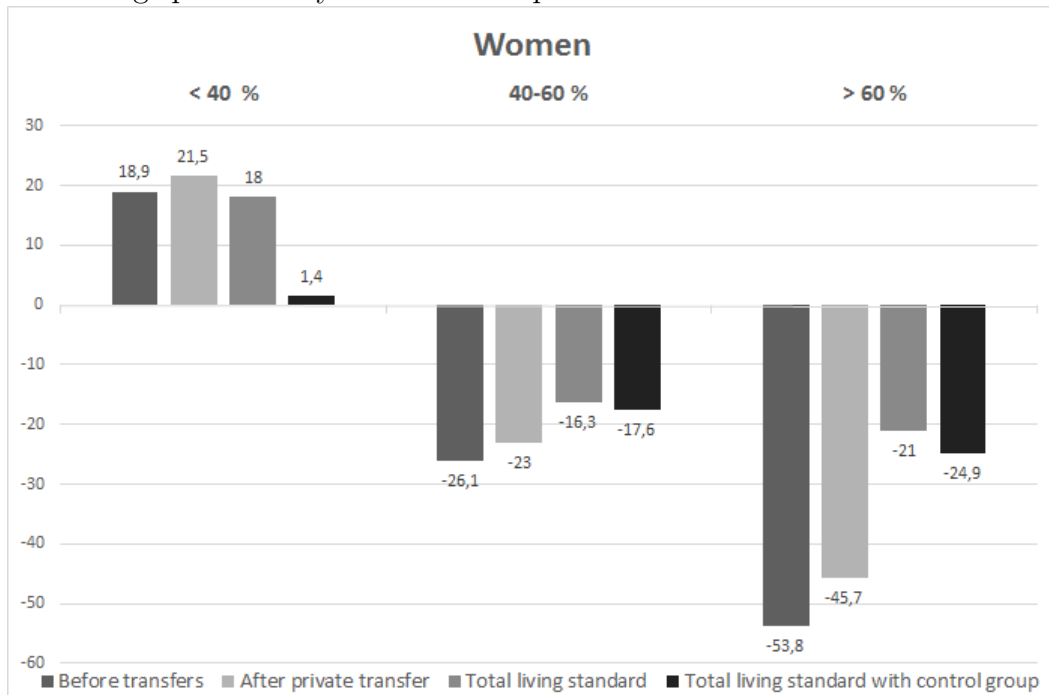
Source: Divorced women sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Figure 10: Pre and post-public transfers variations in living standards for men, by number of children



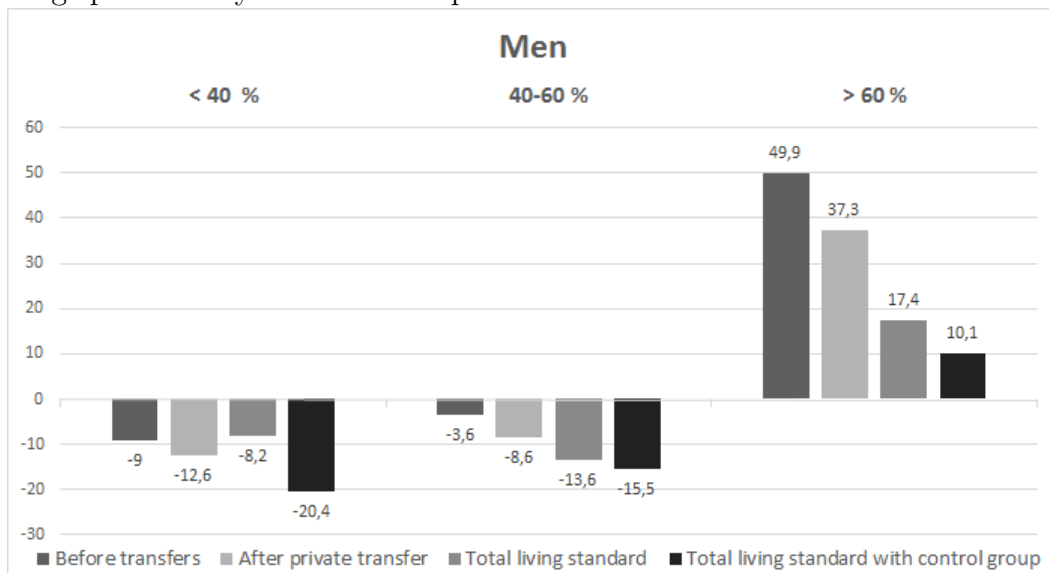
Source: Divorced men sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Figure 11: Pre and post-public transfers variations in living standards for women, by share of earnings provided by man before separation



Source: Divorced women sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Figure 12: Pre and post-public transfers variations in living standards for men, by share of earnings provided by man before separation



Source: Divorced men sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

6.2 The first order effect of marital specialization

Up to now, the literature has little focused on the share of income provided by each partner before the separation. To our knowledge, the sole exception is [McManus and DiPrete \(2001\)](#) who focus exclusively on men and show that, when formerly second earner in the couple, they face a loss in their living standards after divorce. Here, we look both at women and men to assess the importance of the marital specialization. Of course, the whole difference in the share of income provided by each ex-partner does not result from marital specialization. The difference may pre-exist to the union, linked to differences in the level of education for example or to the age difference between partners. Furthermore, gender wage discrimination on the labor market can also explain gender wage gap between spouses: for the same education level or experience in the labor market, we could also observe that women earn less than men ([Meurs and Pontieux \(2015\)](#)). But an important part of the difference (or the widening of an existing difference) results from marital specialization: one partner (generally the woman) is investing less in the labor market and more in domestic work, especially in children's education ([Meurs and Pontieux \(2015\)](#)). In the family economics literature, specialization is seen as a way to increase the gains from marriage. But what is supposed to be an efficient allocation of time when married turns out to have different impacts when the couple dissolves. To assess more precisely the economic consequences of marital specialization and, more broadly, of gender inequality in partner's earnings, we distinguish three types of couples: the "traditional" one where the man is the first income provider (providing more than 60%), the "egalitarian" one where man and woman provide roughly the same amount of income, and those, much more scarce, where woman is the first provider of income.

When women and men earn quite similar incomes, they both lose in living standards on average 13.6% for men and 16.3% for women. It means that the loss in economics of scale due to the end of common life is borne almost equally between the partners. The comparison with the control group enlarges the losses but they remain of similar magnitude for men and women. When men or women are the first income providers, they

generally experience a gain in their living standards (figures 11 & 12). This gain appears to be of similar magnitude before the comparison with the control group. When women provided more than 60% of the earnings before divorce, they experience an increase of 18% of their living standards. For men, this is a 17% increase. Once taken into account of the control group, the gender differences are more pronounced with a gain almost null (1%) for women, and of 10% for men. For the second earner, the loss is also much more pronounced for women (-21%) than for men (-8%). The larger losses or smaller gains for women in case of unequal income sharing, might be related to their situation on the labour market. The labour-market earnings and career advancement perspectives of women who earn more than her husband spouse are probably lower than those of men who earn more than his spouse, because of a possible glass ceiling for instance.

When compared to the evolution experienced by the still married “twins”, the gain for women decreases from 18% to +1%. There is also a fall for men but of less importance and they end up with a 10% increase (instead of the 17% reported above). Whatever the type of couple, the comparison with the control group leads to more pronounced loss in living standards. The most striking is for second earner men: the difference between the before-after estimator and the causal effect of divorce is 12 percentage points, leading to a decrease of -20%. We will see further that the labor market behavior plays an important role in those variations (section 6.3).

It should be kept in mind that those shares are not uniformly distributed among the couples (table 2). Only in a minority of divorced households man was not the first income provider (13%), whereas the proportion of households with a traditional division of tasks (where man earned more than 60 % of couple’s income) is 53%.

Notice that the number of children and the degree of specialization are related. The higher the number of children, the more likely is the man to earn relatively more than the woman (table 3). Moreover, the general level of wealth of previous household is also important and we introduce the quintile of the household income before separation. The regression in table 4 disentangles the effects of each of these three elements. It reinforces

Table 2: Share of man’s income in total labor income of the couple before separation

Man’s share	>60%	40-60%	<40%		
% of couples	53	34	13		
Mean of man’s share	81%	51.5%	21%		
Man’s share	> 80%	60 - 80%	40 - 60%	20 - 40%	< 20%
% of couples	25	28	34	7.5	5.5
Mean of man’s share	95%	68.5%	51.5%	33%	4.5%

Sample: separated couples with non-nul total labor income.

Table 3: Share of earnings provided by men according to the number of children

Number of children	0	1	2	≥ 3
Mean of man’s share	59%	61%	63%	71%

Lecture: In 2 children couples, the men earned in average 63% of the total income before divorce.

the previous results on the important role of specialization (table D.2).

Once controlled for the share of income provided by the man and for the quintile of income before separation, the increase in living standards due to children is of low magnitude and similar for women and men (respectively 3.2 and 2.6 for couples with 2 children relatively to one child, 0.9 and 0.2 when 3 children or more relatively to one child). Comparing to the control group does not lead to alter the conclusion about the magnitude of the low effect of the number of children. Meanwhile, the variation associated with marital specialization is strikingly high. For women, a 20 percentage points decrease in the share of income provided by the man is associated with a variation of living standards by 14 to 20 percents higher. For men, the magnitude of the effect of specialization is also huge. Compared to their still-married “twins”, men providing less than 40% of the earnings before divorce experience a loss from -16.9 to -27.6 percents with respect to those who provided between 60 and 80%.

6.3 Divorce & labor supply

Previous analysis relied on pre-divorce characteristics. However, a separation may increase the economic incentives to (re)enter the labor market or to work more hours in order to compensate the income loss due to this splitting. After divorce, labor market

Table 4: Regression estimates of living standard variation

	Women				Men			
	Before transfers	With private transfers	Total living standard	With control group	Before transfers	With private transfers	Total living standard	With control group
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Number of children								
0	4,8***	1,1 ^(ns)	-8***	-4,9***	-13,7***	-10,8***	-8***	-6***
1	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2	-0,5 ^(ns)	2,3***	3,2***	3,3***	12,3***	8,8***	2,6***	2***
3 or more	-7,2***	-3,1***	0,9**	4,4***	29***	22,7***	0,2 ^(ns)	2,6***
Share of income provided by man before separation								
< 20%	136,3***	126,4***	47,2***	23,9***	-21,9***	-21***	-3,2**	-16,9***
20-40%	79,7***	67,4***	33,3***	29,2***	-34,9***	-33,2***	-24,8***	-27,6***
40-60%	35,7***	28,3***	13,6***	15,2***	-21,9***	-20,3***	-17,9***	-17,3***
60-80%	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
> 80%	-36,1***	-24,5***	-5,2***	-6***	25,7***	22***	14,8***	12***
Quintile of income before separation								
1 st	21,6***	16***	45,7***	32,5***	19,3***	23,7***	18***	4,6***
2 nd	1,5***	0,6 ^(ns)	10,5***	10,1***	3,9***	4,9***	4***	3***
3 rd	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
4 th	0,5 ^(ns)	0,8*	-4,6***	-5,5***	-0,5 ^(ns)	-1,2***	0,2 ^(ns)	-1**
5 th	-5,6***	-4,1***	-14,4***	-14,3***	-1,8***	-3,2***	0 ^(ns)	0,5 ^(ns)
Cons.	-45,9***	-40,7***	-26,2***	-28,7***	16,3***	9,5***	4,2***	1,8***

Note: Standard errors are computed by subsampling. *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels respectively.

Lecture: divorced women in the reference category face a 26.2% decrease in their living standard after divorce compared to the control group (column (4)). When men brought more than 80% of couple resources, women face a change in their living standard 6% lower than the women from couples where men provided between 60 and 80% (the reference category).

Source: Divorced women and men samples from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009.

involvement may thus change. To assess what part of the observed variations is due to recent changes in labor supply, we look at men and women variations in labor market participation at the intensive and extensive margins.

53% of women who were inactive¹⁸ the year previous the divorce (re)enter the labor market the year following divorce. It is 29 percentage points higher than the percentage of women with identical characteristics who stayed married (table D.3), results comparable to Bonnet, Solaz, and Algava (2010) showing, on a previous and smaller survey sample, that around 40% of divorced housewives entered the labor market after the sep-

¹⁸We define inactivity as receiving none labor nor replacement income or receiving less than one month of minimum wage. For collinearity reasons, we do not enter the share of income provided by man before separation because 99% of these women provided less than 20% of the earnings.

aration in France. Obviously, the motherhood status and the size of the family play as constraints: women with 3 children or more have a lower probability to enter labor market while those with no child have a higher one. Women who belonged to poorest households are also less likely to reenter the labor force after divorce compared to those in the highest quintiles of income (column (2) in table 5), probably because of a lower human capital.¹⁹

For women previously working, there is no huge effect of divorce on the probability of being inactive after divorce. While the simple before-after estimator would conclude to a higher probability of being inactive (column (3) in table 5)), the causal effect of divorce turns out to be in the opposite direction: active women are less likely to become inactive after divorce (column (4) in table 5). However those effects are of little magnitude. The probability of withdrawing from the labor market for the divorcees is 3% lower than those of their married counterparts. In other words, divorce maintains more women on the labor market than marriage. The effect of the other factors are small. The labor market attachment of divorcees is only little reduced for women with 2 children or more relatively to one-child mothers. It is also the case for childless woman probably because their inactivity might be linked to other reasons than family ones (health problems for instance) or because their children left home and they have been housewives for such a long time that it led to a depreciation of their human capital. The most notable fact is for women who provided less than 20% of the couple earnings and who are less likely (-5.1 percentage points) to become inactive after divorce. In other words, the divorce may change the reservation wage and thus avoids leaving the workforce because of a too low relative income.

When remaining in the labor market, divorced women can also modify their labor supply behavior, for example shifting their work schedule from part-time to full-time. We analyze the extensive margin of labor supply using the variations in labor income for previously working divorcees. The working hours are not available. A change is thus not necessarily an increase in working hours but may also correspond to a per hour wage

¹⁹Unfortunately, our administrative database does not include education or labor market experience but belonging to a lowest quintile is probably associated with lower human capital.

increase over the period around divorce. At the extensive margin, divorce appears to have a positive effect on labor income for women²⁰ (column (6) in table 5). The highest effect is for women who had a positive earning but provided less than 20% of the couple earnings: compared to women who provided between 60 to 80% they increase their labor market earnings by 27.8%. The more children women have, the less likely they are to increase their labor supply, though the effect is not huge (from -2.4% to 1.6%).

For men, as expected since they are scarcely the custodial parents, whatever the outcome considered in table 6, the effect of the number of children turns out to be either non significant or of very low magnitude. As observed for women, men who were previously inactive²¹ are more likely to enter or re-enter the labor market though the probability is less than twice the one of women. Not being in the labor force is less frequent for males than for women and linked to different reasons. Men who are not in the labor force have generally specific characteristics and are different from women who are not working. Women often withdrew from the labor market for family reasons while this phenomenon is for men more linked to health problems or long-term unemployment. This might explain the lower probability of return on the labor market of men. This could also explain that the probability for working men to become inactive is not altered by other factors, except for those who were providing less than 20% of the couple earnings who are significantly less likely to become inactive (column (4) table 6)).

At the extensive margin, we find again a huge effect for the second provider of income (+19.7%, column (6) table 6). For those who were the first providers of income, while the before-after estimator show no effect, we find a low but significant negative causal impact of divorce, worsened for men who were previously in the poorest couples. It could mean that divorce reduces wages of divorcees relatively to their married counterparts. The underlying mechanisms might be they are less promoted at this moment of the career during which, because of this dramatic change in their personal life, divorcees might be

²⁰Change in labor and UI income are computed for women who were previously considered as active (cf. previous footnote for definition of activity).

²¹As for women, for collinearity reasons, we do not enter the share of income provided by man before separation because 95% of these men provided less than 20% of the couple's earnings.

less involved in work and a higher probability of unemployment after divorce, associated to reduced earnings. Indeed, men who divorce turn out to have a probability of experiencing unemployment 40% higher than similar married men. Those who had a non-zero income and no unemployment benefit before divorce are 8.4% to have unemployment benefits after divorce while still married men with identical characteristics are 6% (table D.4).

Table 5: Changes in women's labor supply

	Women					
	Increase in participation		Decrease in participation		Change in labor and UI income	
	Divorcees	Divorcees with ctrl gp	Divorcees	Divorcees with ctrl gp	Divorcees	Divorcees with ctrl gp
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Number of children						
0	4**	7,4***	-0,9***	1,3***	3,6***	1,6***
1	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2	7,6***	0,4 ^(ns)	0 ^(ns)	1,1***	2,5***	-2,4***
3 or more	0,4 ^(ns)	-4,8***	1,7***	1,2***	1,8 ^(ns)	-2,4***
Share of income provided by man before separation						
< 20%			-3,7***	-0,3***	-14,7***	-4,7***
20-40%			-3,2***	0,9***	-14,3***	-7,2***
40-60%			-1,8***	1,1***	-11,7***	-5,9***
60-80%			Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
> 80%			5,3***	-5,1***	87,1***	27,8***
Quintile of income before separation						
1 st	-12,6***	-7,2***	9,8***	-0,9***	18***	3,2***
2 nd	0,2 ^(ns)	-2,8***	3,1***	-0,5***	3,8***	1,6***
3 rd	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
4 th	1,2 ^(ns)	-1,4 ^(ns)	-0,7***	0,6***	-1,8***	-1,3***
5 th	-5,2**	4,8***	-1,4***	0,8***	-7,1***	-1***
Cons.	57,4***	33,4***	2,7***	-2,8***	17,1***	11,3***

Note: columns (1) and (2): Women who had a null income in 2008. columns (3) to (6): Women who had a non null income in 2008. Columns (1) to (4): Linear probability model, columns (5) and (6): Model 4.

Standard errors are computed by subsampling. *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels respectively.

Lecture: the probability of (re)entering the labor market after divorce for mothers of 3 children or more who had no income before divorce is 4.8 percentage points lower than the probability of mothers with one child (column (2)). The labor force exit for mothers of 2 children is 1.1 percentage points higher than the probability of one child mothers (column (4)). After divorce, childless women increase their earnings by 1.6% compared to one child mothers.

Source: Divorced women sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009.

Table 6: Changes in men's labor supply

	Men					
	Increase in participation		Decrease in participation		Change in labor and UI income	
	Divorcees	Divorcees with ctrl gp	Divorcees	Divorcees with ctrl gp	Divorcees	Divorcees with ctrl gp
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Number of children						
0	-5,6 ^(ns)	-4,1 ^(ns)	0,4 ^(ns)	0,6 ^{***}	1 ^(ns)	-0,1 ^(ns)
1	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2	1,7 ^(ns)	3,6 ^(ns)	-0,1 ^(ns)	0,1 ^{***}	0,2 ^(ns)	-0,1 ^(ns)
3 or more	-3,6 ^(ns)	0,6 ^(ns)	-0,2 ^(ns)	0,02 [*]	-1,2 [*]	-1,1 ^{***}
Share of income provided by man before separation						
< 20%			10,4 ^{***}	-6,5 ^{***}	114,6 ^{***}	19,7 ^{***}
20-40%			4,1 ^{***}	-0,6 ^{***}	28 ^{***}	4,6 ^{***}
40-60%			0,7 ^{***}	0,2 ^{***}	2,8 ^{***}	0 ^(ns)
60-80%			Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
> 80%			-0,1 ^(ns)	0,03 [*]	-6,4 ^{***}	-2,3 ^{***}
Quintile of income before separation						
1 st	18,1 ^{***}	0,2 ^(ns)	5,5 ^{***}	-0,1 [*]	11,5 ^{***}	-2,7 ^{***}
2 nd	13,3 ^{**}	1,2 ^(ns)	0,8 ^{***}	-0,1 ^(ns)	2,8 ^{***}	-0,4 ^{**}
3 rd	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
4 th	2,6 ^(ns)	-0,2 ^(ns)	-0,3 [*]	-0,2 ^{***}	-0,2 ^(ns)	0,4 ^{**}
5 th	-0,5 ^(ns)	3,6 ^(ns)	-0,2 [*]	-0,2 ^{***}	-1,1 ^{**}	0,1 ^(ns)
Cons.	42,1 ^{***}	13,9 ^{***}	0,5 ^{***}	-0,1 ^(ns)	0 ^(ns)	-1,7 ^{***}

Note: columns (1) and (2): Men who had a null income in 2008. columns (3) to (6): Men who had a non null income in 2008. Columns (1) to (4): Linear probability model, columns (5) and (6): Model 4.

Standard errors are computed by subsampling. *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels respectively.

Lecture: the probability of (re)entering the labor market after divorce for men with no child who had no income before divorce is 4.1 percentage points lower (not significant) than the probability of men with one child (column (2)). The labor force exit for fathers of 2 children is 0.1 percentage points higher than the probability of one child fathers (column (4)). After divorce, men with 3 children or more decrease their earnings by 1.1% compared to one child fathers.

Source: Divorced men sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009.

6.4 Robustness checks

The choice of an equivalence scale is a current topic of debate. In the case of lone parent families in particular, it raises two main questions. First of all, the usually “OECD-modified scale” does not consider the specific expenditures of a single parent family. It considers indeed that the economies of scale in a lone-parent family with one child under 14 years old are bigger than in a childless couple (number of consumption units equals 1.3 vs 1.5). Yet it could not be the case. For example, living with one child means in

general having two bedrooms instead of one when living in a childless couple. The other equivalence scale commonly used is the square root of the household size. In that case the equivalence scale is higher for the first child and for single families ($\sqrt{2}$ instead of 1.3). In France, we observe some other practices, the administration adding 0.2 to the total number of consumption units they compute as soon as they deal with single families. We introduce this variant qualified as “Lone parent variant”.

The second critic that could be addressed to the usual equivalence scale is to ignore the expenditures the non-custodial parent could also bear if (s)he is used to welcoming their child. We propose here a variant by giving a fraction of consumption unit to the non-custodial parent. Very few studies compute this extra expenditures for non-custodial parents (Henman and Mitchell (2001), Martin and Périvier (2015)). We assume this fraction reflects the time spent at each parent’s home. When shared custody is not chosen, we suppose that the non-custodial parent sees his child once every two week ends and half of the school holidays. This corresponds roughly to 25% of the time. So, in this variant we give a quarter of the “OECD-modified scale” consumption unit to the non-custodial parent (for example, for a child under 14 years old, it means 0.25×0.3).

The square root equivalence scale assumes that the economies of scales are larger. For example, a couple will need 41%²² of extra income to maintain this living standard while with the OECD modified scale, it needs 50%²³. As divorce means the loss of economies of scale, the decrease in living standard is all the larger as these economies are supposed to be higher. The variation of living standards is more negative for women and for men (column (2) in table 7 and in table 8). In the lone parent variant, we assume that having the child custody is more costly than in the “OECD modified scale”. The negative consequences of divorce are reinforced for women (column 3 in table 7). It also plays a role in the same direction but the effect is lower, men not often being the custodial parent. Finally, in the non-custodial parent variant, we assume that the non custodial parent gets a fraction of consumption unit for the child(ren) not living with them. In this variant, the effect is more important for men, being more in this position (column (4) in table 8)

²²It comes from $\sqrt{2} = 1.41$.

²³it corresponds to $1 + 0.5$.

Table 7: Regression estimates of living standard variation for different equivalence scales, for women

	Women							
	Divorcees				Divorcees with control group			
	OECD	Square root variant	Loneparent variant	Non custodial parent variant	OECD	Square root variant	Loneparent variant	Non custodial parent variant
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Number of children								
0	-8***	-3,9***	2***	-7***	-4,9***	-0,6***	5,5***	-3,9***
1	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2	3,2***	2,5***	3,4***	3,5***	3,3***	1,8***	3,6***	3,7***
3 or more	0,9**	0,5 ^(ns)	3***	1,2***	4,4***	3***	6,5***	4,7***
Share of income provided by man before separation								
< 20%	47,2***	47,8***	47,7***	47,1***	23,9***	24,9***	24,4***	23,9***
20-40%	33,3***	33,5***	33,3***	33,7***	29,2***	29,5***	29,2***	29,6***
40-60%	13,6***	13,6***	13,3***	13,9***	15,2***	15,2***	14,9***	15,6***
60-80%	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
> 80%	-5,2***	-5,2***	-4,8***	-5,3***	-6***	-6***	-5,7***	-6,2***
Quintile of income before separation								
1 st	45,7***	45,7***	45,2***	46,2***	32,5***	32,2***	32***	32,9***
2 nd	10,5***	10,5***	10,4***	10,5***	10,1***	9,9***	10***	10,1***
3 rd	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
4 th	-4,6***	-4,6***	-4,4***	-4,7***	-5,5***	-5,4***	-5,3***	-5,6***
5 th	-14,4***	-14,7***	-14,1***	-14,7***	-14,3***	-14,5***	-14***	-14,5***
Cons.	-26,2***	-33,6***	-34,2***	-27,2***	-28,7***	-35,7***	-36,4***	-29,6***

Note: Standard errors are computed by subsampling. *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels respectively.

Lecture: The living standard of women with 1 child, whose husbands provided between 60 and 80% of couple earnings before divorce and who were in couple from the 3rd quintile of income (reference category), decreases by -28.7%, compared to the control group, when OECD equivalence scale is used (column (5)), by -35.7% when computed with the square root equivalence scale (column (6)), by -36.4% when computed according to the “loneparent variant”(column (7)) and by -29.6% when computed according to the “non custodial parent variant” (column (8)) (cf. main text for explanations about these variants).

Source: Divorced women sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009.

and thus the situation of men is worsened.

Even if we exclude the 0.5% of the bottom of the distribution of living standard variation, big variations could have an influence on the means. We then run median regressions to test the sensitivity of the effects to the extreme value. The results are largely the same (table E.1 and table E.2). One exception, the coefficients for the income share <20% and 20-40% are lower for men in the median regression, suggesting that huge positive variations occur in that population sub-group. This is not surprising considering the variation in labor supply we previously observed.

Table 8: Regression estimates of living standard variation for different equivalence scales, for men

	Men							
	Divorcees				Divorcees with control group			
	OECD	Square root variant	Loneparent variant	Non custodial parent variant	OECD	Square root variant	Loneparent variant	Non custodial parent variant
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Number of children								
0	-8***	-6,1***	-4,5***	-2,9***	-6***	-3,7***	-2,3***	-0,7***
1	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2	2,6***	0,5 ^(ns)	2***	-1,2***	2***	-1***	1,4***	-1,8***
3 or more	0,2 ^(ns)	-6***	0,1 ^(ns)	-8,5***	2,6***	-4,8***	2,5***	-6,3***
Share of income provided by man before separation								
< 20%	-3,2**	-3,7***	-2,5*	-4,1***	-16,9***	-17,2***	-16,4***	-17,8***
20-40%	-24,8***	-25***	-24,3***	-25,4***	-27,6***	-27,6***	-27,1***	-28,1***
40-60%	-17,9***	-18***	-18***	-17,9***	-17,3***	-17,3***	-17,4***	-17,2***
60-80%	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
> 80%	14,8***	15,3***	15,3***	14,4***	12***	12,5***	12,5***	11,6***
Quintile of income before separation								
1 st	18***	18,6***	18,8***	17,1***	4,6***	5***	5,4***	3,9***
2 nd	4***	4,2***	4,3***	3,5***	3***	3,2***	3,4***	2,6***
3 rd	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
4 th	0,2 ^(ns)	-0,2 ^(ns)	-0,2 ^(ns)	0,3 ^(ns)	-1***	-1,3***	-1,3***	-0,8***
5 th	0 ^(ns)	-0,7*	-0,5 ^(ns)	0,6 ^(ns)	0,5***	-0,3**	0 ^(ns)	1***
Cons.	4,2***	-3,9***	-0,3 ^(ns)	-1,3***	1,8***	-6,1***	-2,6***	-3,6***

Note: Standard errors are computed by subsampling. *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels respectively.

Lecture: The living standard of men with 1 child, who provided between 60 and 80% of the couple earnings before divorce and who were in couple from the 3rd quintile of income, increases by +1.8% when the OECD equivalence scale is used (column (5)), decreases by -6.1% when computed with the square root equivalence scale (column (6)), by -2.6% when computed according to the “loneparent variant”(column (7)) and by -3.6% when computed according to the “non custodial parent variant” (column (8)) (cf. main text for explanations about these variants).

Source: Divorced men sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009.

7 Conclusion & Discussion

If “the formation of a couple is often efficient from the pure economic perspective” (Brown-ing, Chiappori, and Weiss (2014)) because marital gains arises from the presence of public consumption and marital specialization process, couple breakdown has opposite consequences, revealing the flip side of marital specialization.

The loss of economies of scale following the divorce is well-known. Some costs, for example dwelling and child education expenses, shared between partners during marriage have to be borne separately after the divorce. Previous empirical works showed that this loss of economies of scale involves a decrease in living standards that is mainly supported by women. This gender disparity is often explained by the greater cost of child custody women more often have.

Taking advantage of a huge sample size of couples observed one year before and one year

after their divorce from a French fiscal database, we are able to evaluate a causal effect of divorce and to distinguish different components of living standards. In line with the literature, we confirm in this article that women experience a decrease in total living standards after divorce, by roughly 19% on average whereas for men living standards remain globally stable (with a decrease of 2.5%). If family composition and child custody play a role in women's loss, we also show that economic consequences of divorce are highly more dependent on the share of couple's resources each spouse provides before divorce resulting mainly from marital specialization choices. Note that the gender gap in earnings observed at the moment of divorce may come also from pre-marital differences in spouses' wages, from different career advancement from marriage that we are not able to control for. This focus on income share leads to some interesting results. We especially highlight huge heterogeneity in living standard variations for men. When, in most cases, men are the main earnings providers (before divorce), they experience a gain in their living standards. But when they are the secondary earner, they also experience losses as most women in the same situation, and the loss is all the more important as their earnings represent a small fraction of the before-divorce earnings of the couple. Rather than a gender inequality or a custodial parent story, the losses after divorce have to be mainly related to the marital specialization choices and the wage gap between partners at the time of the divorce.

In this article, we also investigate the role of public and private transfers. We document the fact that public transfers (family and welfare benefits) partially offset the negative economic consequences of divorce, especially for the poor and large families. Some childless women (and to a lesser extent also childless men) could thus experience larger losses in living standards than mothers with a large family ²⁴, helped by generous French family policies. Private transfers - i.e. child alimony - mitigate the decrease (the increase) in the living standard of women (men) after divorce by about 7 percentage points. Finally our results on labor supply after divorce show that for women working before divorce, there

²⁴this result is also found by [Manting and Bouman \(2006\)](#) on Dutch Data.

is no huge effect of divorce on the probability of being inactive after divorce whereas for housewives, we observe a quite massive return on the labor market, constrained however by the family size, and the household poverty (capturing probably indirectly low human capital). For men, no much change is observed for working status, except an increase in labor market incomes for those who were in second earner provider position.

Some limitations to our study have to be mentioned. In spite of their reliability and huge sample size, the administrative data we used only concern the effect of divorce, that is to say legal separation of marital unions (divorces and civil partnerships) while unmarried couples, a quite common marital status in France, are set aside. However, with the widespread of cohabitation, these unmarried couples are more similar to married ones in sociodemographic characteristics, once controlled for income sharing, number of children and household income as we did. [Tach and Eads \(2015\)](#), analysing US dissolution trends, recently found that the economic consequences of cohabitation dissolution and divorce became similar over time. This result is partly driven by the extension of lone parenthood allowances (reserved to lone mothers) to divorced mothers. However, US unmarried couples still differ from unmarried European. In a more comparable context on Dutch data, [Manting and Bouman \(2006\)](#) find that non-married women short-term losses are less important than married women losses but also point that this result is not driven by the marital status “per se” but by compositional differences: unmarried couples have less children and are more likely to have equal earnings before divorce for instance. As we control for these characteristics, we would have probably reached the same conclusions if we could have had included unmarried couples in the analysis.

A second limitation is the restriction of our sample to divorcees who live alone the year following divorce, that is to say, who are not yet repartnered. Previous studies showed that repartnering may be a way to overcome financial difficulties after divorce especially for poor women ([Dewilde and Uunk \(2008\)](#)). [Manting and Bouman \(2006\)](#) show that gender disparities tend to disappear after five years in case of repartnering. A last limitation is that we are here able to identify only short-term effects, one year after the divorce,

probably the worse period since many studies show that there is a catch-up effect up to the level of pre-divorce living standards due to repartnering and labor market behavior adjustments. But still, the foregone incomes relatively to comparable couples who remained married are not taken into account.

But, on the other way, poor recently divorced women are not the most suitable on the marriage market and can encounter difficulties, so that the direction of the selection effect is undetermined. Lastly, our measure of private transfers only takes into account child support whereas spousal payment can also constitute a big financial resource (and charge). But as spousal payments are more often paid as a lump sum (and not as an annuity), it was difficult to add them to post-divorce living standards. We should have chosen an arbitrary payment period to smooth this one-shot payment. Spousal supports only concern one out of eight divorces ([Roumiguères \(2004\)](#)), in particular older couples than those observed in this study, a long marriage duration being a main determinant of the grant of this spousal payments. However, it remains possible that the living standards losses of women and the stability of men are over-estimated by not taking into account such transfers. However the huge effect we observed makes us confident that inclusion of spousal support, if possible, could not have balanced the inequalities created by marital specialization.

Lastly, one frequent criticism addressed to living standards analyses is that the OECD unit consumption scale (or any other scale), even intensively used in research, is arbitrary and may not reflect the real child cost, for instance for a lone parent. This choice of an equivalence scale could then drive the results regarding changes in living standards. It is not the case. We first theoretically showed that family size or the custodial status is far from being the whole story. Secondly, we replicate our analysis using different equivalence scales and all our conclusions remain. The income sharing before divorce is a stronger determinant than family structure captured by the number of consumption units.

We document an increase in labor force participation for second earners and especially for women. This tends to support the idea that marital specialization process is the main responsible for the gender inequality in living standards after divorce . In spite of this, couples continue to do so because it is a short-term efficient solution or they are probably not prepared to the risk of divorce. In terms of public policy, our study also shows that divorce constitutes a public cost because of large public transfers to single parents and poor people. However, for dual earners or when divorcees reenter the labor market, this cost is largely reduced.

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A Tables for the literature review

Table A.1: Living standards variations (before-after divorce) (%)

Article	Unadjusted household income		Adjusted household income		Type of variation	Type income adjustment
	Women	Men	Women	Men		
American data						
Hoffman (1977)	-29	-19	-7	+17	Change in mean	(a)
Corcoran (1979)	-44		-18		Mean of changes	(a)
Duncan and Hoffman (1985)	-28 (W)	-9 (W)	-11 (W)	+10 (W)	Mean of changes	(b)
Burkhauser <i>et al.</i> (1991)	-46(B)	+2(B)	-29 (B)	+40 (B)	Median of changes	(c)
Smock (1993)	-46 to -43 (W)	-8 to +7 (W)	-22 to -21 (W)	+61 to +93 (W)	Median of changes	(d)
Smock (1994)	-51 to -45 (B)	-29 to -13 (B)	-44 to -35 (B)	+47 to +80 (B)	Mean of changes	(d)
Peterson (1996)			-27	+10	Changes in mean	(e)
Bianchi <i>et al.</i> (1999)			-36	+28	Median of changes	(c)
McKeever and Wolfinger (2001)	-45		-14		Median of changes	(d)
McManus and DiPrete (2001)		-42 to -40 (B)		-20 to -14 (B)	Mean of changes	(b)
				-12 to -11 (B)	of changes	(f)
		-58 à -41 (N)		+29 to +34 (B)		(d)
				-27 to -3(ns) (N)		(b)
				-30 to -3(ns) (N)		(f)
				+30(ns) to +68 (N)		(d)
Bedard and Deschênes (2005)			Increase		Mean of changes (Instrumentation for all ever divorced women. Local effect)	(j)
Ananat and Michaels (2008)			Increase and decrease		Quantile treatment effect (Instrumentation for all ever divorced women. Local effect)	(c), (j)
Canadian data						
Finnie (1993)	-30 (-49)	-11 (-25)	-14 (-33)	+32 (+11)	Mean (Median) of changes	(c)
UK Data						
Jarvis and Jenkins (1999)			-18	2 (ns)	Median of changes	(h)
Uunk (2004)			-36		Changes in median	(i)
Andreß <i>et al.</i> (2006)			-28	1	Median of changes	(k)
Dutch data						
Poortman (2000)	-46	-31	-31	+4	Changes in mean	(g)
Uunk (2004)			-19		Changes in median	(i)
Kalmijn and Alessie (2008)			-38	ns	Mean of changes	(i)
German data						
Burkhauser <i>et al.</i> (1991)			-44	-7	Median of changes	(c)
Uunk (2004)			-25		Changes in median	
Andreß <i>et al.</i> (2006)			-33	-2	Median of changes	(k)
Norwegian data						
Bratberg and Tjøtta (2002)	-4 (C)	+36 (C)			Median of changes	
	-32 (NC)	-1 (NC)				
Italian data						
Andreß <i>et al.</i> (2006)			-32	+5	Median of changes	(k)
Uunk (2004)			-3		Changes in median	(i)
Ongaro <i>et al.</i> (1991)	-23	+25			Mean of changes (compared to control group)	(i)
French data						
Uunk (2004)			-32		Changes in median	(i)
Jauneau and Raynaud (2009)			-30	-6	Median of changes	(i)
European data						
Uunk (2004)			-36 to -3		Changes in median	(i)
			(according to country)			

Results for non-repartnered women after their divorce.

For US data: (B): estimation for Black people, (W) for White. For Bratberg and Tjøtta (2002): (C): Estimation for custodial parents, (NC) non-custodial.

Method of adjustment: (a): This measure of needs uses the Department of Agriculture's "Low-Cost Food Budget"; (b): This measure of needs uses "official US Department poverty standard"; (c): Division by a poverty threshold (depending on the family size); (d): "per capita" (division by the number of people in the household); (e): This measure of needs uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Lower Standard Budget; (f): ELES : "Expanded Linear Extension System" by Merz, Garner, Smeeding, Fink, and Johnson (1994); (g): Schiepers' equivalence scale (1993); (h): McClements "Before Housing Costs" equivalence scale; (i): modified OECD equivalence scale; (j): Census Bureau equivalence scale: (nb adults + 0.7 * nb children)^{0.7}; (k): square root equivalence scale.

Remark: See table A.3 for a detail of equivalence scales used in the studies.

Table A.2: Sample sizes

Article	Data	Number of observations
Hoffman (1977)	PSID	182 Women & 110 Men
Corcoran (1979)	PSID	56 Women
Duncan and Hoffman (1985)	PSID	349 Women & 250 Men
Poortman (2000)	SEP	359
Peterson (1996)	PSID	161
Burkhauser <i>and al.</i> (1991)	PSID	301 Women & 239 Men
	GSEP	56 Women & 45 Men
Finnie (1993)	LAD	2125 Women & 2375 Men
Smock (1993)	NLSY, NLSYW & NLSYM	Women : 133 to 430 Men : 67 to 312
	NLSY & NLSYM	Women : 84 to 258 Men : 43 to 167
Jarvis and Jenkins (1999)	BHPS	148 Women & 105 Men
Bianchi, Subaiya, and Kahn (1999)	SIPP	199 couples
McKeever and Wolfinger (2001)	NSFH	472 Women
Bratberg and Tjøtta (2002)	KIRUT	Women : 538 to 2038
		Men : entre 600 et 1881
Uunk (2004)	ECHP	29 to 157

SEP : Dutch Socioeconomic Panel, PSID : Panel Study of Income Dynamics, GSEP: German Socio-Economic Panel

NLSY : National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth, NLSYW : National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women

NLSYM : National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Men

KIRUT : base longitudinale norvégienne

NSFH : National Survey of Family and Households

LAD : Longitudinal Administrative Database

BHPS : British Household Panel Survey

ECHP : European Community Household Panel

SIPP : Survey of Income and Program Participation

Table A.3: Some equivalence scales used

Échelle	1 st pers.	2 nd pers.	3 rd pers.	4 th pers.
"Per capital"	1	1	1	1
Square root	1	$\sqrt{2}$	$\sqrt{3}$	2
OECD (original)	1	0.7	0.5	0.5
OCDE (modified)	1	0.7	0.5 (if + 14 y.o) 0.3 (if - 14 y.o)	0.5 (if + 14 y.o) 0.3 (if - 14 y.o)
Buhmann (1988)				
For $\theta = 0.5$ (classical case)	1	0.41	0.32	0.27
For $\theta = 0.25$	1	0.19	0.13	0.10
For $\theta = 0.75$	1	0.68	0.60	0.55
McClements "Before Housing Costs"				
	0,61	0,39 (partner) 0,46 (non-partner adult)	0,42 (non-partner adult) 0,32 (children + 14 y.o)	0,36 (non-partner adult) 0,32 (children + 14 y.o)
		0,32 (children + 14 y.o) 0,20 (children - 14 y.o)	0,20 (children - 14 y.o)	0,20 (children - 14 y.o)
Schiepers (1993)				
1 adult & all children ≤ 5 y.o	1	0.3	0.24	0.19
1 adult & older child from 6 to 11 y.o	1	0.32	0.22	0.20
1 adult & older child from 12 to 18 y.o	1	0.35	0.24	0.20
2 adults & all children \leq	1	0.38	0.28	0.16
2 adults & older child from 6 to 11 y.o	1	0.38	0.31	0.16
2 adults & older child from 12 to 18 y.o	1	0.38	0.34	0.17

B Creation of dataset and computation of weights

B.1 Dataset

In 2009, the official statistics report 130,601 divorces in France. 164 divorces are for marriages that last less than one year, 1,700 for ones that last one year and 3,926 two years. So, the number of divorces in 2009 for people who marry before 2008 ranges then between 124,807 and 128,733. Our sample size belongs to this interval. We thus have information about 2008 earnings for at least 98% of the divorced couples who didn't married neither in 2008 nor in 2009. For "paced" people, the number of dissolutions reported in official statistics is 17,186 without any clue about the duration of the contract that has been disrupted. In our sample, we found 9,760 paced-couples. Then we have information about 2008 earnings for at least 57% of the couples who broke their Pacs in 2009 and probably more if we take into account that we kept only those who do sign their contract before 2008 (whereas the denominator include all Pacs dissolution whatever the year of pacs formation) We call the global sample with information about 2008 earnings for all ex-married and ex-paced couples we recovered : the "sample 1" (cf. table B.1).

In order to have information about the dwelling in 2008 we then match our data with the local residence tax ("taxe d'habitation"). This leads to a little loss and we get 122,939 formerly married couples and 9,442 formerly paced couples. We thus have information about dwelling (homeownership, house or flat, ...) for at least 95% of divorcees and 55% for those who were paced. We call this sample with all ex-married and ex-paced couples for which we have information about 2008 earnings and 2008 local residence tax the "sample 2".

From that point we then need to match with tax return for the 2010 earnings (one year after divorce) and the local residence tax for the same year.

Table B.1: Information about dataset creation

	Official statistics		Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4
Divorced %	All 130,601	Married before 2008 124,807 to 128,733	126,250 At least 98%	122,939 At least 95%	113,794	91,732
End of "Pacs" %	17,186	?	9,760 At least 57%	9,442 At least 55%	9,007 (7,932 heterosexual)	5,557
Available information according to sample						
Income tax 2008			X	X	X	X
Local residence tax 2008				X	X	X
Income tax 2010					X	X
Local residence 2010					X	X
Selection						
Married or paced before 2008			X	X	X	X
Heterosexual						X
Not cohabitating with other adult 2010						X

"Pacs" is the French civil union contract.

B.2 Weights and attrition correction

The fact that we are using all the available information from the fiscal databases for the year 2010 leads to lose some individuals who do not appear in these databases the year after their conjugal separation. After matching with the 2010 datasets (tax return & local tax residence) we get 113,794 ex-married (ie a loss of 7.5%) and 9,007 ex-paced couples (loss of 4.5%) that we call "sample 3". For 74% of these couples, we recovered the two partners.

In some cases, we do not recover the man's tax return, in other cases the woman's one. To take into account a possible attrition bias, we compute weights such that the weighted recovered population of men and women is representative of all the divorces and Pacs dissolutions that occurred in 2009 that we had formerly recovered (ie representative of our sample 1).

To do so, we stratify between couples who were married and those who were "Paced" in 2008. Weights are then calibrated for men and women separately in order to keep 2008 couples for which only one spouse was recovered. Since our main approach is to compare women's living standards on one hand and men's ones on the other hand, this

approach appears as the most relevant one. Weights are computed using the “MACRO CALMAR” developed and freely provided by the French National Statistics and Studies Institute (Insee). The margins used are those from the sample 1 for the margins related with the 2008 earnings and from the sample 2 for information related with dwellings.

Since we study gender gap and alimonies, we finally exclude same sex couples and then get 7,932 ex-paced-couples.

The last exclusion is the one of individuals who either (re)marry, (re)pacs or cohabit (with at least another adult) the year after the break up in 2010. This choice has been made for the sake of simplicity , because cohabitation after divorce could be with a new partner, a relative or a friend. Finally, as we are interested in labor supply after divorce, we focus on individuals aged between 20 and 55 years old. The upper age limit has been set to 55 because in France, withdrawals from the labor market may begin at an early ages.

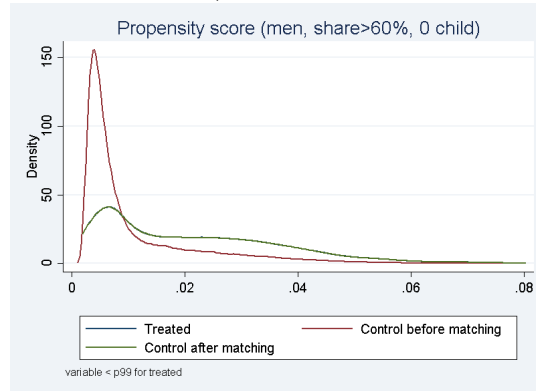
Finally in sample 4, we have 97,289 couples: 91,732 ex-married couples and 5,557 ex paced -couples for which we recover at least one partner who didn't marry / pacs / cohabit in 2010. It represents 132,094 individuals who were formerly married and 8,039 formerly paced.

C Assessing the quality of matching

C.1 Overlapping assumption

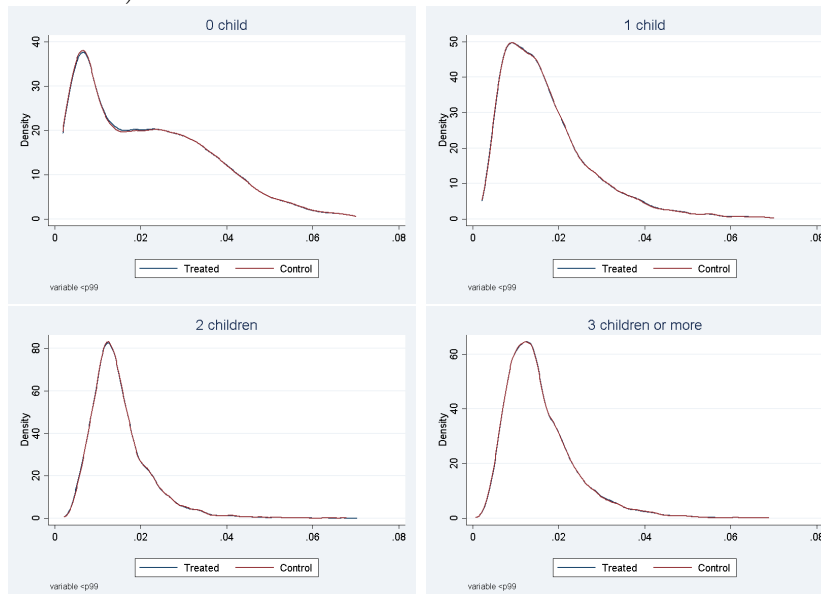
The first one concerns the “overlapping assumption”. This assumption states that for each observation in the treated group, one observation with similar characteristics can be found, in order to be matched with. This assumption is generally verified presenting graph of the propensity score matching for treated and for the group where the “control group” is extracted. Since we extract our control group from a quasi-exhaustive dataset of married couples, the probability to find a “twin” for each of our divorced couples is high. It turns out that for each of our 24 subsamples of our divorced couples, we have no problem finding a nearest-neighbor. We present in graphs [C.1](#) and [C.2](#) the propensity score matching by number of children in the subsample of men whose share in total income was above 60% (before divorce). As we can notice, the propensity score matching for the divorced couples is “overlapped” by the one of the non-divorced ones and then it is possible to find a nearest-neighbor for each divorced couple without been compelled to reduce the range of the estimation to a subsample of them. It is also noticeable that the propensity score of the nearest-neighbor chosen (the “control group”) perfectly fit the divorced one. This is not so surprising since the number of married couples used to find a nearest-neighbor is above 10 million which represents more than 100 times the number of divorced couples to match with: the probability to find a close neighbor is then high. We have similar results whatever the subsample of matching is.

Figure C.1: Propensity score matching (men, man's share in total income > 60%, 0 child)



Source: French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Figure C.2: Propensity score matching by number of children (men sample, man's share in total income > 60%)



Source: French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

C.2 Balance of covariates

The second point of concern is to know if the matching leads to balance properly the covariate in the sample. Our purpose is to balance numerous characteristics of the couple in 2008 (that is before the divorced couples split): age of each ex-partner, regions of living, homeownership, married (vs pacs), house (vs apartment), ..., number and age of child(ren), number of dependent persons, and a wide range of earnings for both men and women (labor income, unemployment benefits, pensions, self-employment incomes (details in profits from commercial and non-commercial occupations and farm profits), earnings from previous year and for 2 years before. To assess the balancing, we provide in tables X1 to X3 the several means for the treated (the divorced couples) and the control group. All differences in mean have been tested with a t-test and turn out to be non significant to a 10% threshold. In the kind of subsample we have (with a large number of observations) the t-test is reputed to be generally too demanding because the large number of observations leads to conclude that little differences in means are significant. Another method of testing the equality between the means is to compute “standardized differences”. They are presented in appendix, tables X4 to X6. Standardized differences turn out to be very small, always besides 0.1 and it then confirms our former statement about differences in means.

As often, means are not enough. It is also of concern to know if the matching leads to similar distributions of covariates in the treated and the control group.

We show in graphs Y1 that proceeding by matching greatly improves the fitting of the distribution: after matching the distributions for treated and control group are so similar that they are often impossible to distinguish separately. Of course, this last point could be due to a “scale effect” and to check the similarity of the distribution, it is probably better to just compare the 2 distributions of treated and control group without taking into account the distribution of the non-treated-non-control group whose introduction in the graph tends to dramatically change the scale. We provide in graphs Y2 to Y5 evidences that the difference between the covariates distribution are definitively small and that those distributions are often impossible to disentangle. Those graphics concern

all the income quartiles of the subsample for men whose share in total income was higher than 60%. Findings for the other subsamples are similar and none subsample present distinctive feature.

Figure C.3: Age head of men and women (Sample: man's share > 60% & no child)

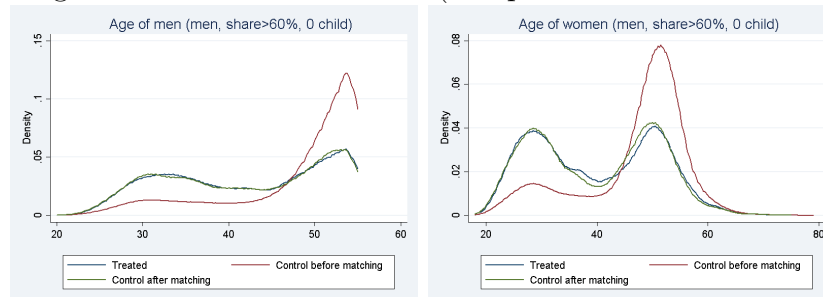
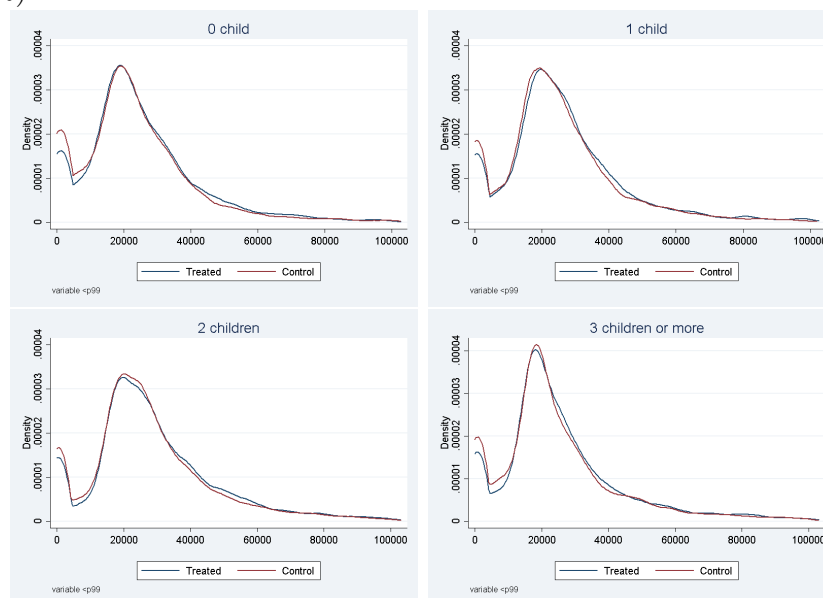
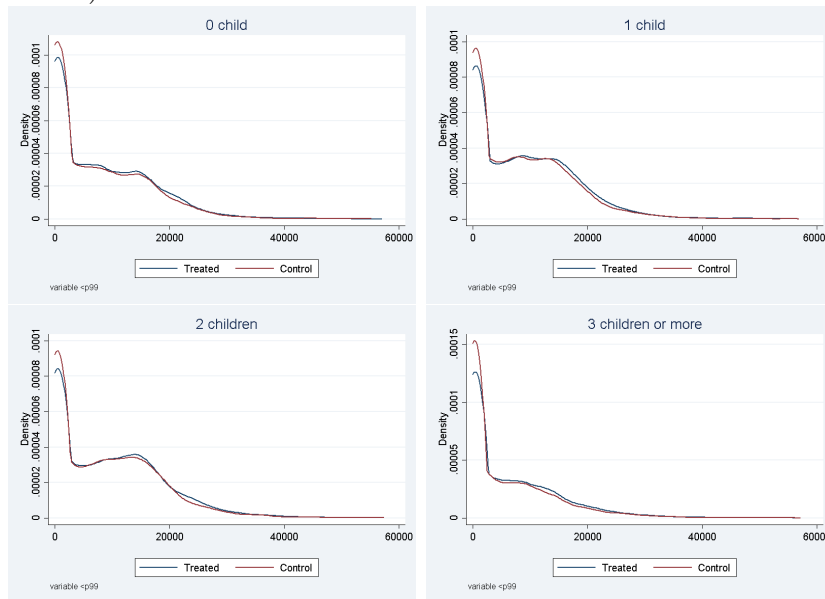


Figure C.4: Man Labor Income 1 year before divorce (men sample, man's share in total income > 60%)



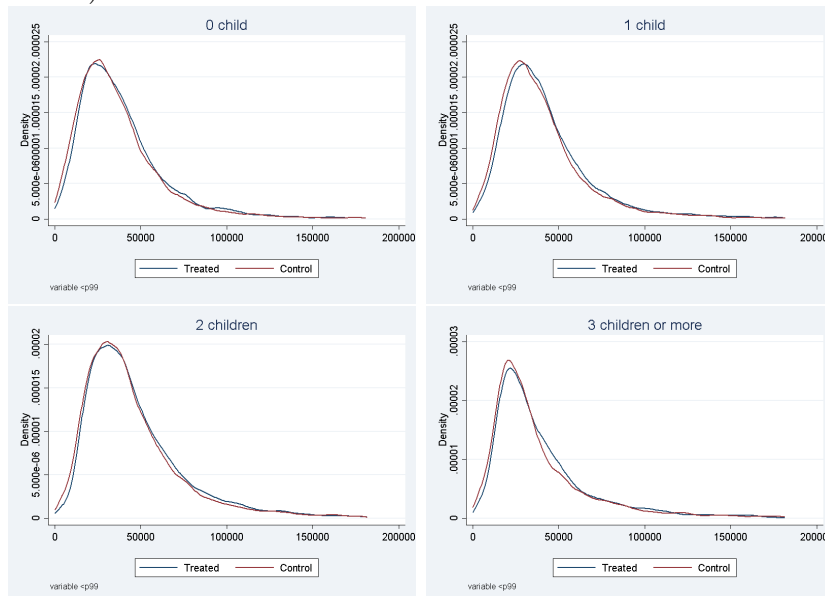
Source: French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Figure C.5: Woman Labor Income 1 year before divorce (men sample, man's share in total income > 60%)



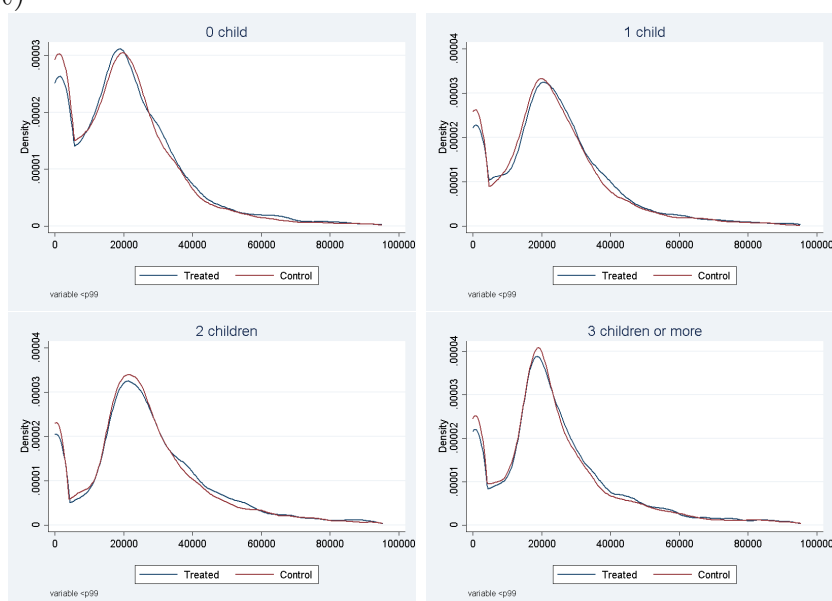
Source: French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Figure C.6: Total declared income 1 year before divorce (men sample, man's share in total income > 60%)



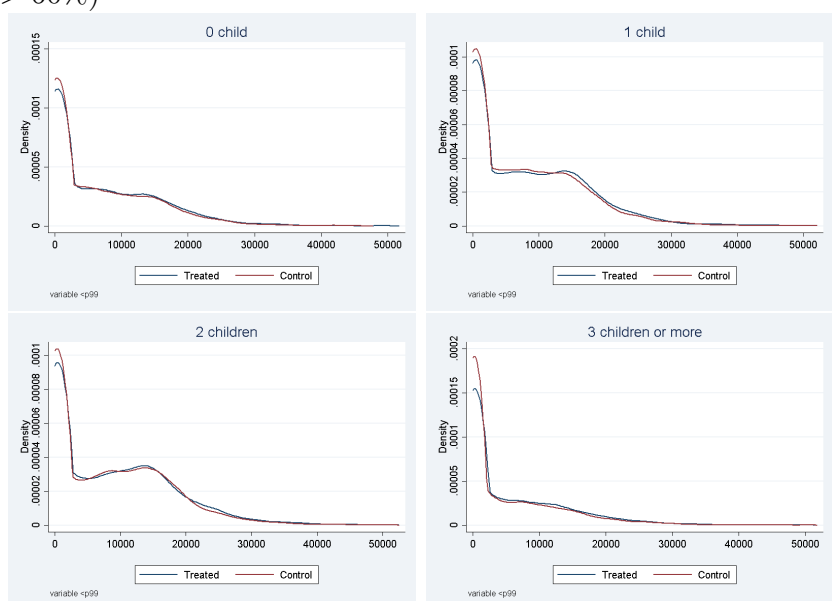
Source: French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Figure C.7: Man Labor Income 2 years before divorce (men sample, man's share in total income > 60%)



Source: French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Figure C.8: Woman Labor Income 2 years before divorce (men sample, man's share in total income > 60%)



Source: French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009

Table C.1: Means of covariates and standardized differences (Men sample, Share : > 60%, 0 & 1 child)

	0 child			1 child		
	Divorcees	Control group	Standardized differences	Divorcees	Control group	Standardized differences
Share of man earnings in total earnings	0,8	0,8	-0,002	0,8	0,8	0,002
married	0,9	0,9	-0,002	0,9	0,9	0,006
Paris	0,1	0,0	0,026	0,0	0,0	-0,003
Ile-de-France (excepted Paris)	0,2	0,2	-0,017	0,1	0,1	-0,025
Age (men)	41,8	41,6	0,015	42,1	41,9	0,019
Age (women)	39,4	39,3	0,011	39,2	39,2	0,008
Total Declared Income (1 year before divorce)	41222,5	41306,1	-0,002	45926,8	45141,8	0,017
Men Labor Income (1 year before divorce)	25408,7	25639,5	-0,008	27971,3	27635,1	0,011
Women Labor Income (1 year before divorce)	7247,9	7280,7	-0,004	8288,2	8167,6	0,014
Homeowner	0,4	0,4	-0,002	0,5	0,5	0,020
Living in a House	0,5	0,5	0,000	0,6	0,6	0,008
At least one 1 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,000	0,0	0,0	0,010
At least one 2 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,000	0,1	0,1	-0,001
At least one 3 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,000	0,1	0,1	-0,002
At least one 4 to 6 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,000	0,2	0,2	0,005
At least one 7 to 9 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,000	0,1	0,1	0,006
At least one 10 to 14 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,000	0,2	0,2	0,014
At least one 15 to 17 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,000	0,2	0,2	-0,016
At least one 18 to 25 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,000	0,2	0,2	-0,012
At least one more than 26 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,000	0,0	0,0	-0,007
Women Earnings (2 years before divorce)	6422,5	6410,1	0,001	7630,4	7693,9	-0,007
Men Earnings (2 years before divorce)	20918,0	21449,1	-0,021	24753,3	24537,2	0,007
Women Earnings (3 years before divorce)	5066,8	5166,4	-0,013	6530,2	6713,1	-0,022
Men Earnings (3 years before divorce)	18589,1	19116,1	-0,024	22226,2	21944,8	0,011
Tax paid	2749,7	2781,1	-0,003	2472,1	2277,0	0,020
Number of children	0,0	0,0	0,000	1,0	1,0	0,000
Long term unemployment (Men)	0,0	0,0	0,014	0,0	0,0	-0,004
Overtime work (Men)	618,0	656,1	-0,026	674,3	698,1	-0,016
Pensions (Men)	548,4	554,4	-0,002	406,3	395,5	0,004
Unemployment and pre-retirement benefit (Men)	779,1	799,5	-0,006	736,2	736,7	0,000
Long term unemployment (Women)	0,0	0,0	0,020	0,0	0,0	0,002
Overtime work (Women)	115,2	108,2	0,016	109,1	104,7	0,011
Pensions (Women)	383,9	382,4	0,001	227,3	199,7	0,018
Unemployment and pre-retirement benefit (Women)	734,7	770,4	-0,016	783,6	786,7	-0,001
Self-employment earnings	3277,1	3449,2	-0,009	3935,8	4034,9	-0,005
Profits from non-commercial occupations (Men)	1738,9	1763,9	-0,002	1912,6	2208,9	-0,017
Profits from non-commercial occupations (Women)	166,5	168,8	-0,001	218,0	236,3	-0,006
Profits from commercial occupations (Men)	1293,1	1384,0	-0,010	1745,8	1570,8	0,017
Profits from commercial occupations (Women)	56,8	67,5	-0,011	148,7	166,4	-0,008
Farm profits (Men)	188,0	262,9	-0,024	246,6	240,9	0,002
Farm profits (Women)	1,7	4,3	-0,009	20,5	14,9	0,010
No activity (Men)	0,0	0,0	-0,003	0,0	0,0	0,002
No activity (Women)	0,3	0,3	-0,010	0,3	0,3	0,005
Standard of living before divorce	24658,7	24704,8	-0,002	22630,7	22331,9	0,015
UC OECD	1,5	1,5	0,000	1,9	1,9	-0,021
UC square root	1,4	1,4	0,000	1,7	1,7	0,010

Table C.2: Means of covariates and standardized differences (Men sample, Share : > 60%, 2 & 3 children or more)

	2 children			3 children or more		
	Divorcees	Control group	Standardized differences	Divorcees	Control group	Standardized differences
Share of man earnings in total earnings	0,8	0,8	-0,003	0,9	0,9	0,006
married	1,0	1,0	-0,001	1,0	1,0	0,010
Paris	0,0	0,0	0,003	0,0	0,0	0,005
Ile-de-France (excepted Paris)	0,1	0,1	-0,003	0,1	0,1	-0,001
Age (men)	41,6	41,6	0,008	41,9	41,8	0,022
Age (women)	38,9	38,9	0,002	39,0	38,9	0,008
Total Declared Income (1 year before divorce)	49636,4	49298,4	0,007	41524,3	40952,1	0,012
Men Labor Income (1 year before divorce)	30322,9	30286,3	0,001	26434,7	26249,5	0,006
Women Labor Income (1 year before divorce)	8961,9	8781,4	0,019	5629,5	5574,0	0,007
Homeowner	0,6	0,6	0,009	0,5	0,5	0,003
Living in a House	0,7	0,7	0,003	0,7	0,7	0,006
At least one 1 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	-0,001	0,1	0,1	-0,007
At least one 2 y.o. child	0,1	0,1	-0,009	0,1	0,1	0,008
At least one 3 y.o. child	0,1	0,1	0,002	0,1	0,1	-0,019
At least one 4 to 6 y.o. child	0,3	0,3	0,007	0,4	0,4	-0,015
At least one 7 to 9 y.o. child	0,4	0,4	-0,013	0,5	0,5	-0,009
At least one 10 to 14 y.o. child	0,5	0,5	-0,003	0,7	0,7	0,004
At least one 15 to 17 y.o. child	0,3	0,3	-0,004	0,4	0,4	0,007
At least one 18 to 25 y.o. child	0,2	0,2	0,003	0,3	0,3	0,017
At least one more than 26 y.o. child	0,0	0,0	0,011	0,0	0,0	0,027
Women Earnings (2 years before divorce)	8388,1	8310,3	0,008	5015,2	4925,6	0,011
Men Earnings (2 years before divorce)	27684,4	27676,3	0,000	24441,9	24437,4	0,000
Women Earnings (3 years before divorce)	7616,0	7605,3	0,001	4445,3	4252,9	0,024
Men Earnings (3 years before divorce)	25200,4	25284,5	-0,003	22247,9	22353,8	-0,004
Tax payed	2407,1	2302,6	0,009	1333,0	1215,6	0,012
Number of children	2,0	2,0	0,000	3,0	3,0	0,000
Long term unemployment (Men)	0,0	0,0	0,004	0,0	0,0	0,004
Overtime work (Men)	667,5	660,7	0,005	654,8	650,1	0,004
Pensions (Men)	302,3	276,3	0,011	305,1	269,9	0,018
Unemployment and pre-retirement benefit (Men)	609,3	575,0	0,011	765,8	752,0	0,005
Long term unemployment (Women)	0,0	0,0	0,017	0,0	0,0	-0,001
Overtime work (Women)	106,0	101,9	0,010	75,8	73,2	0,007
Pensions (Women)	119,5	120,2	-0,001	160,0	183,3	-0,018
Unemployment and pre-retirement benefit (Women)	667,2	694,7	-0,013	531,4	538,0	-0,004
Self-employment earnings	4725,4	4759,8	-0,001	4419,1	4334,8	0,004
Profits from non-commercial occupations (Men)	2564,9	2689,8	-0,005	2621,2	2652,6	-0,001
Profits from non-commercial occupations (Women)	239,0	260,9	-0,007	238,6	281,9	-0,012
Profits from commercial occupations (Men)	1837,0	1794,3	0,004	1515,7	1335,8	0,019
Profits from commercial occupations (Women)	175,2	174,4	0,000	74,7	92,4	-0,015
Farm profits (Men)	310,6	262,8	0,014	267,8	334,4	-0,016
Farm profits (Women)	13,6	15,2	-0,003	19,5	28,8	-0,011
No activity (Men)	0,0	0,0	-0,023	0,0	0,0	0,000
No activity (Women)	0,3	0,3	-0,018	0,4	0,4	0,003
Standard of living before divorce	21769,8	21677,9	0,005	17650,6	17505,5	0,011
UC OECD	2,2	2,2	-0,005	2,7	2,7	0,008
UC square root	2,0	2,0	0,000	2,3	2,3	-0,002

D Other tables of results

Variations of living standards, by number of children and by share of earnings provided by man before separation

Table D.1: Variations of living standards, by number of children

	Women				Men			
	Before transfers (1)	With private transfers (2)	Total living standard (3)	With control group (4)	Before transfers (5)	With private transfers (6)	Total living standard (7)	With control group (8)
All	-35.1***	-29.4***	-14.4***	-18.8***	24.2***	15.4***	3.5***	-2.4***
0	-26,9***	-25***	-18,6***	-21.5***	-1,9***	-3,7***	-5,2***	-9.8***
1	-32,7***	-28***	-13,5***	-18.9***	12,4***	6.5***	2,1***	-4,1***
2	-36,2***	-29,1***	-13,9***	-18.7***	28,1***	17.1***	5,5***	-1,0***
≥ 3	-45***	-36,6***	-12***	-15.7***	64,6***	47,5***	11,9***	5,6***

Lecture: Means of changes.

Table D.2: Variations of living standards, by share of earnings provided by man before separation

	Women				Men			
	Before transfers (1)	With private transfers (2)	Total living standard (3)	With control group (4)	Before transfers (5)	With private transfers (6)	Total living standard (7)	With control group (8)
All	-35.1***	-29.4***	-14.4***	-18.8***	24.2***	15.4***	3.5***	-2.4***
<40 %	18.9***	21.5***	18***	1.4***	-9***	-12.6***	-8.2***	-20.4***
40-60 %	-26.1***	-23***	-16.3***	-17.6***	-3.6***	-8.6***	-13.6***	-15.5***
>60 %	-53.8***	-45.7***	-21***	-24.9***	49.9***	37.3***	17.4***	10.1***

Lecture: Means of changes.

Increase in participation & unemployment benefits

Table D.3: Increase in participation for women & men

	Women		Men	
	Divorcees (1)	Divorcees with ctrl gp (2)	Divorcees (3)	Divorcees with ctrl gp (4)
Treated		28.8***		14.5***
Cons.	52.8***	24.0***	54.7***	40.2***

Sample: individuals who had no income or a yearly income lower than the minimum mensual wage before divorce. They are considered to have increase their participation when, after divorce, their yearly income is higher than the minimum mensual wage.

Lecture: Linear probability models.

Table D.4: Presence of unemployment benefits after divorce when none before, women & men

	Women		Men	
	Divorcees (1)	Divorcees with ctrl gp (2)	Divorcees (3)	Divorcees with ctrl gp (4)
Treated		3.0***		2.4***
Cons.	9.7***	6.7***	8.4***	6.0***

Sample: individuals who had no unemployment benefits and a non-zero individual income before divorce.

Lecture: Linear probability models.

E Tables of quantile regressions

Table E.1: Median regressions : Changes in living standards and changes in labor and UI income for women

	Women			
	Changes in living standards		Changes in labor and UI income	
	Divorcees (1)	Divorcees with ctrl gp (2)	Divorcees (3)	Divorcees with ctrl gp (4)
Number of children				
0	-8,4***	-6,8***	-0,2*	0,3***
1	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2	5***	4,4***	1,2***	-0,4***
3 or more	4,5***	6,3***	1,2***	-0,5***
Share of income provided by man before separation				
< 20%	47,7***	32,6***	-5,8***	-4,5***
20-40%	36,9***	34,8***	-4,2***	-3,1***
40-60%	16,4***	16,8***	-2,7***	-2,3***
60-80%	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
> 80%	-9,3***	-9,8***	31,5***	31,9***
Quintile of income before separation				
1 st	40,8***	34***	6,1***	3,9***
2 nd	9***	9,1***	1,1***	1,1***
3 rd	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
4 th	-4,9***	-5,5***	-0,5***	0 ^(ns)
5 th	-13,6***	-13,7***	-1,6***	-0,7***
Cons.	-28,8***	-30,2***	7,6***	4,1***

*Note: Median regressions. Standard errors are computed by sub-sampling. *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels respectively.*

Lecture: The living standard of women with 1 child, whose husbands provided between 60 and 80% of couple earnings before divorce and who were in couple from the 3rd quintile of income (the reference category), decreases by -30.2% compared to control group (column (2)). Their labor and UI income increases by +4.1%.

Source: Divorced women sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009.

Table E.2: Median regressions : Changes in living standards and changes in labor and UI income for men

	Men			
	Changes in living standards		Changes in labor and UI income	
	Divorcees	Divorcees with ctrl gp	Divorcees	Divorcees with ctrl gp
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Number of children				
0	-7,3***	-6,3***	0,2 ^(ns)	0,5***
1	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2	2,3***	1,3***	0 ^(ns)	-0,1***
3 or more	0,2 ^(ns)	1***	-0,4***	-0,7***
Share of income provided by man before separation				
< 20%	-12,5***	-20,2***	73,7***	12,2***
20-40%	-31,6***	-32,5***	6,2***	2,1***
40-60%	-17,6***	-17,4***	1,4***	0,3***
60-80%	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
> 80%	16,9***	15***	-1,8***	-0,9***
Quintile of income before separation				
1 st	12,8***	6,2***	2,6***	-0,1*
2 nd	3,1***	2,6***	0,9***	0,2***
3 rd	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
4 th	0,2 ^(ns)	-0,9***	0 ^(ns)	0,3***
5 th	0,3 ^(ns)	0,4***	-0,5***	0,3***
Cons.	3***	1,8***	3,4***	-0,9***

Note: Median regressions. Standard errors are computed by sub-sampling. *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels respectively.

Lecture: The living standard of men with 1 child, who provided between 60 and 80% of the couple earnings before divorce and who were in couple from the 3rd quintile of income (the reference category), increases by +1.8% compared to control group (column (2)). Their labor and UI income decreases by -0.9%.

Source: Divorced men sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009.

Table E.3: Median regressions: Variations of living standards, by number of children

	Women				Men			
	Before transfers	With private transfers	Total living standard	With control group	Before transfers	With private transfers	Total living standard	With control group
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
All	-37,9***	-32,5***	-19***	-21,8***	11,9***	5***	-2,2***	-5,1***
0	-30,6***	-29,3***	-24,8***	-26,5***	-8,3***	-9,5***	-11,6***	-13,4***
1	-35,6***	-31,3***	-19,3***	-22,4***	5,6***	0,2 ^(ns)	-4,3***	-6,8***
2	-38,6***	-31,6***	-17,7***	-21,2***	18,9***	8,7***	0,1 ^(ns)	-3,3***
≥ 3	-50***	-40,6***	-15,5***	-17,6***	51***	34,9***	8,1***	5***

Lecture: Medians of changes.

Table E.4: Median regressions: Variations of living standards, by share of earnings provided by man before separation.

	Women				Men			
	Before transfers	With private transfers	Total living standard	With control group	Before transfers	With private transfers	Total living standard	With control group
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
All	-37,9***	-32,5***	-19***	-21,8***	11,9***	5***	-2,2***	-5,1***
< 40 %	5,6***	7,4***	9,1***	1,6***	-27,4***	-30***	-22,5***	-27,2***
40-60 %	-27,1***	-23,5***	-17,8***	-19,5***	-7,1***	-10,6***	-15,1***	-16,5***
> 60 %	-56,1***	-48***	-26***	-28,9***	38,1***	27,2***	13***	9,3***

Lecture: Medians of changes.

Table E.5: Median regressions: Changes in living standards for different equivalence scales, for women.

	Women							
	Divorcees				Divorcees with control group			
	OECD	Square root variant	Loneparent variant	Non custodial parent variant	OECD	Square root variant	Loneparent variant	Non custodial parent variant
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
Number of children								
0	-8,4***	-4,7***	3,1***	-7,7***	-6,8***	-2,2***	5***	-6***
1	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2	5***	4,2***	6,3***	5,2***	4,4***	3***	5,7***	4,7***
3 or more	4,5***	4,5***	8***	4,7***	6,3***	5,1***	9,9***	6,5***
Share of income provided by man before separation								
< 20%	47,7***	49,1***	48***	48,2***	32,6***	34,4***	32,9***	33***
20-40%	36,9***	37,3***	36,2***	37,7***	34,8***	35,5***	34,1***	35,6***
40-60%	16,4***	16,4***	15,9***	16,8***	16,8***	16,7***	16,3***	17,3***
60-80%	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
> 80%	-9,3***	-9,2***	-9***	-9,3***	-9,8***	-9,9***	-9,6***	-9,9***
Quintile of income before separation								
1 st	40,8***	41***	41,1***	41,3***	34***	34,7***	34,3***	34,5***
2 nd	9***	9,3***	9,4***	9,2***	9,1***	9,3***	9,4***	9,3***
3 rd	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
4 th	-4,9***	-4,6***	-4,8***	-5***	-5,5***	-5,3***	-5,4***	-5,5***
5 th	-13,6***	-13,3***	-13,4***	-13,7***	-13,7***	-13,6***	-13,5***	-13,8***
Cons.	-28,8***	-35,9***	-37,3***	-29,6***	-30,2***	-37,6***	-38,6***	-31***

Note: Median regressions. Standard errors are computed by subsampling. *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5% and 1% levels respectively.

Lecture: The living standard of women with 1 child, whose husbands provided between 60 and 80% of couple earnings before divorce and who were in couple from the 3rd quintile of income (the reference category), decreases by -30.2%, compared to the control group, when OECD equivalence scale is used (column (5)), by -37.6% when computed with the square root equivalence scale (column (6)), by -38.6% when computed according to the "loneparent variant" (column (7)) and by -31% when computed according to the "non custodial parent variant" (column (8)) (cf. main text for explanations about these variants).

Source: Divorced women sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009.

Table E.6: Median regressions: Changes in living standards for different equivalence scales, for men.

	Men							
	Divorcees				Divorcees with control group			
	OECD (1)	Square root variant (2)	Loneparent variant (3)	Non custodial parent variant (4)	OECD (5)	Square root variant (6)	Loneparent variant (7)	Non custodial parent variant (8)
Number of children								
0	-7,3***	-5,5***	-2,5***	-2,6***	-6,3***	-3,5***	-1,5***	-1,5***
1	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2	2,3***	0,1 ^(ns)	0,9**	-0,5*	1,3***	-1,5***	-0,1 ^(ns)	-1,5***
3 or more	0,2 ^(ns)	-5,3***	0 ^(ns)	-7,1***	1***	-5,5***	0,8***	-6,4***
Share of income provided by man before separation								
< 20%	-12,5***	-12,6***	-11,9***	-13,3***	-20,2***	-19,6***	-19,6***	-20,9***
20-40%	-31,6***	-31,9***	-30,4***	-32,6***	-32,5***	-32,7***	-31,4***	-33,6***
40-60%	-17,6***	-17,6***	-17,8***	-17,6***	-17,4***	-17,5***	-17,7***	-17,5***
60-80%	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
> 80%	16,9***	17,1***	16,8***	16,8***	15***	15,3***	14,8***	14,9***
Quintile of income before separation								
1 st	12,8***	13,1***	14,5***	10,8***	6,2***	6,9***	7,8***	4,3***
2 nd	3,1***	3,4***	3,7***	2,6***	2,6***	3***	3,2***	2,1***
3 rd	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
4 th	0,2 ^(ns)	-0,2 ^(ns)	-0,6 ^(ns)	0,2 ^(ns)	-0,9***	-1,2***	-1,7***	-0,9***
5 th	0,3 ^(ns)	-0,8**	-0,9**	0,2 ^(ns)	0,4***	-1***	-0,8***	0,3**
Cons.	3***	-4,6***	-2,1***	-1,7***	1,8***	-6,6***	-3,3***	-2,9***

Note: Median regressions. Standard errors are computed by subsampling. *, **, *** denote significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels respectively.

Lecture: The living standard of men with 1 child, who provided between 60 and 80% of the couple earnings before divorce and who were in couple from the 3rd quintile of income (the reference category), increases by +1.8% when the OECD equivalence scale is used (column (5)), decreases by -6.6% when computed with the square root equivalence scale (column (6)), by -3.3% when computed according to the "loneparent variant" (column (7)) and by -2.9% when computed according to the "non custodial parent variant" (column (8)) (cf. main text for explanations about these variants).

Source: Divorced men sample from French exhaustive income-tax returns database, 2009.

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