

HUNGARIAN **DEMOGRAPHIC**  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

## One Aspect of Family Cohesion: Trends in Parents' Time with Children in Hungary

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## Motivation

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- increasing social expectation of adequate parenting
- remarkable structural changes in the last decades
- decreasing fertility rate
- appearing of idea of „new fatherhood”



positive effect on

- parenting in general  
parental time with children  
quality of parenting



## Research Questions

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- How the time Hungarian parents spend with their children has changed in the observed three decades?
- What factors have effect on the parental time?
- How the influence of these factors have changed over time?
- What was the role of structural changes (like educational restructuring, changes in the labour market) ?
- How the mothers' and fathers' time has changed in the interested period? How the gap between the maternal and paternal time have changed?



# Factors that influence parental time 1.

## Demographic determinants

- age of the children
- number of children
- gender of parent
- type of family: coupled parents, lone parents

## Literature about demographic determinants

- *Kendig – Bianci 2008; Monna-Gauthier 2008, Craig et al. 2014*: parental time decreases as children age
- *Craig et al. 2014*: increasing parental time concerned only children aged 0-4 years
- Mothers spend more time with children
- The gendered division of labour become more remarkable after children are born (*Coltrane – Adams, 2008, Craig, 2007*) Having a child push the family into a more traditional gender division of work – basically mothers are responsible for the child care (but not in Sweden for example – *Dribe - Stanfors, 2009*)
- *Rehel 2014; Craig et al. 2014, Hofacker 2007*: In time: Greater parity between the mothers and fathers



## Factors that influence parental time 2.

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### Socioeconomic determinants

- the educational level of parents
- activity status of parents

### Institutional effects (social policy etc.)

### Cultural attitudes to family care provision

### Literature about sociological determinants:

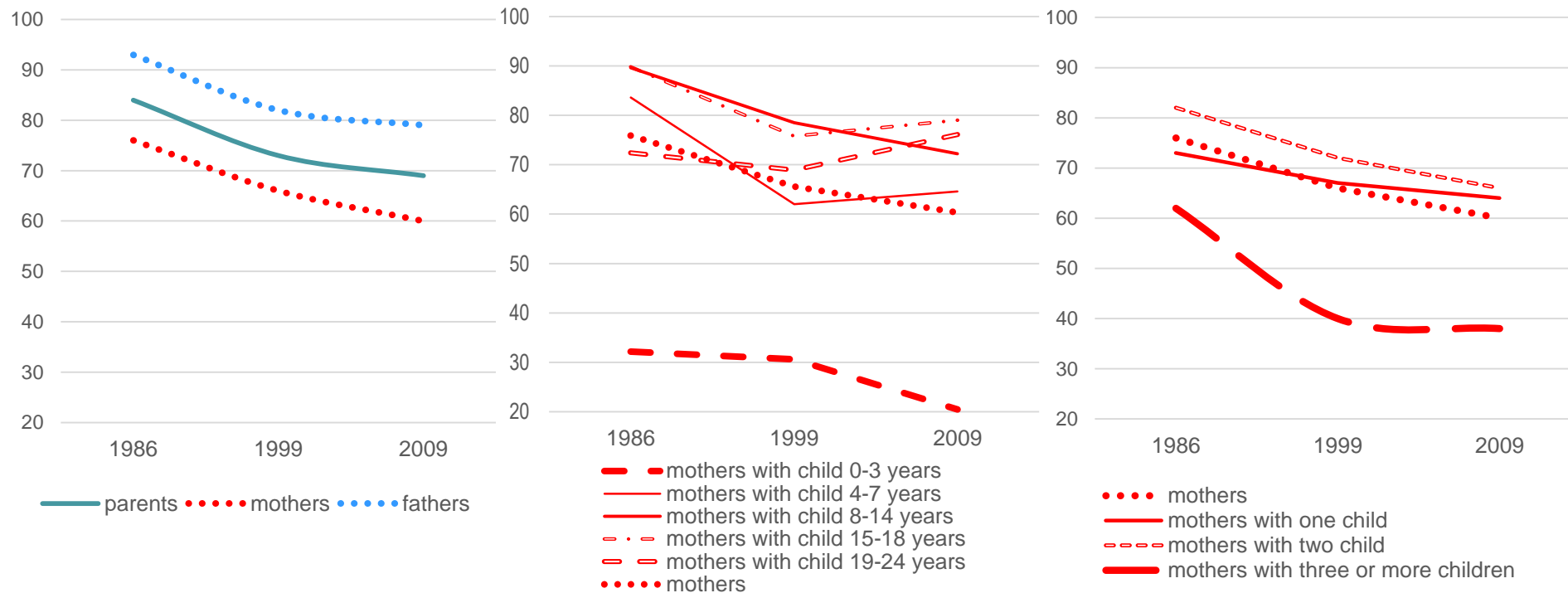
- *Craig, 2006; Kalil et al., 2012; England – Strivastava, 2013*: well-educated parents spend more time on childcare (especially fathers: highly educated men do more child care than other men (*Sayer – Bianchi – Robinson, 2004*))
- *Sayer et al., 2004; Baxter, 2009*: working parents spend less time with their children than their non-working counterparts



# Structural changes 1.

Parents with children aged 0-24

## Employment rate



Source: Hungarian Time Use Surveys, 1986, 1999, 2009

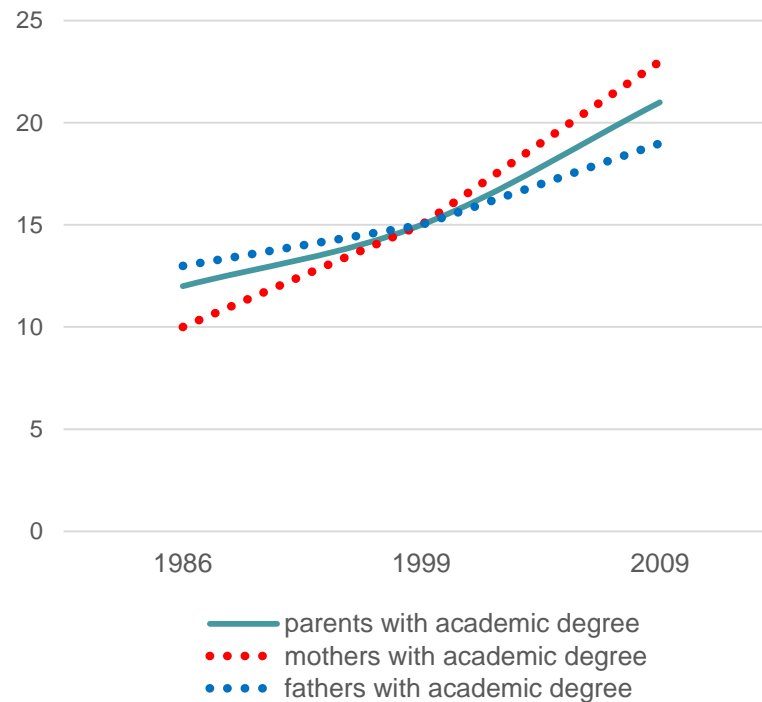


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## Structural changes 2.

*Parents with children aged 0-24*

### Parents with academic degree



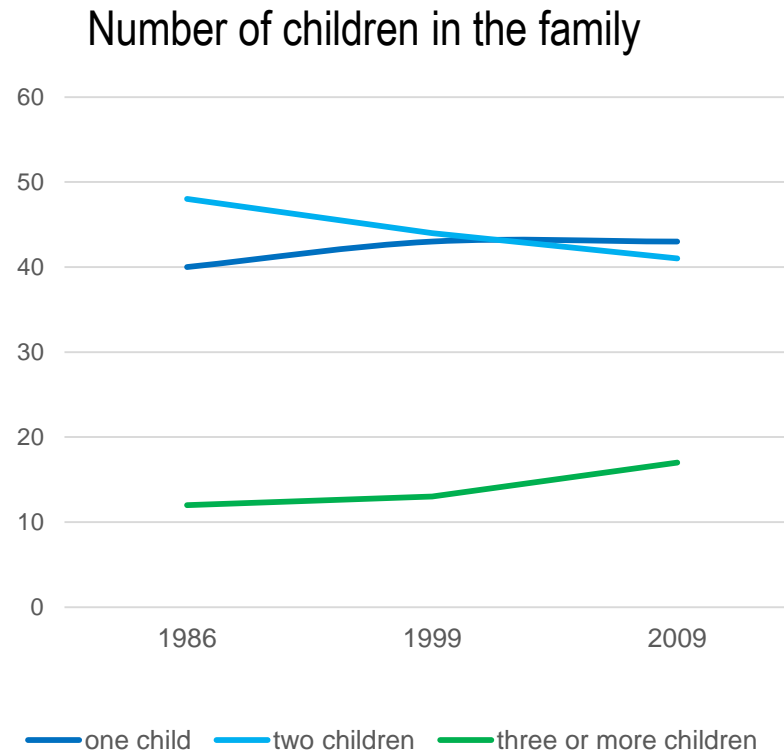
*Source: Hungarian Time Use Surveys, 1986, 1999, 2009*



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## Structural changes 3.

*Parents with children aged 0-24*



*Source: Hungarian Time Use Surveys, 1986, 1999, 2009*



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## Data

- Hungarian Time Use Surveys, 1986/1987, 1999/2000, 2009/2010
- Only one respondent from the households; no information from the childrens' point of view, no matched couple
- Subsample: Coupled parents living with children ages 0-24 in the same household
- 1986/1987, 1999/2000: Four diaries/respondent, 2009/2010: One diary/respondent

### *Number of Persons:*

	1986/1987	1999/2000	2009/2010
TOTAL SAMPLE	10 709	11 395	8 391
Coupled parents	3810	3204	2036



## Methods, variables

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**Pooled database for coupled parents (1986, 1999, 2009)**

**Dependent variable:** total parental time

**Independent variables:**

year	1986; 1999; 2009
gender	0. male 1. female
number of children	1. one child; 2. two children; 3. three or more children
age of the youngest child	1. 0-3 years; 2. 4-6 years; 3. 7-14 years; 4. 15-18; 5. 19-24 years
educational level of parent	1. elementary; 2. Vocational; 3. Secondary; 4. Degree
activity of parent	0. in work 1. not in work

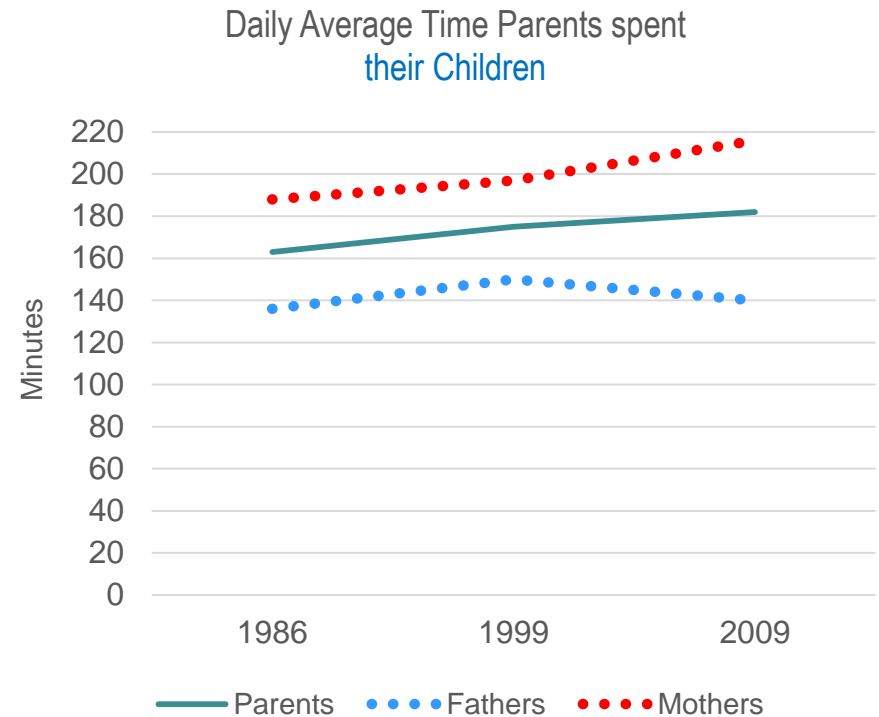
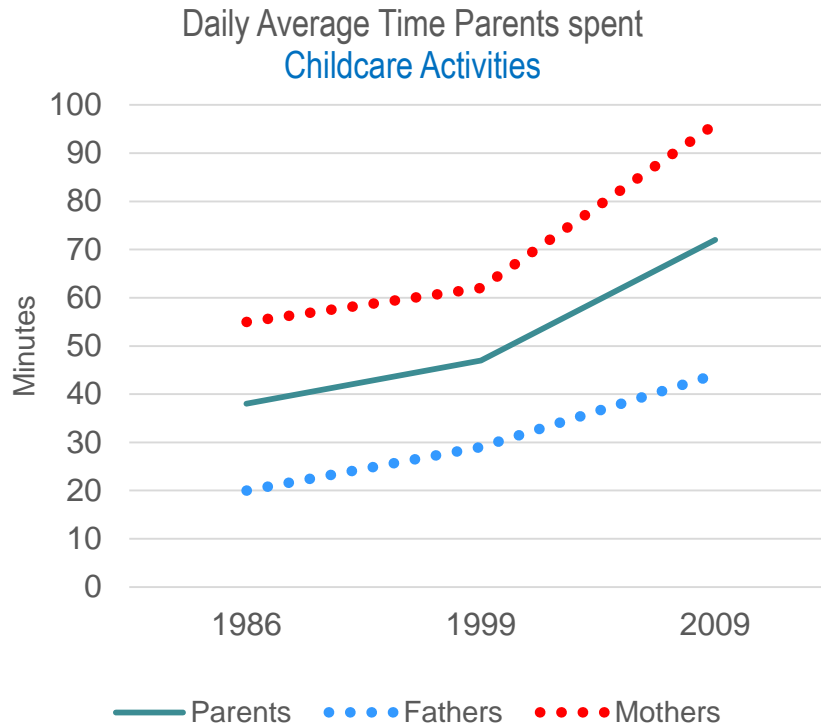
**Methods:** Descriptive analysis;

Multivariate analysis – Multivariate regression analysis (OLS)

We computed all measures as minutes per day.



# Trends in parental time



Parents=Parents live with their children ages 0-24

## Childcare activities (classical approach):

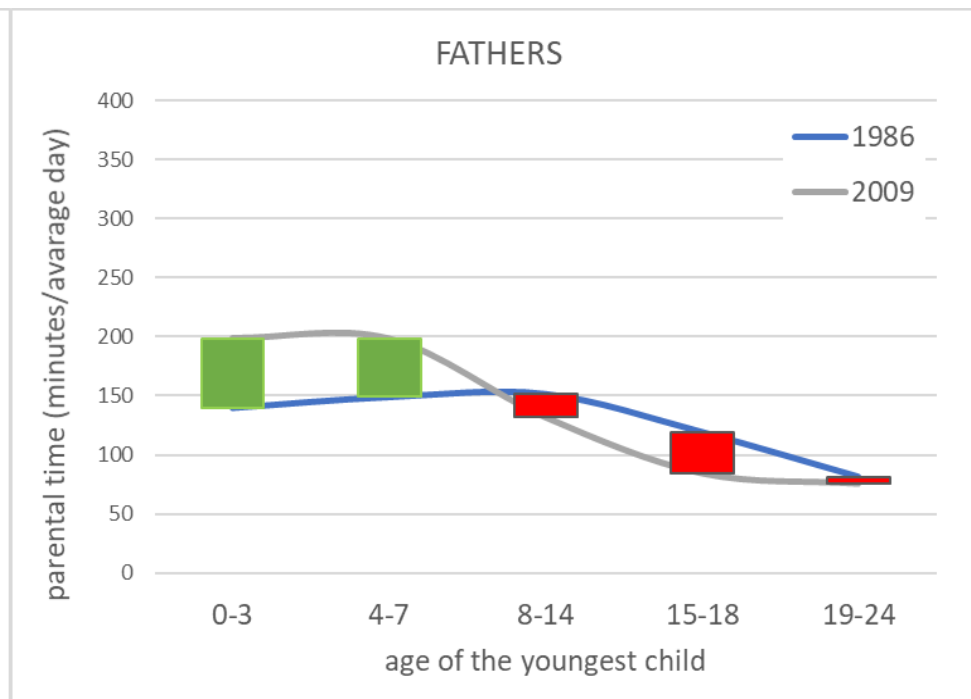
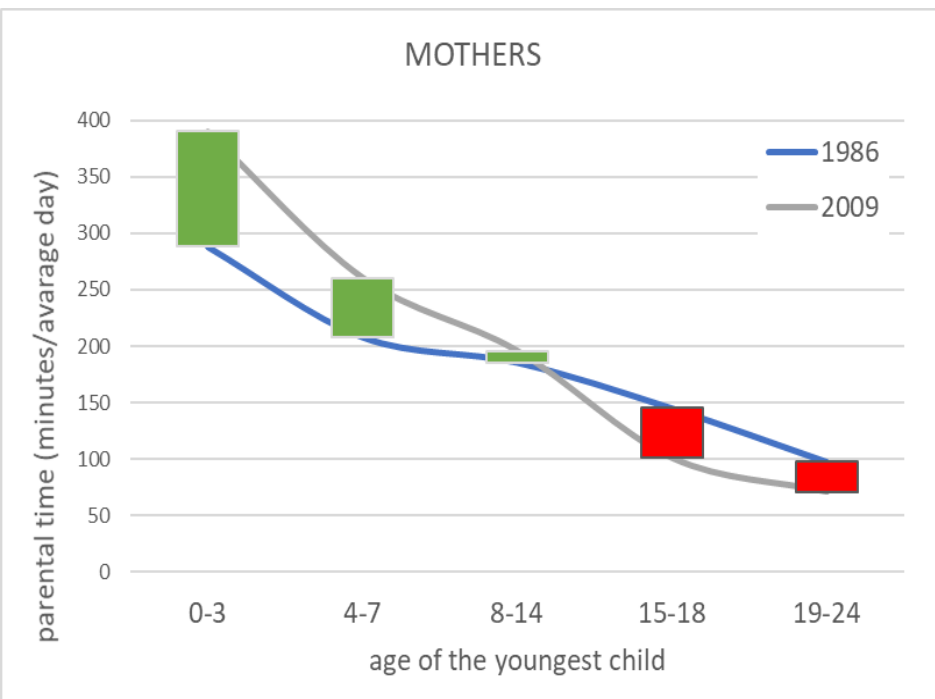
- Physical care and supervision
- Reading, playing, talking with child
- Teaching the child
- Transporting the child

## Parental time (alternative approach):

- All of the activities with children, if the children participate in that in an active way
- For example: housework with children, leisure activities with children...



## Parental time – age of the youngest child 1.



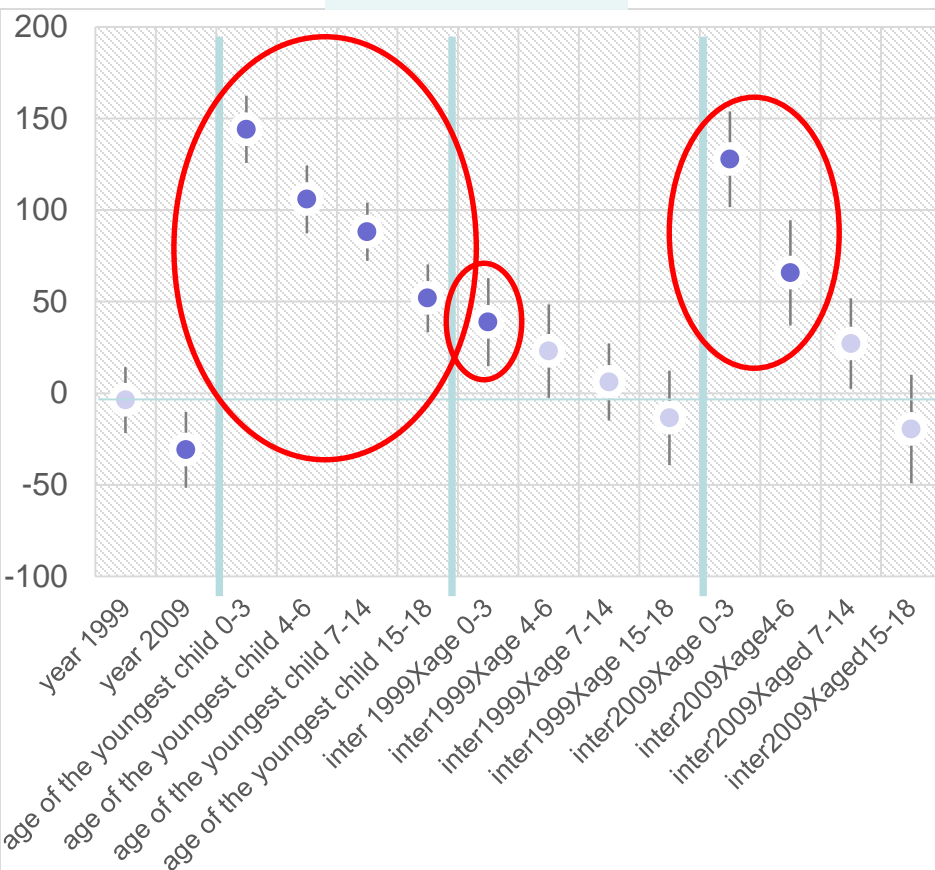
Source: Hungarian Time Use Surveys, 1986, 2009



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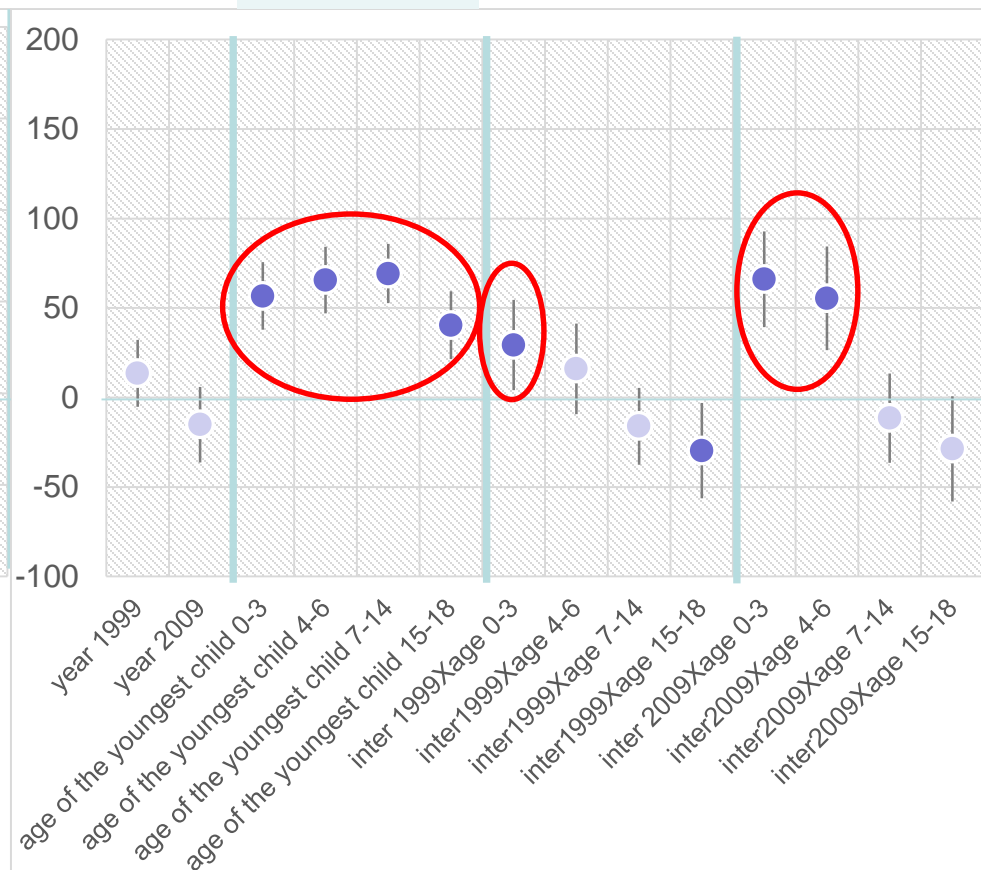
## Parental time – age of the youngest child 2.

### MOTHERS



### FATHERS

*Controlled and interaction effects*



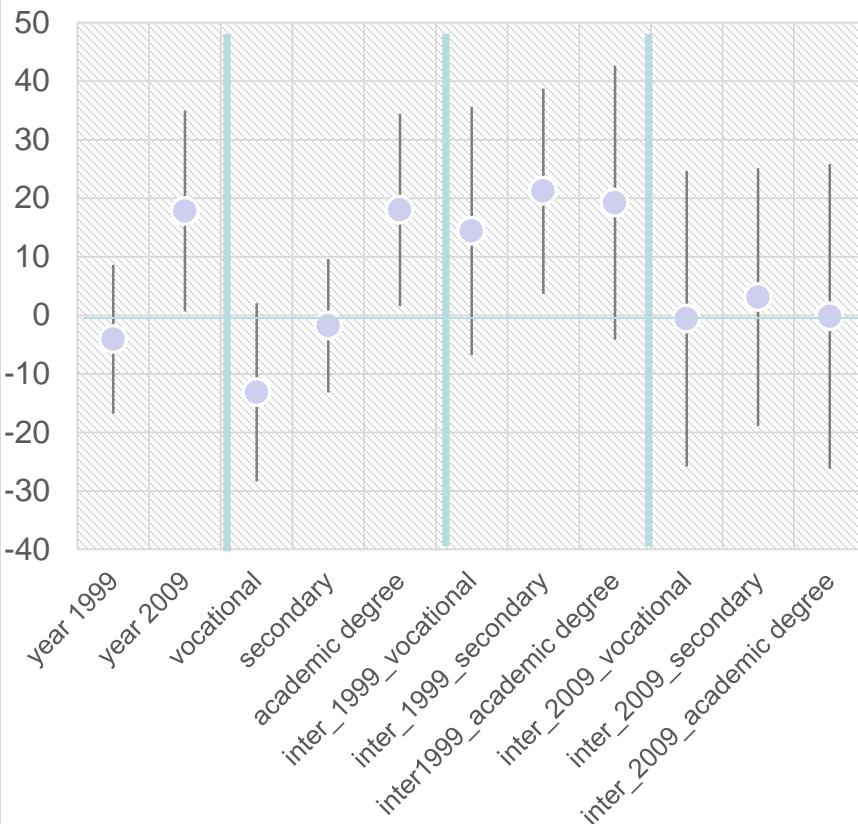
Control variables: number of children in the family, educational level, activity  
Reference categories: year 1986, age of the youngest child 19-24



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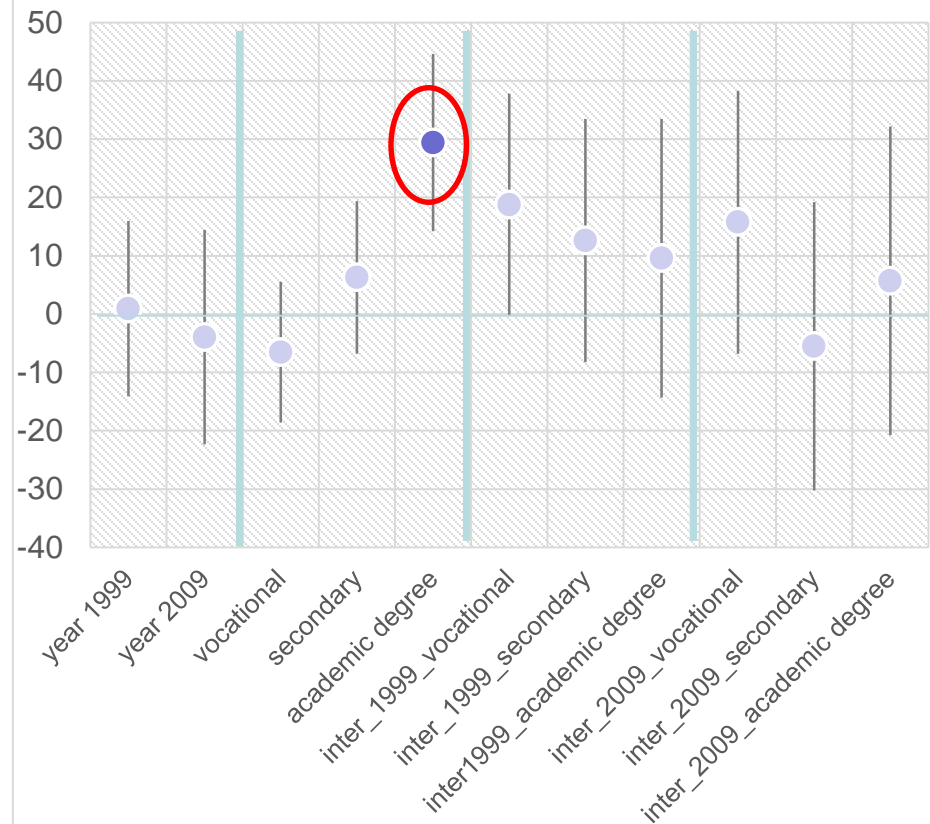
# Parental time – educational differences

## MOTHERS



## FATHERS

*Controlled and interaction effects*



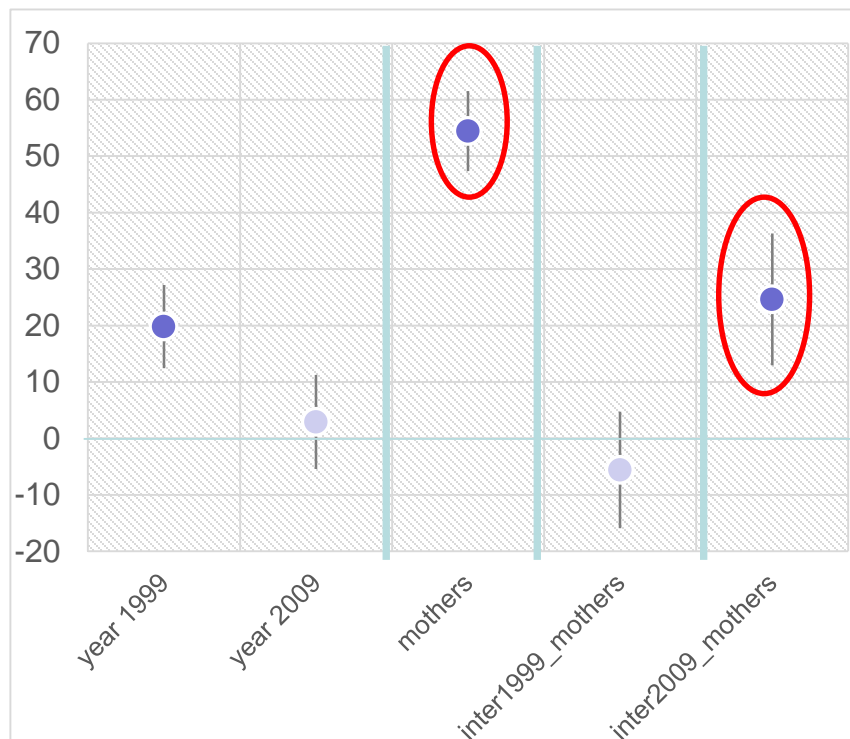
Control variables: number of children in the family, age of the youngest child, activity  
Reference categories: year 1986, fathers, elementary school



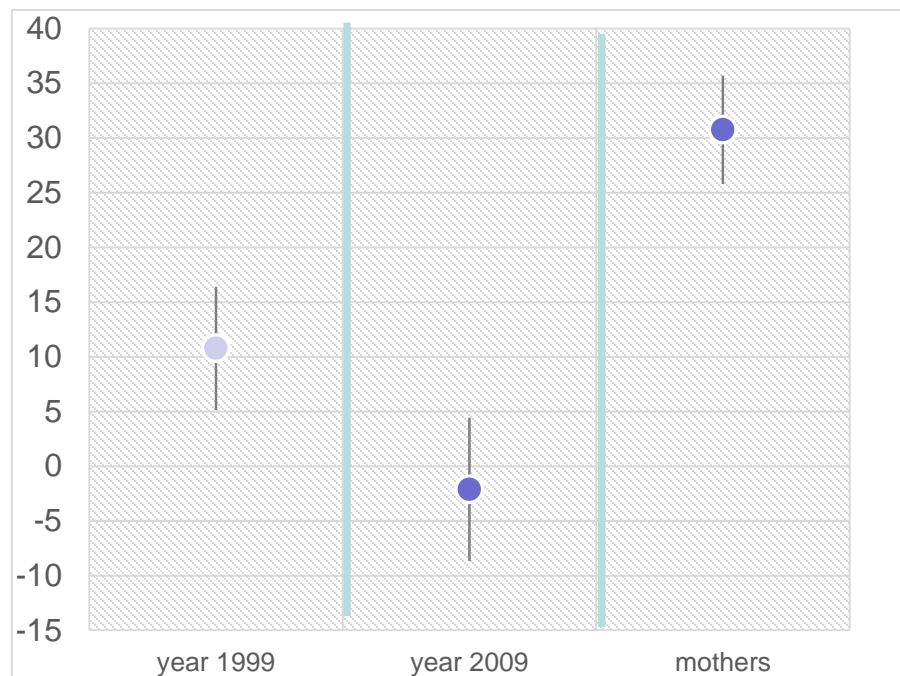
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# Parental time – Gender gap

*Controlled and interaction effects*



## Working parents



*Control variables:* number of children in the family, age of the youngest child, educational attainment, activity status  
*Reference categories:* year 1986, fathers



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# Conclusions

In Hungary **the parental time increased only in the families with little kids.**

There is **strong gender division of parental time**: mothers spend more time with children than fathers.

The gender gap increased in 2009 → we moved a more traditional gender division of parental time.

What we know about reasons:

- Hungarian family policy measures push the mothers to stay their children at home for a long time → much of mothers are on parental leave for at least 2 years; mothers with 3 or more children they can leave at home for at least 8 years

The gender division of parental time is very strong among the working parents as well

- Traditional attitudes

**The maternal time doesn't depend on the educational level of mother.**

**Only the high educated fathers are more involved** compared to lower educated counterparts.

Well educated fathers don't spend more time with their children in 1999 or 2009 than in 1986. – There is **no „new fatherhood'** , but well educated fathers are more visible because they are more than before.





Thank you for your attention!

