

An Introduction to Feminist Economics

Diane Elson

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Some Basic Principles of Feminist Economics

- Work: unpaid as well as paid
- Businesses: patriarchy as well as profit
- Markets: inequality as well as exchange
- Households: conflict as well as cooperation
- Behaviour: altruism as well as self-interest
- Choices: shaped as well as shaping
- Well-being: capabilities as well as consumption

Economies are gendered

- Gender divisions of labour
- Gender divisions of income
- Gender divisions of wealth
- Gender divisions intersect with class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age
- Gender norms and relations
- Do women 'choose' to work part-time?

Unpacking 'efficiency'

- Maximise output from given inputs
- Minimize input use for a given output
- But how are inputs and outputs defined?
- Example of 'day surgery' :an increase in efficiency or a transfer of work from paid to unpaid time?
- Example of subcontracting public services : an increase in efficiency or an intensification of work and fall in quality of service?

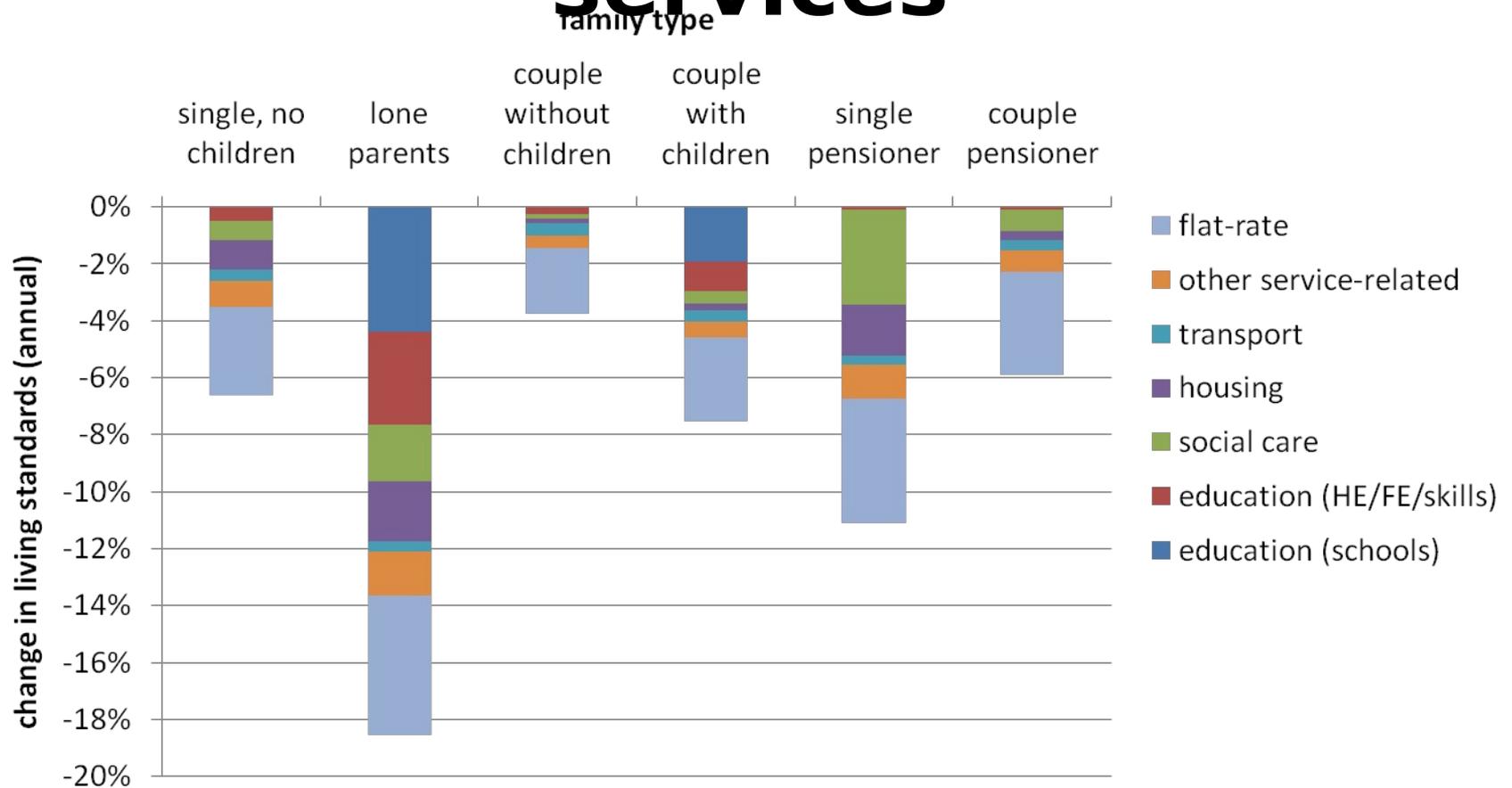
Understanding the budget deficit

- Is government debt like credit card debt to buy a holiday in the sun?
- Or like a mortgage to buy a house?
- Did the Labour Government irresponsibly 'max out' the UK credit card?
- Is the ConDem government irresponsibly paying off the mortgage at a faster rate at expense of being able to heat the house and put food on the table?

Are deficit reduction policies gender-neutral?

- Cut expenditure a lot and raise taxes a little OR
- Cut expenditure a little and raise taxes a lot
- 65% of workers in the UK public sector are women
- on average one-fifth of women 's income is made up of benefits and tax credits, compared to one-tenth for men
- women use public services more intensively than men- to meet their own needs, which are greater than those of men, because of pregnancy, longer life expectancy, and lower earnings and assets; to assist them in managing care responsibilities for children, for frail elderly people, and for sick or disabled people.
- women's incomes will tend to be less hard hit by rises in direct taxes, like income tax, and by national insurance charges, because women have lower incomes than men and fewer women than men have paid jobs.
- rises in VAT will hit poorer people harder than richer people

Effects of spending cuts by family type: as % of net income, all services



Gender effects within pensioners

Single women hit hardest among those without children

