

The Gender Wage Gap Evidence from British Cohort Studies

Project Overview
Heather Joshi June 5 2024



A research project funded by ESRC

- Investigates the gap between men's and women's hourly pay over the life course and across cohorts, using evidence from the British Birth Cohorts.
- Alex Bryson (PI) with Heather Joshi, David Wilkinson, Francesca Foliano and Bozena Wielgoszewska
- UCL Social Research Institute
- September 2019- June 2024
- Project website: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/departments-and-centres/centres/quantitative-social-science/gender-wage-gap-evidence-cohort-studies>

Why GWG ?

- The Gender Wage Gap (GWG) is a pivotal feature of economic inequality between men and women though not its sole manifestation.
- A focus of Equality policy

Why Cohorts?

- The British cohort studies provide longitudinal data on individuals on:
 - pay, employment, education and early life through time
 - for several cohorts
 - Studies managed at the Centre for Longitudinal Studies, SRI, UCL
 - We look at variables which may account for the GWG
- Our Invited speakers will be using complementary evidence

Factors used to decompose GWG

“EXPLAINED”

Human capital characteristics

- Family of origin
- Education
- Skills
- Experience
- Family responsibilities
- **Job characteristics**
- Full/part-time
- Occupation
- Vertical or horizontal segregation
- Employer characteristics
- Sector, contract, unionisation, size, institutional structure

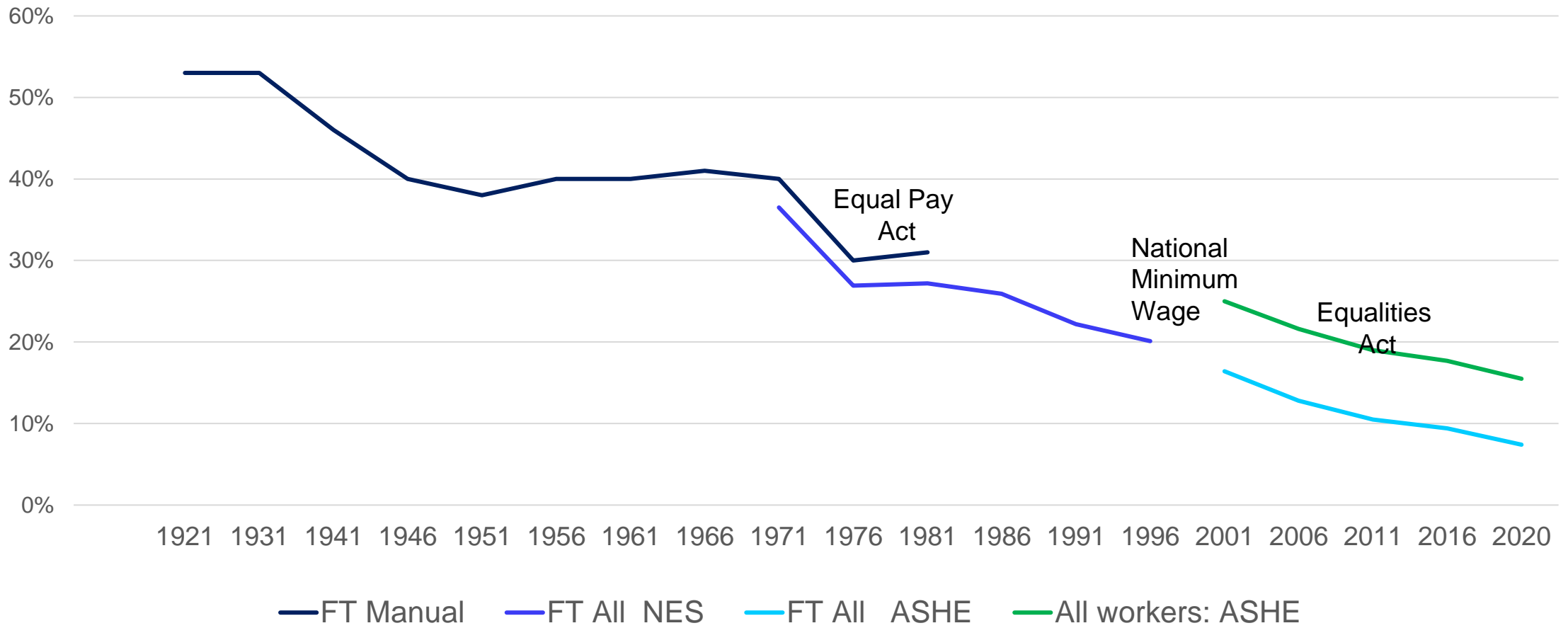
“UNEXPLAINED”

Unequal rewards to a characteristic for men and women

- Employer/ee preference against hiring, promoting, training or retaining women
- Institutional culture/ Workplace sexism
- Women’s preference for flexibility or female workmates
- Lower bargaining power and travel range
- Asymmetric social expectations of men’s and women’s family roles.

Secular trend in the gender pay gap: various series and policy landmarks

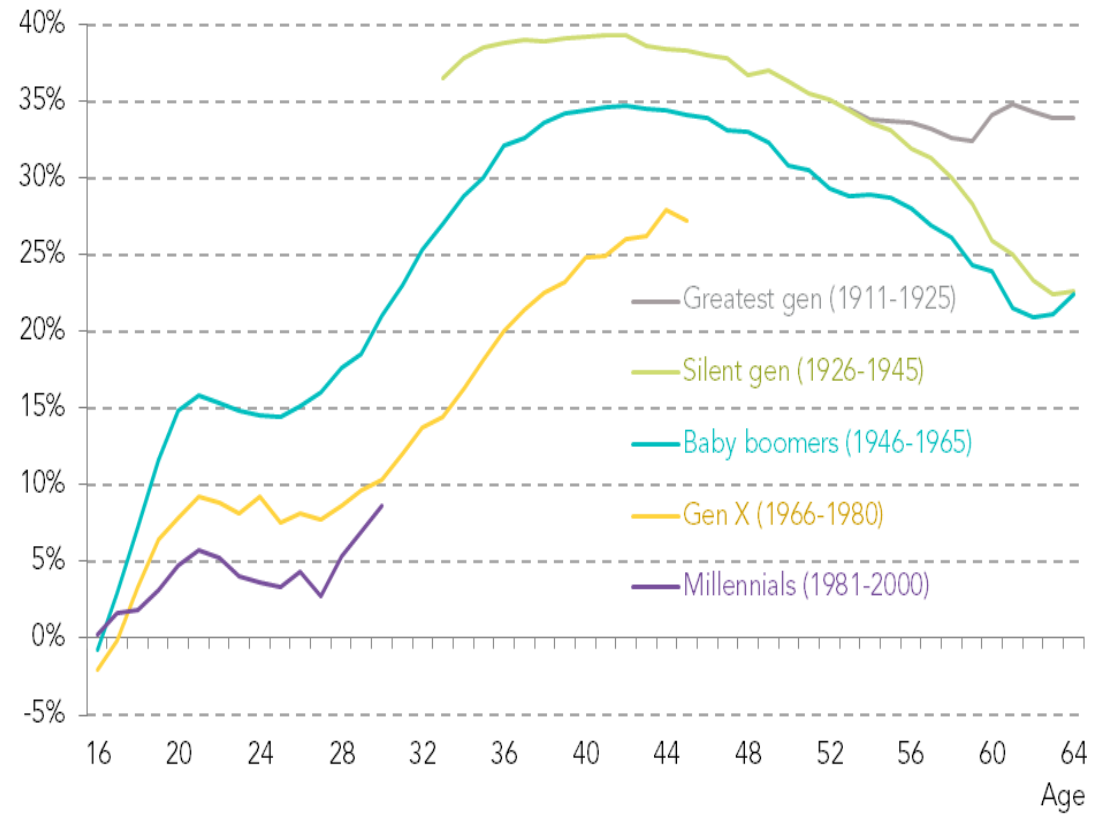
Gender Gap in hourly pay, 1921-2020, per cent of men's median



Trends in GWG: Aggregate data

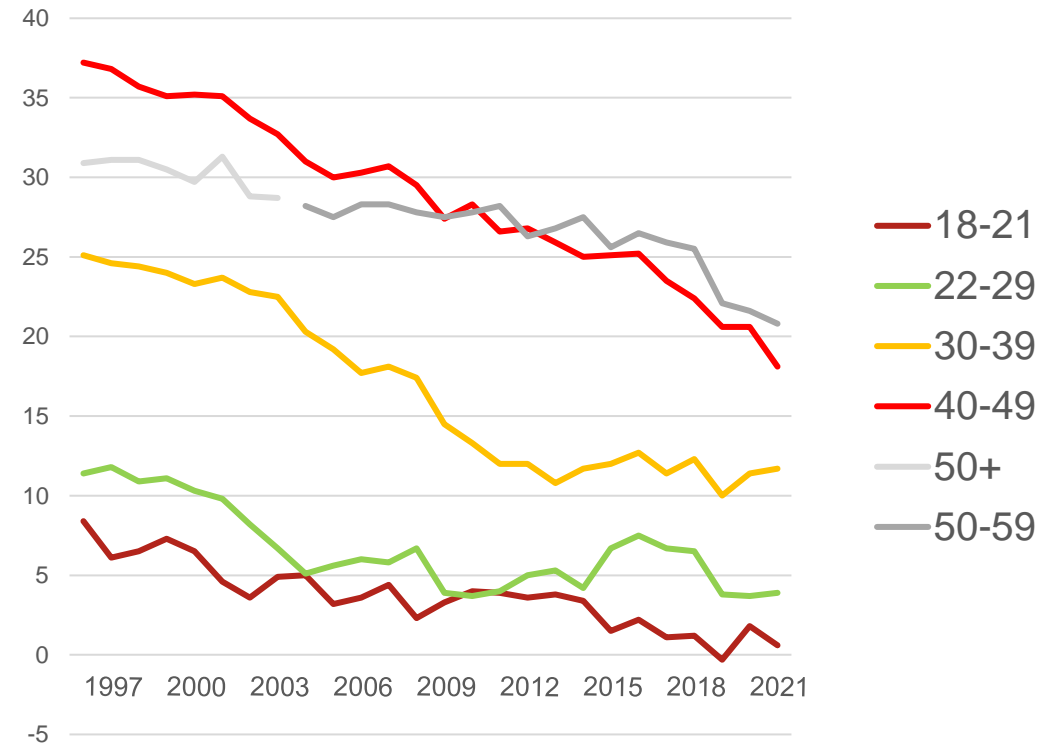
By Generation

Gender pay gap for median gross hourly earnings, by generation: UK, 1975-2016



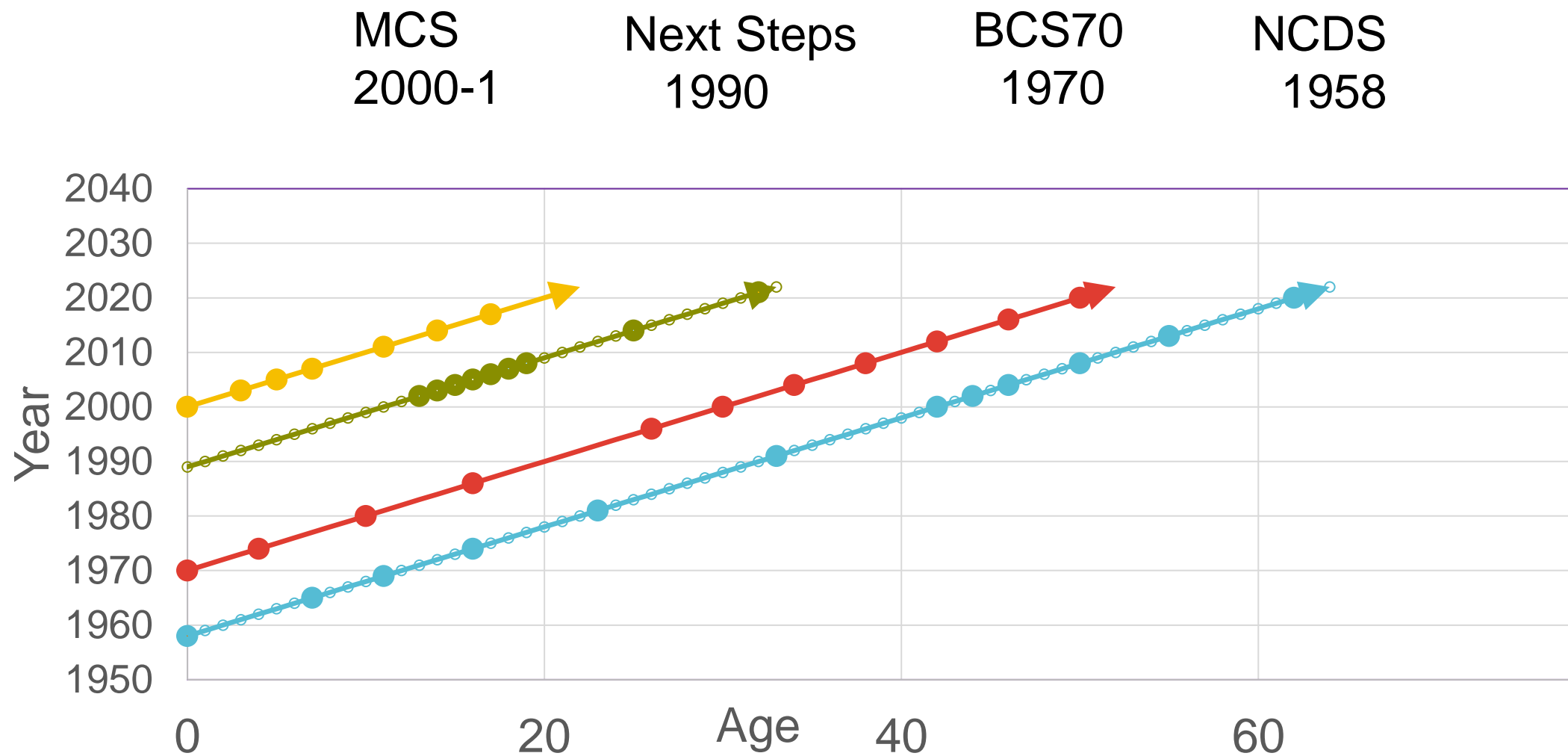
Source: Resolution Foundation

• By Age group

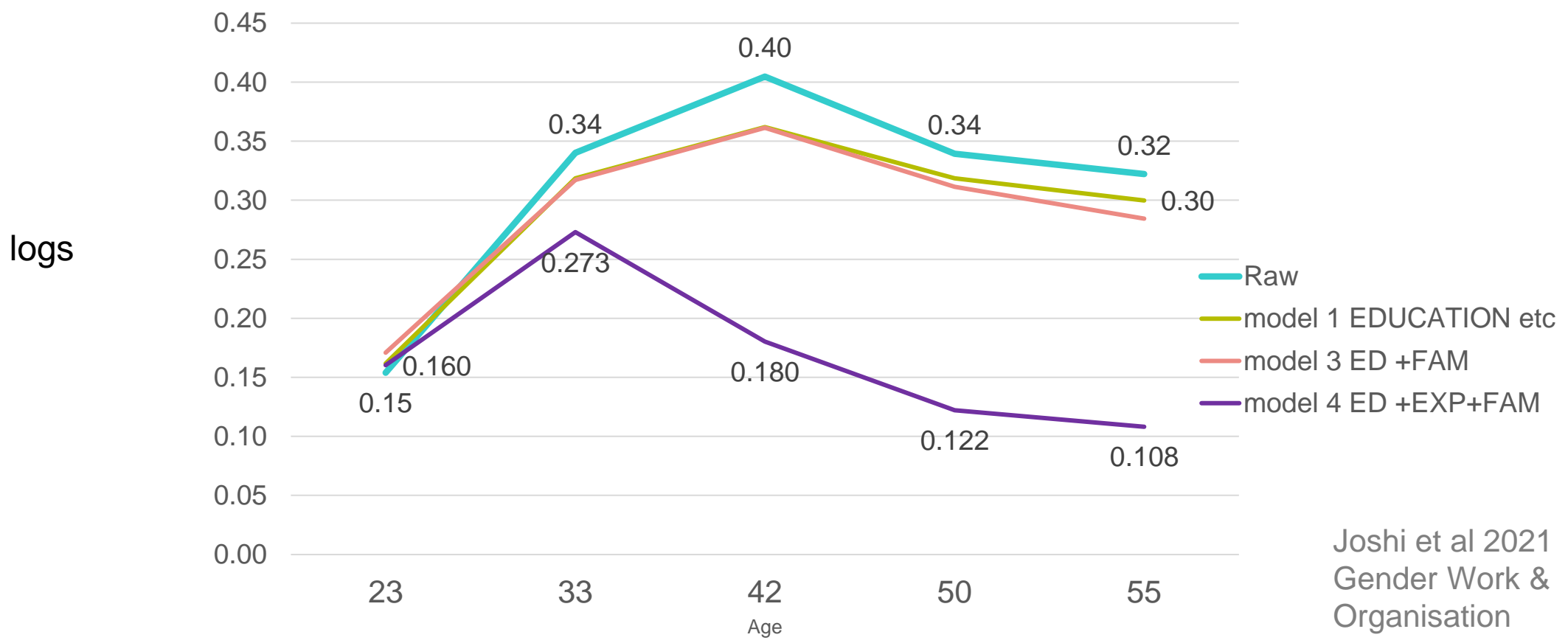


Source: ONS

Cohort age and timelines to 2020



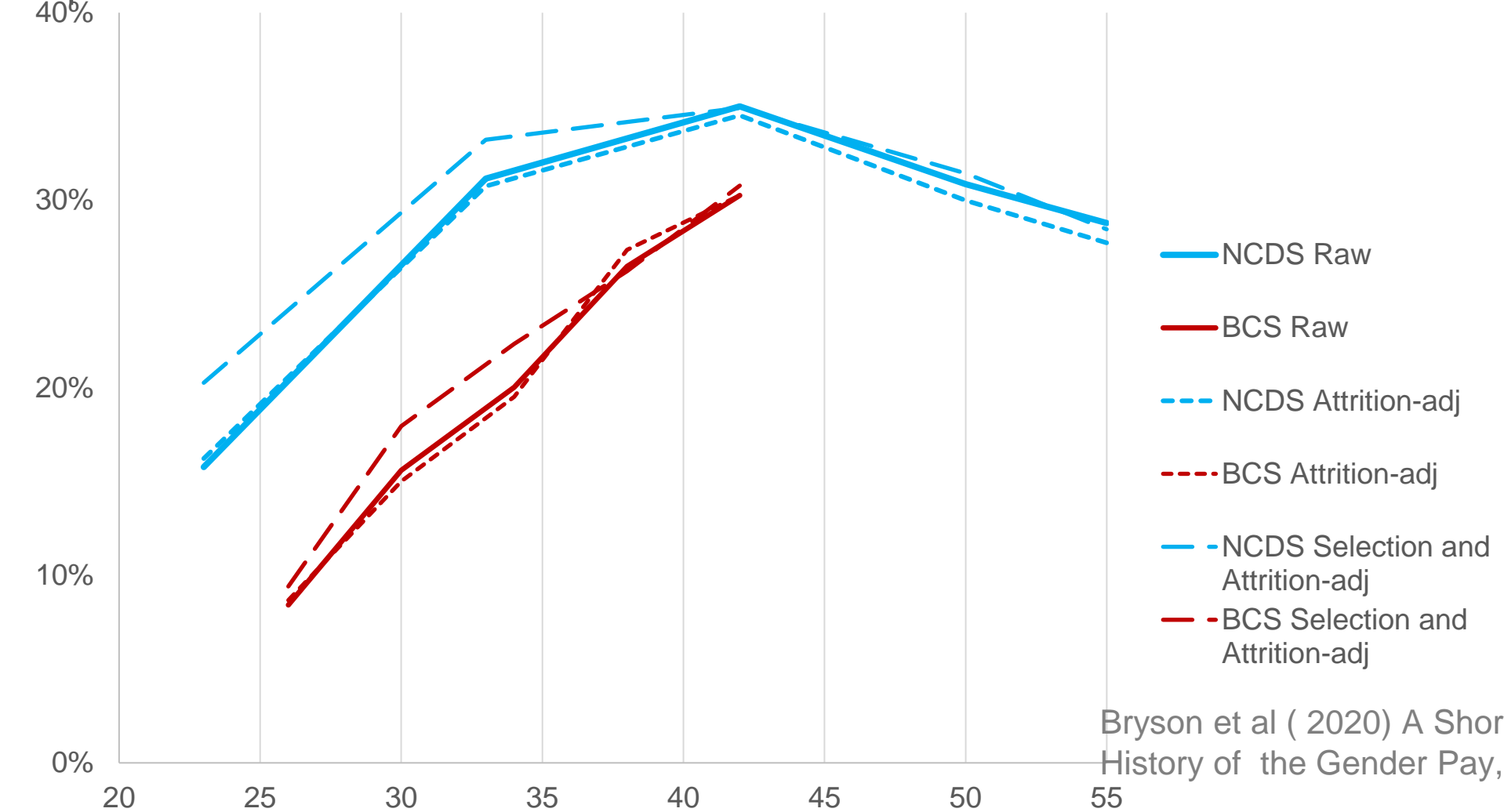
1958 cohort: Gender pay gap - raw and covariate adjusted (unexplained - parameter gap)



Joshi et al 2021
Gender Work &
Organisation

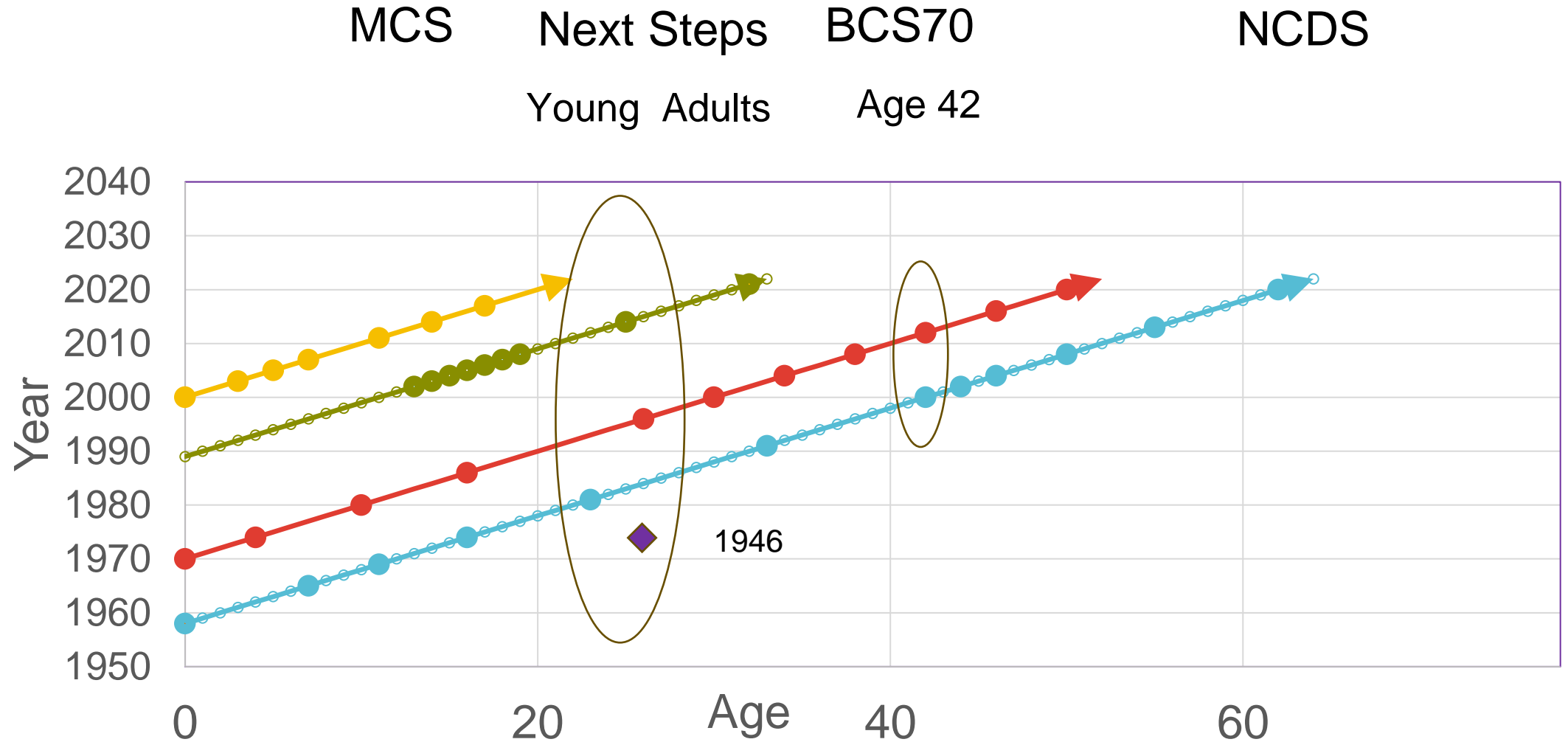
BCS70 and NCDS: Selection and attrition

Gap at median

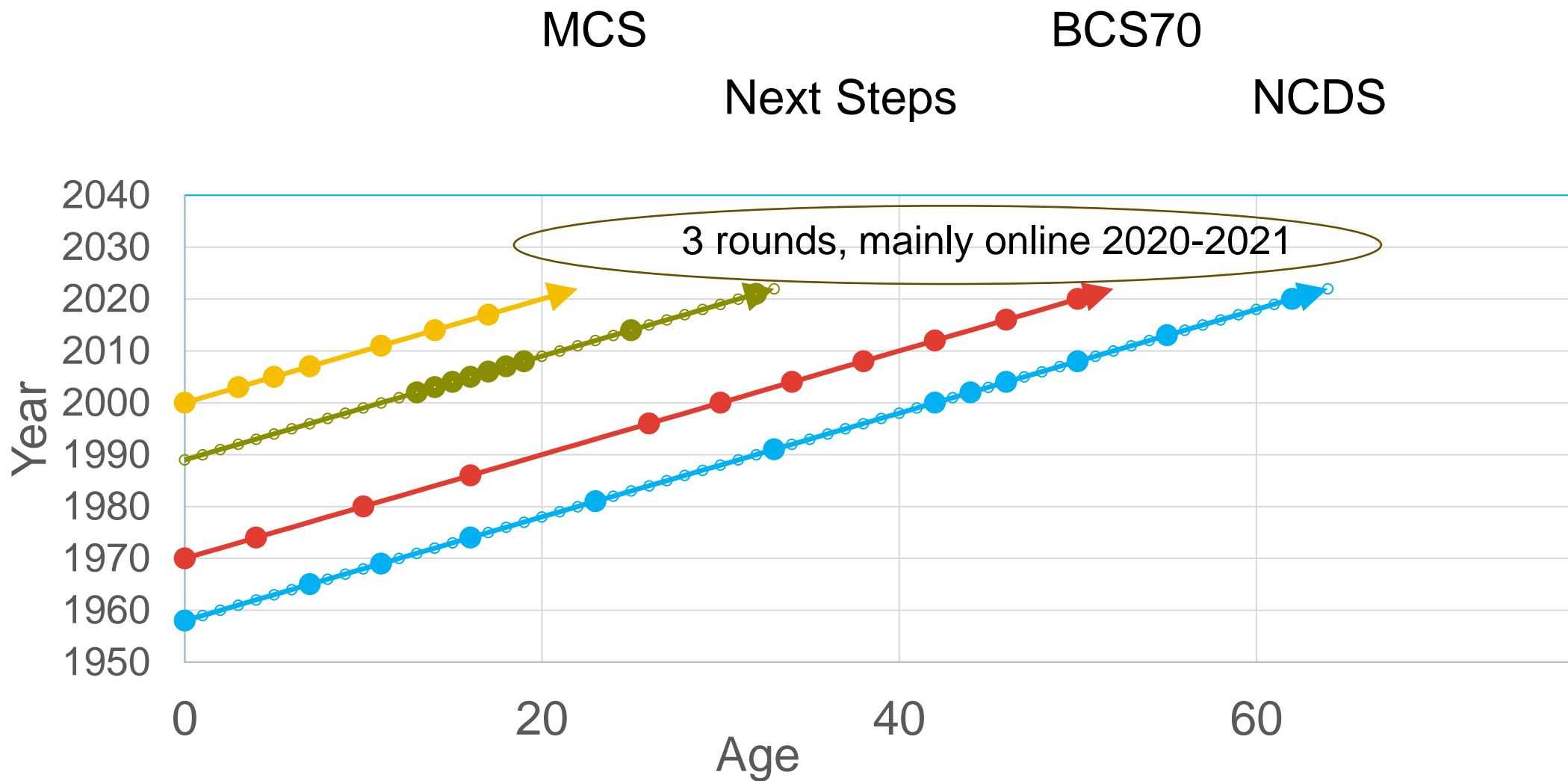


Bryson et al (2020) A Short History of the Gender Pay,

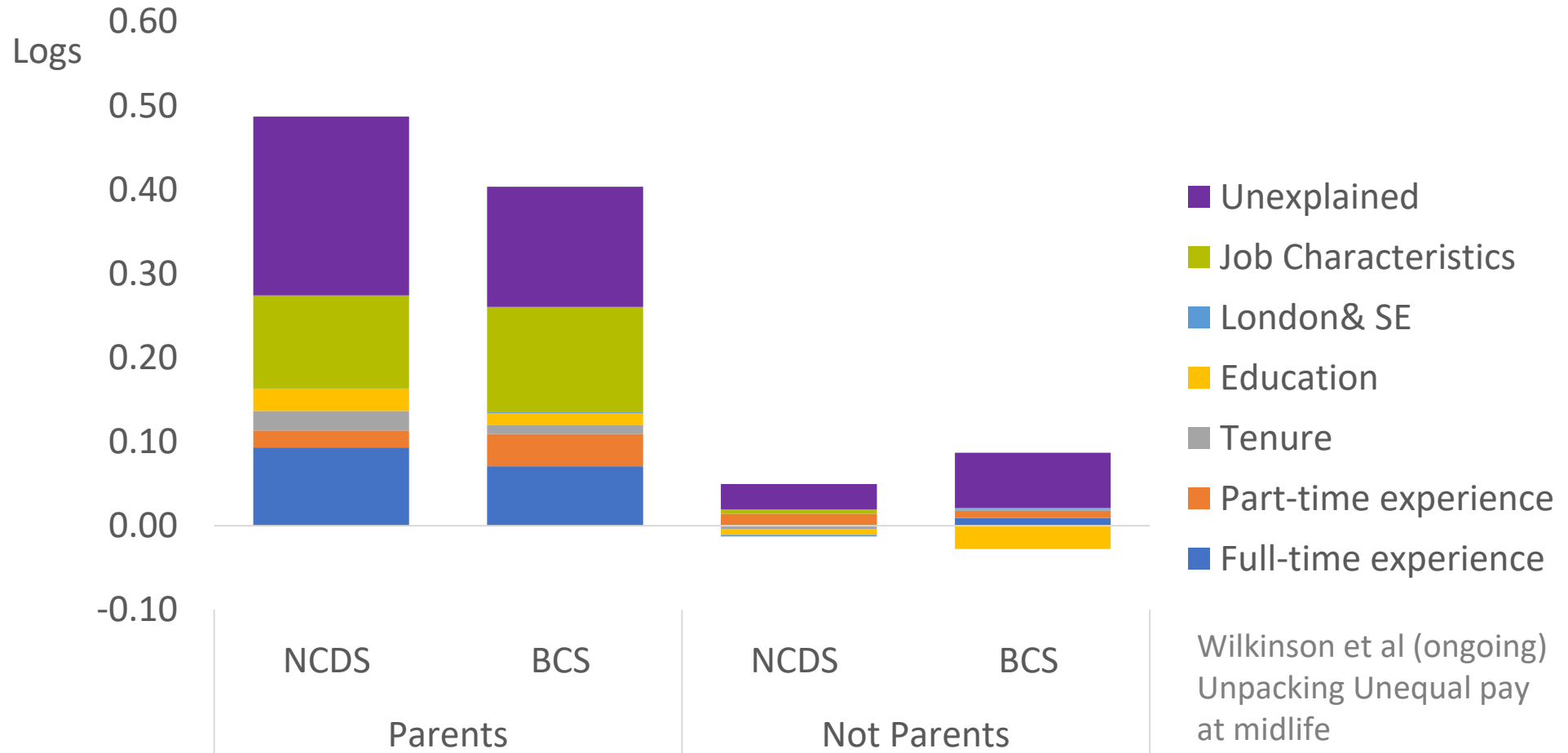
Cohort age and timelines: cross-cohort comparisons



All four cohorts surveyed in Covid 19 pandemic



Across cohorts at age 42 (2000, 2012): GPG components for Parents and Non-Parents



Explaining the “EXPLAINED”

- Are the origins of gender disadvantage laid down in or before childhood?
- Ongoing work using the 1958 cohort, looks at genetic associations with educational achievements and other pre-labour market characteristics
- The preliminary results suggest that **human capital** is not the ultimate explanation of the gender pay gap but itself needs explaining.
 - The gender wage gap among those born in 1958: A matching estimator approach, Alex Bryson, 23 November 2023, IAB Colloquium Nuremberg Germany
 - The Gender Wage Gap Across the Life Course: The Role of a Genetic Marker for Educational Attainment April 18 2024. Alex Bryson, David Bann, Tim Morris, Dave Wilkinson.

Other outputs

- Are Women Doing It For Themselves? Gender Segregation and the Gender Pay Gap, Theodoropoulos, N., - Forth, J. and Bryson, A. 2022 *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics* – **a study about women managers**
- **The Gender Wage Gap Among University Vice Chancellors in the UK**
R Bachan and A Bryson, 2022 *Labour Economics*,
- **The Gender Wage Gap in Britain: A Meta-Analysis (in progress)** Patrice Laroche (Université de Lorraine), with Bryson Joshi and Wilkinson
- **+ more related papers and presentations listed on Outputs page of Project Website**

Findings Unfinished

- Like the gender pay gap, and the ‘gender revolution’ itself – there is still a way to go
- *“We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time “*
 - TS Elliot, Little Gidding
- We will finish today with a discussion of where policy and academic research may go from here. Please bring your comments to the panel session.

Thank you

