

# Wenqi Lu

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## Education

Ph.D. in Economics, University of Antwerp & Université libre de Bruxelles, 2021-2026 (expected)

*Advisors: Luca Merlino, Sam Cosaert*

*Committees: Jan Bouckaert, Marion Leturcq, Paula Gobbi, Thomas Demuynck*

M.Sc. in Advanced Studies of Economics, KU Leuven, 2019-2020

M.Sc. in Economics (Finance), University of Edinburgh, 2017-2018

B.Sc in Finance, Wuhan University, 2013-2017

B.Sc in Political Science (dual degree), Wuhan University, 2013-2017

## Research Fields

Family Economics, Labor Economics, Revealed Preference Theory

## Working Papers

### **Time or Money? Togetherness and Intrahousehold Allocation**

Joint experience between partners, or togetherness, are key benefits of marriage. Despite the importance, the allocation tradeoffs between togetherness and other household activities, and its relation to gender differences, remains limited understood. This paper captures time use and consumption allocation between spouses, with a particular focus on togetherness. The study shows that women place higher value on home-production, while men hold more bargaining power. This study also reveals a substitutable role between joint leisure time and expenditure. These patterns help explain the gender gap in time use and consumption within families.

### **To Veil or Not to Veil? Assessing the Removal of Headscarf Ban in a Muslim Country**

with Ekin Yurdakul (*Under Review*)

This paper examines the labor and marriage market effects of lifting the headscarf ban in Turkey. Using Household Labor Force Survey data, we employ a diff-in-diff approach, leveraging novel methods to predict veiling status. The reform increased veiled women's employment, primarily in the public sector, while non-veiled women shifted to private-sector jobs. Veiled women also experienced lower informal employment and greater job stability. Marriage rates remained unchanged, but veiled women became more likely to marry wage-earning partners with a larger spousal age gap. Effects were similar across regions with high and low veiling prevalence, suggesting broader implications for minority contexts.

### **Spousal Preference Alignment, Narrow Equity, and Heterogeneity of Intra-Household Allocations**

with Sam Cosaert

We examine the interhousehold heterogeneity in spousal allocations using a collective model where household members have distributional preferences over consumption, time away from work, and leisure. Most households exhibit spousal preference alignment in some domains but not in others, indicating narrow equity considerations. We then assess how many distributional preference types are needed to explain observed intra-household allocations. The presence of children emerges as the primary factor behind this heterogeneity. Our analysis integrates revealed preference principles with data on consumption and time use, supplemented by stated preference information from the Dutch LISS surveys.

## Work in Progress

### **The Cost of Inequality: Home Production, Gender Roles, and Fertility in Japan**

(Job Market Paper, draft soon)

Japan was among the first countries to encounter ultra-low fertility, despite generous leave policies. Rigid gender-based labor specialization persists: women take on most unpaid domestic work after childbirth, while men remain focused on market work. This division creates a large gender gap in labor and resource sharing, discouraging fertility especially among progressive women. Japan's overwork culture and persistent gender norms sustain this imbalance. This study explores how unequal domestic labor affects fertility decisions and how improved work-life balance and shifting norms may change fertility intentions.

## Conferences and Seminars (\*scheduled)

2025: Meeting of the Society of Economics of the Household (Zaragoza), ECARES Internal Seminar (Brussels), UAntwerpen Internal Seminar (Antwerp)

2024: ECARES Christmas Workshop (Brussels), European Association of Labour Economists Conference (Oslo), Meeting of the Society of Economics of the Household (Singapore), GRAPE External Research Seminar (online)

2023: Household Economics Workshop (Leuven), UAntwerp FEB Doctoral Day (Antwerp), Belgian Day for Labour Economists (Brussels), Gender Gaps Conferences (Warsaw), UAntwerpen Internal Seminar (Antwerp)

2022: Household Economics Workshop (Brussels)

## Research visits

**Aix-Marseille School of Economics (AMSE)**, 2025-2026  
*AMSE one-year research grants for external PhD students*

## Awards

Best Paper Award, Gender Gaps Conference, 2023

## Teaching Experience

T.A. of *Microeconomics*, UAntwerp, 2024-2025  
for Prof. Sam Cosaert

T.A. of *Microeconomics*, UAntwerp, 2023-2024  
for Prof. Sam Cosaert

T.A. of *International Economics*, UAntwerp, 2022-2023  
for Prof. Elsa Leromain

T.A. of *International Economics*, UAntwerp, 2022-2023  
for Prof. Mewael Tesfaselassie

Master Thesis (Co)supervision, UAntwerp, 2022-2025

## Other Experience

Organizer of Economics Internal Seminar, UAntwerpen, 2024-2025

Assessors of Master Thesis, UAntwerp, 2023-2025

Assessor of Master Research Internship, UAntwerp, 2024-2025

## Skills

Languages: Chinese (native), English (proficient).

Softwares: Stata, MATLAB, Julia, Python, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X.

## References

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