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Suddenly a Stay-At-Home Dad? Short- and Long-term Consequences of Fathers' Job Loss on Time Investment in the Household

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Motivation

- Persistent gender difference in domestic work in virtually all countries, despite strong increase in female (and maternal) labor force participation and public child care coverage ▸
- Changes in paternity leave regulation induced limited shifts in fathers' time investments + selection issue of paternity leave policies
- Little evidence on causal factors that actually shape and change the intra-household allocation of unpaid work ▸ Literature

This Paper: Contributions

We study the **effect of paternal involuntary unemployment** on time allocated to **child care** and **housework**

1. **Focus on child care:**
   To the best of our knowledge we are the first to do so
2. **Exogenous variation in paternal availability over entire child upbringing:**
   Paternity leave literature provides evindence on fathers with very young children only
3. **Event study approach with individual fixed effects:**
   We analyze short- and long-run effects
4. **Mechanisms:** Theory and Channels
   We calculate heterogenous effects and differentiate between weekdays and weekends, and analyze partner spillovers and household investments

Data

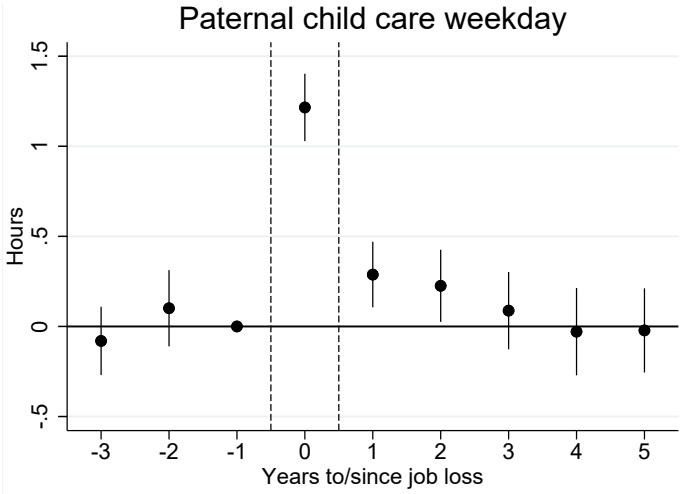
- German Socio-Economic Panel, SOEP, waves 1992-2018
- **Outcome:** Time use for child care and housework on weekdays *(annually)* and weekends *(bienially)* Histogram
- **Expl. Variable:** Unemployment due to an involuntary job loss (dismissial or firm closure)
- **Sample restrictions:**
  - Fathers aged 18-65 years, living with one dependent child up to the age of 14
  - Observed for at least two periods and non-missing information on main variables
  - Exclusion of hours larger than 16
- **Final sample:**
  - 59,438 father-year combinations from 6,928 fathers observed for 8.5 years
  - 1,210 involuntary job losses

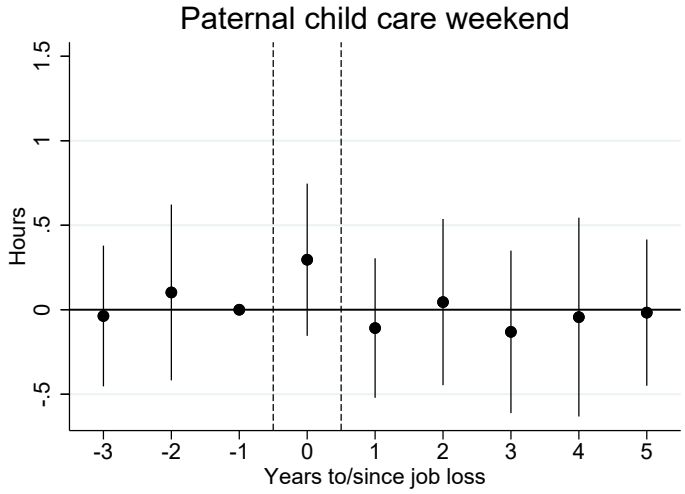
Event Study Approach

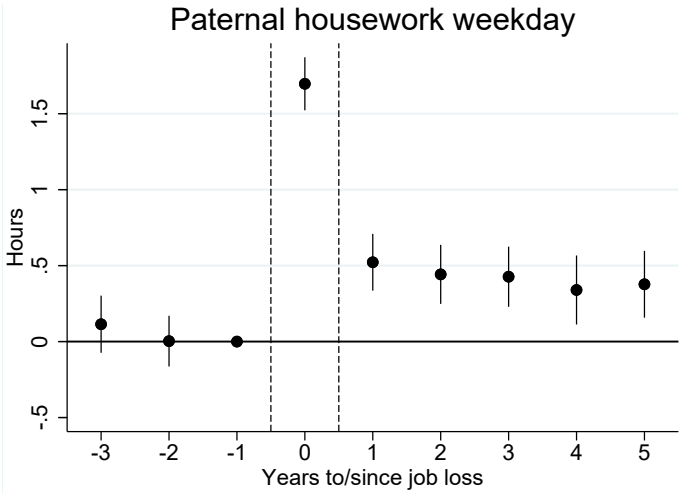
$$y_{it} = \sum_{j=\underline{j}}^{\overline{j}} \beta_j b_{it}^j + \alpha_i + \alpha_t + \alpha_a + \alpha_{ca} + I_{it} + \epsilon_{it} \tag{1}$$

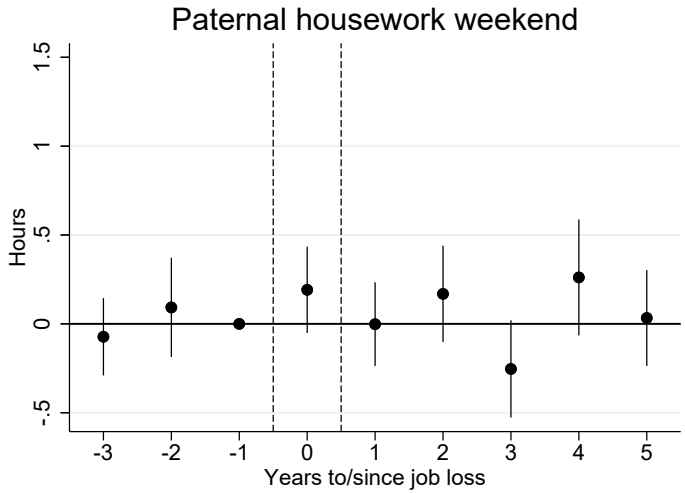
- y_{it} - Outcome y of individual i at time t
- b_{it}^j - Treatment indicator for an event happening $j \in [\underline{j}, \overline{j}]$ periods away from t
- α_i - Individual fixed effects
- θ_t - Time fixed effects
- α_a, α_{ca} Paternal and child age group fixed effects
- I_{it} - Interview characteristics
- ϵ_{it} - Standard errors clustered on the individual level

Main Results









Source: Own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Regression results

Heterogeneity: Employment Status and Partner Interaction

	Estimated treatment effect of job loss			
	Child care		Housework	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
Job loss				
Both not working	1.239***	0.062	1.361***	-0.040
	(0.131)	(0.265)	(0.111)	(0.143)
Mother working	1.111***	0.405	2.088***	0.303*
	(0.119)	(0.268)	(0.129)	(0.151)
1-2 periods post				
Both not working	0.791***	0.152	1.025***	-0.158
	(0.166)	(0.291)	(0.141)	(0.144)
Father working	-0.510***	-0.892**	-0.327**	-0.331*
	(0.115)	(0.307)	(0.113)	(0.163)
Mother working	0.806***	0.413	1.437***	0.116
	(0.148)	(0.286)	(0.169)	(0.202)
Both working	-0.231*	0.029	-0.048	0.259
	(0.103)	(0.259)	(0.101)	(0.149)

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parantheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Further Results

- **Cumulative Time, Outsourcing and Spillovers**
  - Cumulative time investments increase when both spouses remain at home and decrease if both return to employment
  - Female partners decrease their time investments if they are employed and increase them if they stay at home
  - Slight decrease in external care and child care expenses
- **Treatment characteristics** - effect on employment, working hours, labor earnings, household income, hourly wage
- **Co-determined and correlated outcomes** - mental health/life satisfaction, maternal employment, fertility and migration
- **Heterogeneity Analysis**
  - Child age
  - Education
  - Pre-treatment levels
  - East-West
- **Robustness Checks** - esp. exogeneity of the treatment (only plant closures, only JL in last 3 month, no multiple JL)

Conclusion

- Paternal involuntary job loss increases average domestic work in the short run
- Long-term effects **positive** only for fathers who remain unemployed and **negative** for fathers who return to employment
  - → **Time availability**
  - → **No emotional bonding or gender role attitude changes**
- Working mothers reduce domestic time investments, while not working mothers increase time investments
  - → **Bargaining**
- Households increase domestic time investment if both partners are not working and decrease it when both are in employment
  - → **Financial constraints and outsourcing**

Thank you for your attention!

Paper available online

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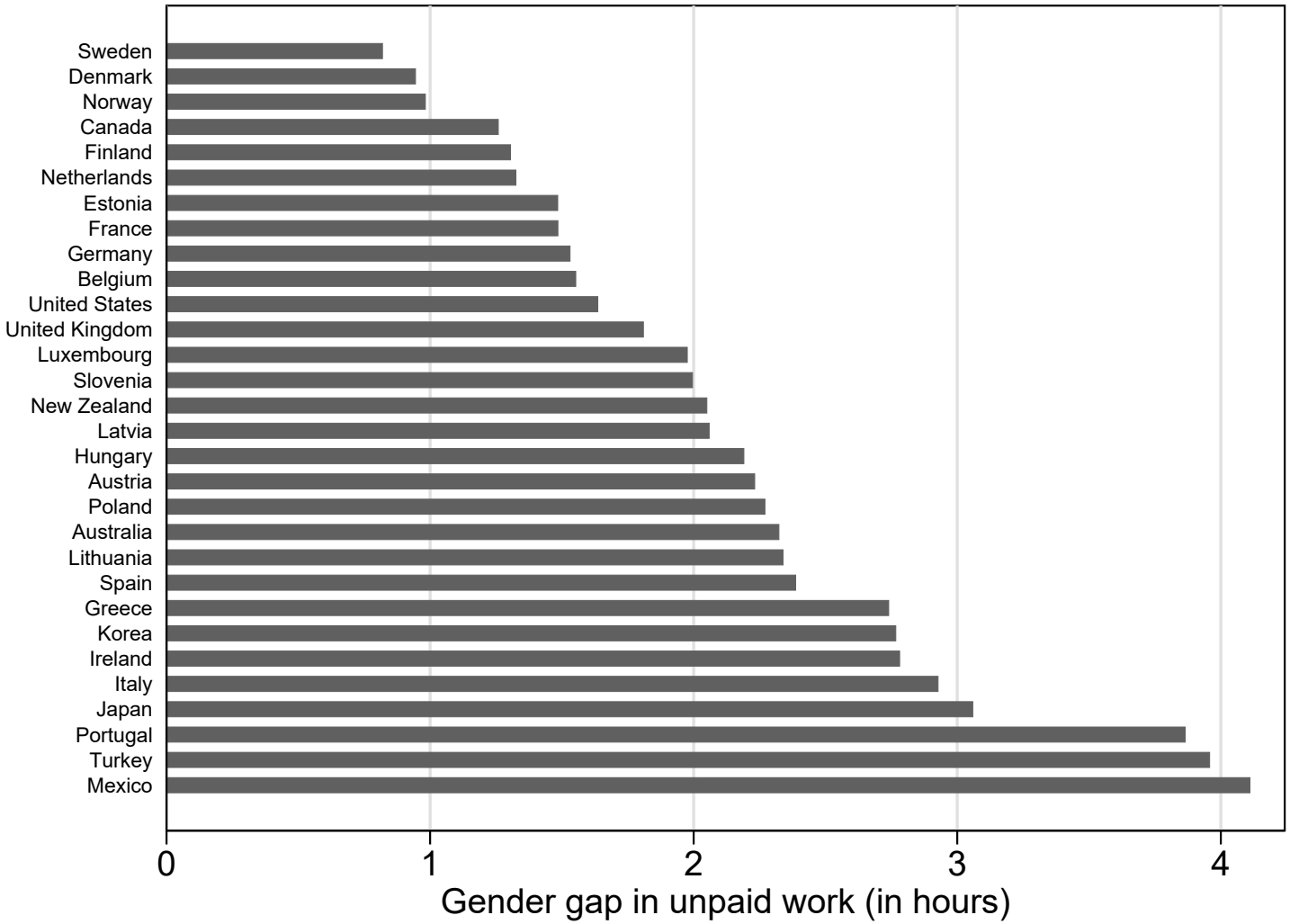
Gender Gap in Unpaid Work



Source: OECD Time-Use Database, 2015 or nearest year.

Return to slide

Related Literature

Return to slide

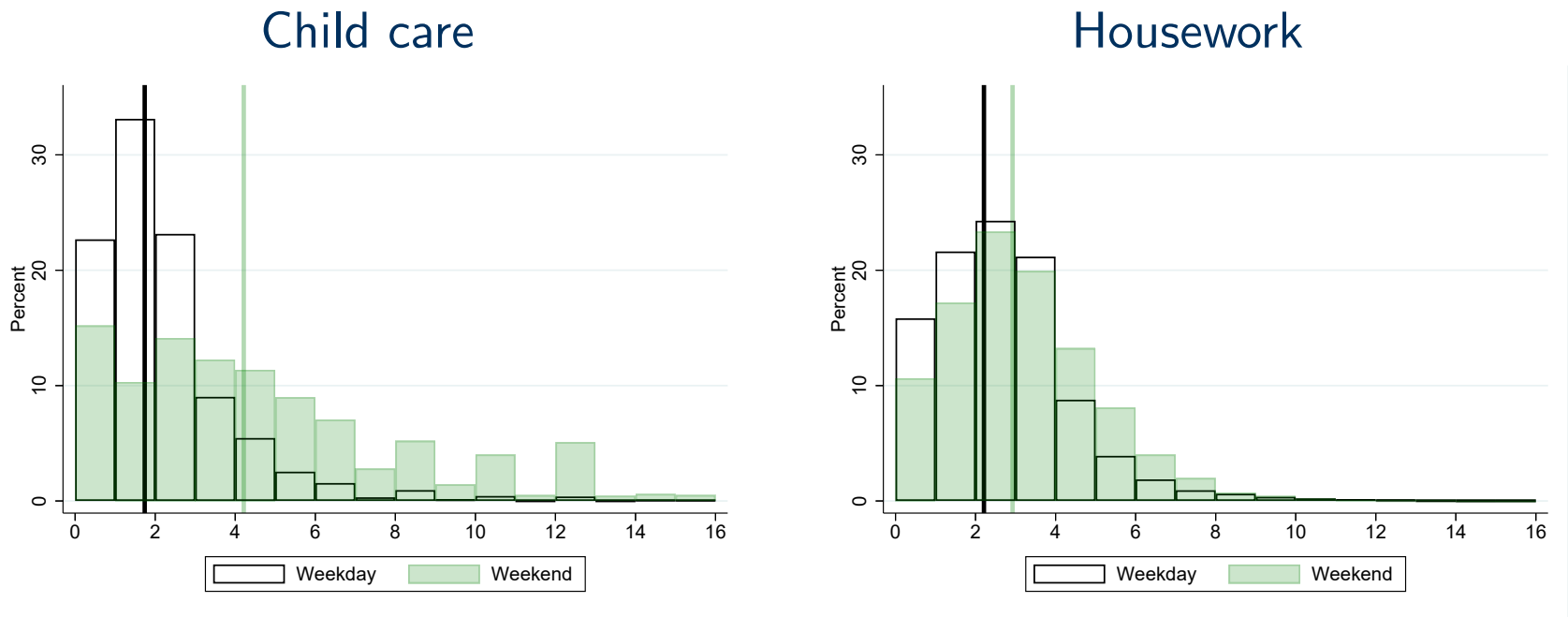
- **Gender differences in time allocation:**
  - Coltrane (2000); Hook (2010); Sanchez and Thomson (1997); Bianchi (2000); Samtleben (2019)
- **Paternity leave and time investment:**
  - Bünning (2015); Schober (2014); Ekberg et al. (2013); Tamm (2019); Patnaik (2019); Pailhé et al. (2018)
- **Economic shocks and allocation of housework:**
  - Foster and Stratton (2018): parental unemployment and promotion, HLFS
  - Fauser (2019) and Voßemer and Heyne (2019): male unemployment, SOEP
- **Negative consequences of parental unemployment on children's outcomes:**
  - Financial constraints and psychological distress: Mörk et al. (2014); Coelli (2011); Schaller and Zerpa (2019); Peter (2016)

Theory and Channels

Return to slide

1. **Time availability and financial constraints**
   - Job loss → more time available → partly directed to child care and housework → especially in the face of financial constraints
2. **Bargaining power**
   - Job loss → lower bargaining power in division of domestic duties → relatively more domestic duties
3. **Gender role attitudes**
   - Job loss → exposure to nontraditional division of labor → change in gender attitudes → more equal division of domestic work
4. **Emotional bonding**
   - Job loss → father spends more time with child(ren) → stronger emotional bond → permanent change in time investment

Paternal Time Spent on Child Care and Housework

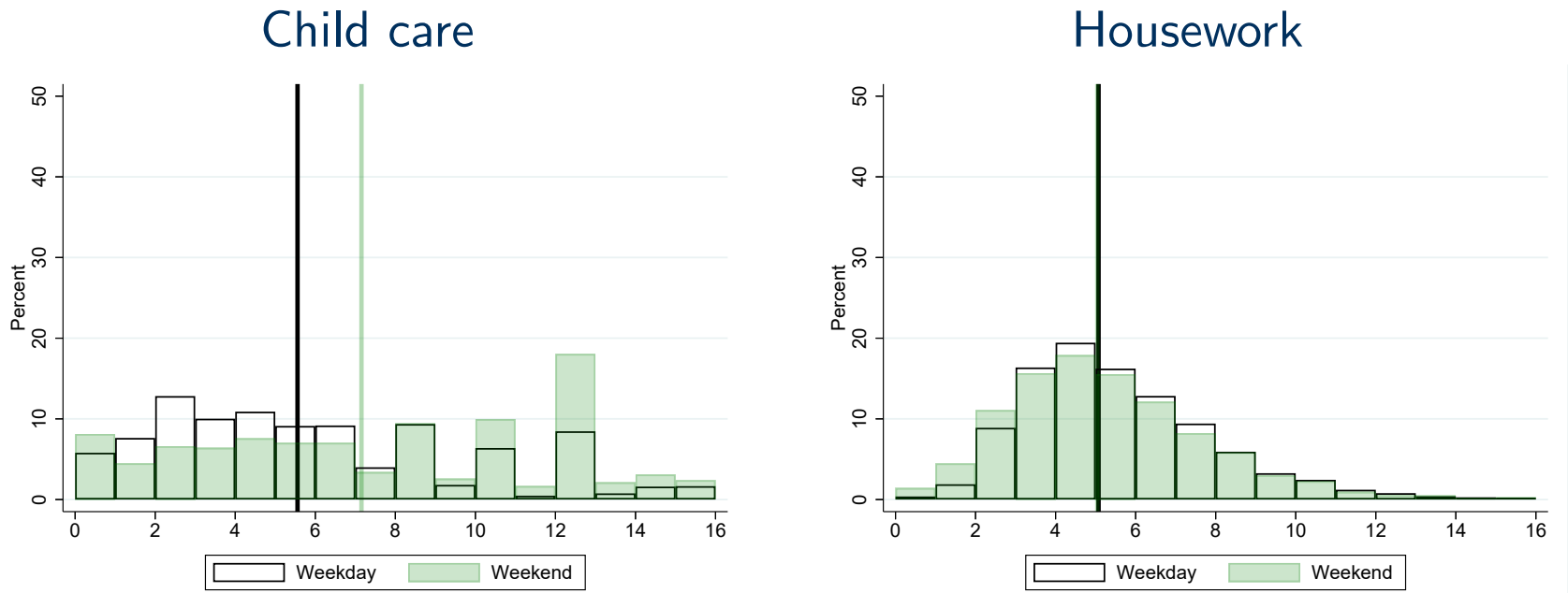


Notes: The figure plots the distribution of the maternal time use variables. The vertical lines indicate the sample mean.

Source: Own calculations based on SOEP (2019).

Return to slide

Maternal Time Spent on Child Care and Housework



Notes: The figure plots the distribution of the maternal time use variables. The vertical lines indicate the sample mean.

Source: Own calculations based on SOEP (2019).

Return to slide

Descriptives

	Sample				
	Inv. job loss		No inv. job loss		
	Sample mean	N	Sample mean	N	Difference
Paternal characteristics (time invariant)					
Age	38.78	7,117	40.63	52,321	1.85***
Migration background (D)	0.34	7,117	0.25	52,321	-0.09***
No degree (D)	0.21	7,117	0.10	52,321	-0.11***
Vocational degree (D)	0.71	7,117	0.71	52,321	-0.01
Academic degree (D)	0.10	7,117	0.28	52,321	0.18***
Child characteristics					
Total number of children up to age 18	1.96	7,117	1.88	52,321	-0.08***
Age youngest child	6.26	7,117	6.40	52,321	0.13*
Partner characteristics (for those with a partner)					
Age	35.79	6,801	37.67	49,919	1.88***
In labor force (D)	0.68	6,801	0.70	49,919	0.02**
Working (D)	0.48	6,801	0.53	49,919	0.05***
Income and health					
Net household income (month)	2621.61	6,937	3575.16	50,314	953.56***
Mental health	50.34	4,078	51.25	30,281	0.91***
Physical health	51.01	4,078	53.06	30,281	2.05***

Notes: The table provides descriptive statistics for fathers experiencing an involuntary job loss and fathers who do not. Column (6) reports the difference between the two groups. Dummy variables are marked with a D. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: Own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Regression Results

	Estimated treatment effect of job loss			
	Child care		Housework	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
3 periods pre	-0.066	-0.106	0.136	-0.072
	(0.100)	(0.220)	(0.096)	(0.112)
2 periods pre	0.103	0.055	0.008	0.060
	(0.111)	(0.267)	(0.086)	(0.142)
Job loss	1.200***	0.230	1.708***	0.147
	(0.098)	(0.231)	(0.091)	(0.126)
1 period post	0.254**	-0.201	0.526***	-0.034
	(0.095)	(0.213)	(0.096)	(0.121)
2 periods post	0.189	0.010	0.437***	0.114
	(0.104)	(0.253)	(0.098)	(0.139)
3 periods post	0.081	-0.217	0.425***	-0.289*
	(0.112)	(0.250)	(0.103)	(0.141)
4 periods post	-0.053	-0.111	0.325**	0.355*
	(0.127)	(0.311)	(0.116)	(0.173)
5 periods post	-0.040	-0.144	0.371**	0.012
	(0.124)	(0.226)	(0.113)	(0.141)
Pre-treatment mean	2.01	4.52	2.15	2.74
Obs.	56,393	28,262	56,393	28,262

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. Regressions include individual and time fixed effects and interview controls. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: Own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Heterogeneity: Child Age and Daycare

	Child care		Housework	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
Job loss				
Children $>$ 6	0.699***	0.071	1.849***	0.339
	(0.122)	(0.301)	(0.145)	(0.190)
Child $<=$ 6 not in daycare	1.867***	0.040	1.561***	-0.252
	(0.194)	(0.337)	(0.156)	(0.191)
Child $<=$ 6 in daycare	1.215***	0.539	1.688***	0.103
	(0.153)	(0.325)	(0.142)	(0.161)
1-2 periods post				
Children $>$ 6	0.315*	-0.145	0.676***	0.238
	(0.123)	(0.261)	(0.133)	(0.182)
Child $<=$ 6 not in daycare	0.277	-0.082	0.411**	-0.128
	(0.150)	(0.285)	(0.145)	(0.162)
Child $<=$ 6 in daycare	0.158	-0.083	0.424**	-0.047
	(0.133)	(0.284)	(0.130)	(0.144)

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation.Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parantheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Heterogeneity: Education

	Child care		Housework	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
Job loss				
Voc. or academic degree	1.450***	0.490	1.092***	-0.128
	(0.209)	(0.379)	(0.148)	(0.204)
No degree	1.160***	0.200	1.886***	0.150
	(0.104)	(0.239)	(0.100)	(0.131)
1-2 periods post				
Voc. or academic degree	0.398*	0.263	0.558***	-0.209
	(0.165)	(0.315)	(0.160)	(0.189)
No degree	0.186*	-0.202	0.491***	0.085
	(0.094)	(0.207)	(0.094)	(0.117)
3-4 periods post				
Voc. or academic degree	0.204	-0.003	0.433**	-0.060
	(0.203)	(0.402)	(0.147)	(0.223)
No degree	-0.023	-0.213	0.394***	-0.084
	(0.105)	(0.234)	(0.105)	(0.132)
Obs.	59,438	29,782	59,438	29,782

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parantheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Heterogeneity: Pre-Treatment Time Investments

	Child care		Housework	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
Job loss				
Low	1.051***	0.216	1.944***	0.042
	(0.120)	(0.276)	(0.138)	(0.167)
High	1.291***	0.230	1.540***	0.135
	(0.130)	(0.276)	(0.110)	(0.145)
1-2 periods post				
Low	0.538***	0.261	0.790***	-0.030
	(0.114)	(0.223)	(0.121)	(0.144)
High	0.038	-0.373	0.311**	0.071
	(0.109)	(0.242)	(0.107)	(0.133)
3-4 periods post				
Low	0.339**	0.046	0.631***	-0.138
	(0.125)	(0.266)	(0.121)	(0.173)
High	-0.161	-0.359	0.243*	-0.028
	(0.122)	(0.274)	(0.115)	(0.145)
Obs.	59,438	29,782	59,438	29,782

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parantheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Heterogeneity: East-West

	Child care		Housework	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
Job loss				
East	1.057***	0.522	2.159***	-0.001
	(0.147)	(0.310)	(0.160)	(0.160)
West	1.311***	0.088	1.473***	0.140
	(0.117)	(0.252)	(0.099)	(0.144)
1-2 periods post				
East	0.217	-0.171	0.504***	-0.093
	(0.131)	(0.274)	(0.143)	(0.142)
West	0.236*	-0.078	0.515***	0.084
	(0.100)	(0.211)	(0.097)	(0.130)
3-4 periods post				
East	0.067	-0.281	0.364**	-0.222
	(0.151)	(0.333)	(0.141)	(0.176)
West	-0.000	-0.116	0.430***	-0.005
	(0.111)	(0.237)	(0.107)	(0.142)
Obs.	59,438	29,782	59,438	29,782

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parantheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Robustness Checks

Back to slides | Robustness Checks Child Care | Robustness Checks Housework

1. Plant closures only
2. Job loss 3 month pre-interview
3. Excl. untreated fathers
4. Excl. fathers living without partner
5. Excl. fathers with multiple job losses
6. Tobit model (no fixed effects)
7. Robust two-way fixed effects estimation Results
8. Controlling for co-determined controls (channels)
   Descriptives | Channels
9. Other outcomes
   Other Outcomes

Robustness Checks: Child Care

	Estimated treatment effect of job loss					
	Plant closures	Job loss 3 month pre-interview	Incl. not treated fathers	Excl. fathers w/o partner	Excl. mult job losses	Tobit model (no fe)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Child care weekday						
2 periods pre	-0.099	-0.044	0.083	0.035	0.044	0.086
	(0.140)	(0.146)	(0.109)	(0.105)	(0.123)	(0.129)
Job loss	0.956***	1.185***	1.224***	1.174***	1.156***	1.376***
	(0.191)	(0.143)	(0.097)	(0.096)	(0.119)	(0.103)
1 to 2 periods post	-0.104	0.097	0.258**	0.179*	0.200	0.369***
	(0.165)	(0.125)	(0.093)	(0.083)	(0.107)	(0.101)
3 to 4 periods post	-0.131	-0.110	0.069	0.009	-0.086	0.199
	(0.160)	(0.142)	(0.119)	(0.095)	(0.115)	(0.111)
Number of obs.	54,242	55,483	7,117	56,720	57,612	59,438

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. The regressions include individual and year fixed effects and interview and age-group controls. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: Own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

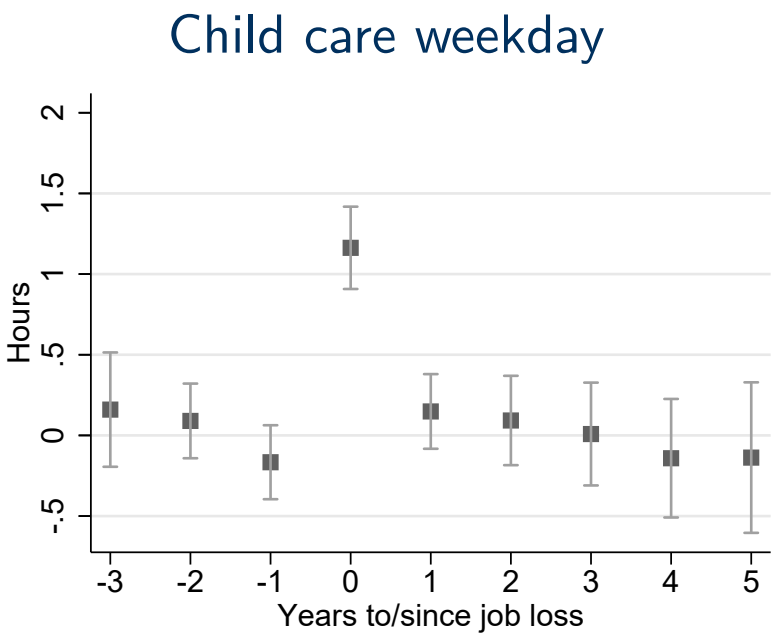
Robustness Checks: Housework

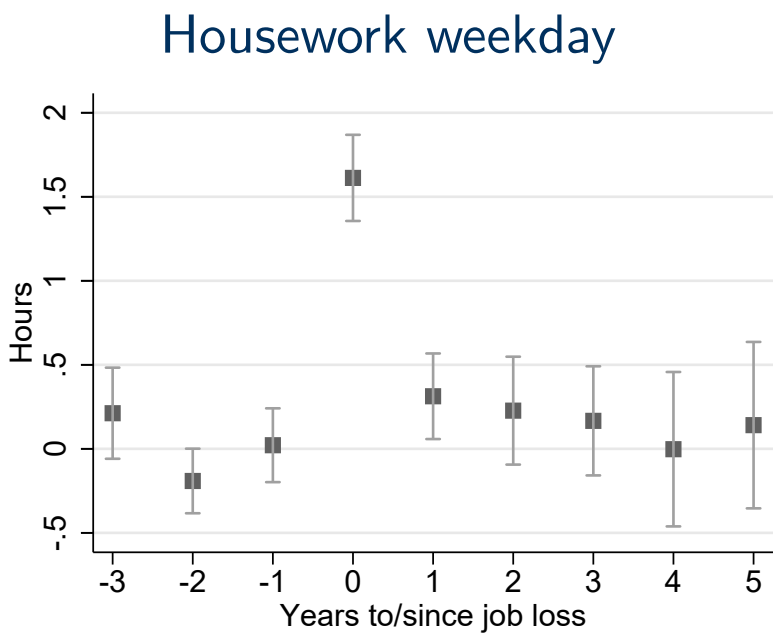
	Estimated treatment effect of job loss					
	Plant closures	Job loss 3 month pre-interview	Incl. not treated fathers	Excl. fathers w/o partner	Excl. mult job losses	Tobit model (no fe)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Housework weekday						
2 periods pre	-0.161	-0.006	0.023	-0.001	-0.056	-0.007
	(0.139)	(0.135)	(0.087)	(0.085)	(0.095)	(0.121)
Job loss	1.766***	1.800***	1.705***	1.709***	1.590***	1.892***
	(0.184)	(0.137)	(0.090)	(0.090)	(0.104)	(0.096)
1 to 2 periods post	0.251	0.370**	0.499***	0.470***	0.392***	0.590***
	(0.166)	(0.134)	(0.092)	(0.084)	(0.100)	(0.094)
3 to 4 periods post	-0.004	0.152	0.381***	0.358***	0.271*	0.453***
	(0.167)	(0.141)	(0.109)	(0.093)	(0.108)	(0.104)
Number of obs.	54,242	55,483	7,117	56,720	57,612	59,438

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. The regressions include individual and year fixed effects and interview and age-group controls. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: Own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Robust Two-Way Fixed Effects Estimation





Notes: The figure plots the distribution of the maternal time use variables. The vertical lines indicate the sample mean.

Source: Own calculations based on SOEP (2019).

Return to slide

Channels Child Care

	Estimated treatment effect of job loss			
	Baseline	Partner controls	Child controls	Health controls
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Child care weekday				
2 periods pre	0.097	0.096	0.129	0.102
	(0.107)	(0.106)	(0.119)	(0.194)
Job loss	1.223***	1.210***	1.215***	1.308***
	(0.095)	(0.095)	(0.100)	(0.131)
1 to 2 periods post	0.231**	0.221**	0.223*	0.107
	(0.085)	(0.084)	(0.090)	(0.111)
3 to 4 periods post	0.025	0.019	0.014	-0.080
	(0.098)	(0.098)	(0.103)	(0.138)
Number of obs.	59,438	59,438	55,171	33,592

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. The regressions include individual and year fixed effects and interview and age-group controls. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: Own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Channels Housework

	Estimated treatment effect of job loss			
	Baseline	Partner controls	Child controls	Health controls
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Housework weekday				
2 periods pre	0.010	0.009	-0.031	-0.052
	(0.084)	(0.084)	(0.090)	(0.115)
Job loss	1.710***	1.701***	1.656***	1.631***
	(0.089)	(0.089)	(0.092)	(0.114)
1 to 2 periods post	0.509***	0.501***	0.514***	0.563***
	(0.086)	(0.086)	(0.092)	(0.119)
3 to 4 periods post	0.403***	0.398***	0.421***	0.356**
	(0.094)	(0.094)	(0.096)	(0.128)
Number of obs.	59,438	59,438	55,171	33,592

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. The regressions include individual and year fixed effects and interview and age-group controls. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: Own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Other Outcomes

	Estimated treatment effect of job loss				
		Maternal outcomes		Household outcomes	
	Paternal wellbeing (log.) (1)	Working (2)	Full-time (3)	Birth bio. child (4)	State change (5)
2 periods pre	-0.005	0.001	0.003	-0.019	-0.001
	(0.015)	(0.020)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.007)
Job loss	-0.105***	0.034*	0.030*	-0.001	-0.001
	(0.012)	(0.016)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.003)
1 to 2 periods post	-0.046***	0.034	0.019	-0.008	-0.002
	(0.012)	(0.018)	(0.014)	(0.011)	(0.006)
3 to 4 periods post	-0.009	0.022	0.040*	-0.009	-0.002
	(0.015)	(0.023)	(0.018)	(0.012)	(0.009)
Obs.	58,972	56,720	56,720	59,438	59,438

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. The regressions include individual and year fixed effects and interview and age-group controls. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: Own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Cumulative Household Investments

	Estimated treatment effect of job loss on household			
	Childcare		Housework	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
Job loss				
Both NW	2.093***	0.843	1.792***	0.202
	(0.285)	(1.072)	(0.172)	(0.590)
Mother W	-0.241	-0.809	1.505***	-0.102
	(0.247)	(0.988)	(0.155)	(0.480)
1-2 periods post				
Both NW	1.780***	2.237*	1.238***	-0.690
	(0.349)	(1.112)	(0.210)	(0.550)
Father W	0.521	-0.569	0.149	-0.536
	(0.306)	(1.197)	(0.192)	(0.626)
Mother W	-0.148	0.619	0.621**	0.122
	(0.285)	(1.134)	(0.198)	(0.550)
Both W	-0.709**	0.056	-0.540***	0.174
	(0.263)	(1.001)	(0.153)	(0.435)

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parantheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

Spousal Spillovers

	Estimated treatment effect of job loss on partner			
	Chilcare		Housework	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
Job loss				
Both NW	0.854***	0.360	0.431***	0.141
	(0.236)	(0.407)	(0.109)	(0.228)
Mother W	-1.352***	-0.809*	-0.583***	-0.354
	(0.204)	(0.358)	(0.098)	(0.181)
1-2 periods post				
Both NW	0.989***	0.967*	0.213	-0.187
	(0.282)	(0.404)	(0.135)	(0.203)
Father W	1.031***	0.608	0.476**	0.063
	(0.283)	(0.469)	(0.153)	(0.251)
Mother W	-0.954***	-0.103	-0.816***	-0.054
	(0.252)	(0.442)	(0.129)	(0.231)
Both W	-0.478*	-0.001	-0.493***	-0.173
	(0.228)	(0.369)	(0.113)	(0.164)

Notes: The table reports treatment effect estimates of an involuntary job loss on paternal time allocation. Standard errors clustered on the individual level in parantheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.
Source: own calculations based on SOEP v35.

Return to slide

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