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Changing patterns in parental time use in the UK

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24 October 2018



Overview

- Motivation, research questions and prior research
- Data and Methods
- Descriptive Analysis
- Regression Analysis
- Conclusions and next steps



**Motivation,
research
questions and
prior research**



1.

Societal context: competing demands on parents' time

- Cultural shift towards more time-intensive, child-centred parenting (e.g. Hays 1996, Sullivan 1997, O'Brien et al 2015)
- Increases in maternal labour market participation
 - Maternal employment rates increased from 61.9% in 1996 to 73.7% in 2017 (ONS 2017)
- More egalitarian gender-role attitudes towards paid work and domestic work (e.g. Working Families 2017; Scott and Clery 2013)
- Normative expectations around 'a participative father' (O'Brien et al 2015)

Have parents changed the way they spend their time in response to changing expectations?

Research questions

1. Has parental time use changed between 2000 and 2015?
2. Are parents spending more time with their children?
3. How does this vary by personal characteristics?
4. Does a persons time use depend on their partner's time use?

Data



2.

UK Time Use Survey Sample

2000

- 2,693 parents with a child aged 16 or younger in the household
 - 1,556 mothers and 1,137 fathers
 - 1,223 partnered mothers with partner data
 - 1,102 partnered fathers with partner data
- Primary and Secondary activities recorded

2015

- 2,032 parents with a child aged 16 or younger in household
 - 1,191 mothers and 841 fathers
 - 788 partnered mothers with partner data
 - 794 partnered fathers with partner data
- Primary activity and up to three other activities

Categorising time use

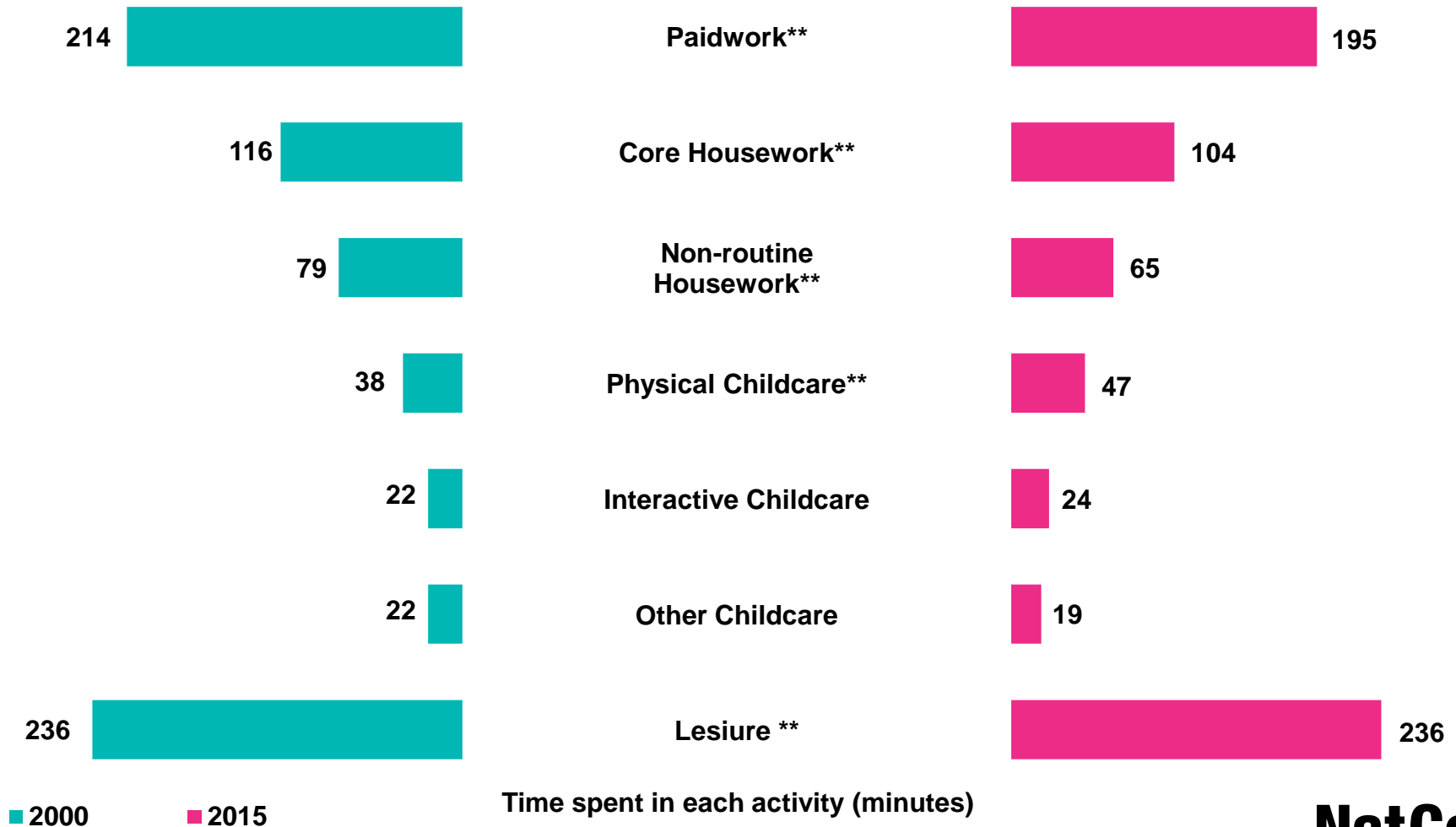
Time use is categorised as follows

- Core housework
- Non-routine housework
- Childcare
 - Physical childcare
 - Interactive childcare
 - Other childcare
- Paid Work
- Leisure
- Sleep

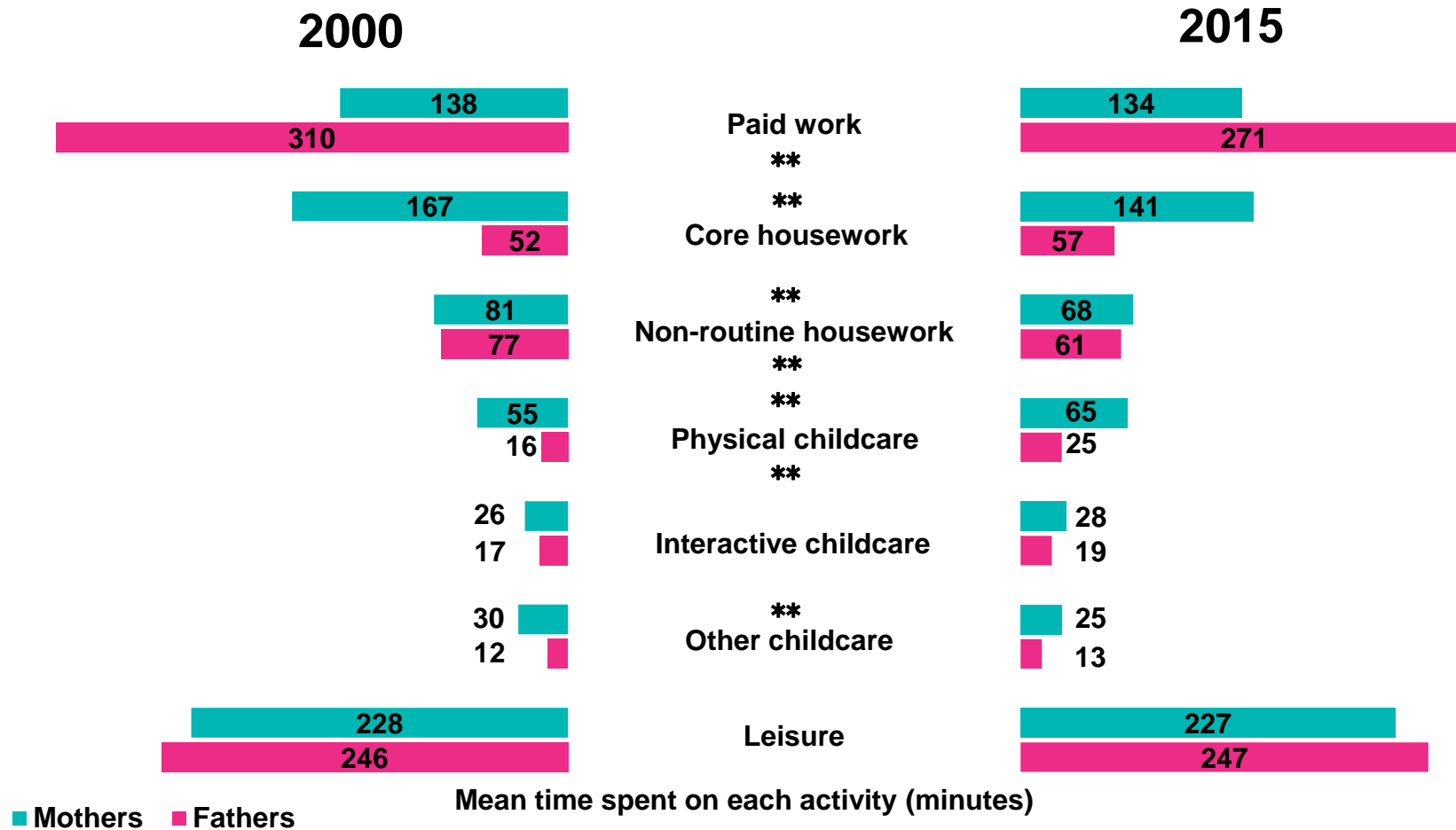
Descriptive Analysis

3.

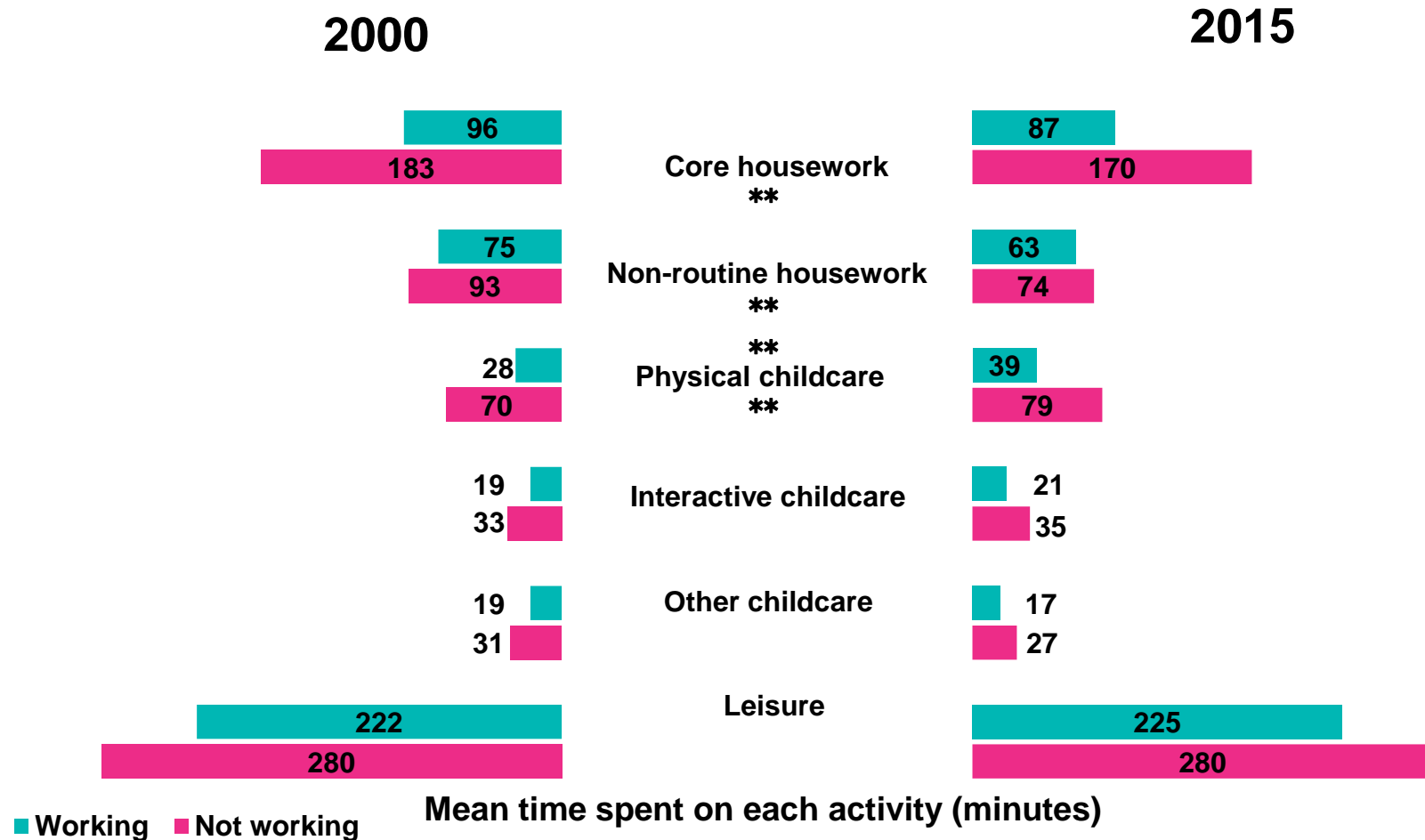
Changes in time use 2000-2015



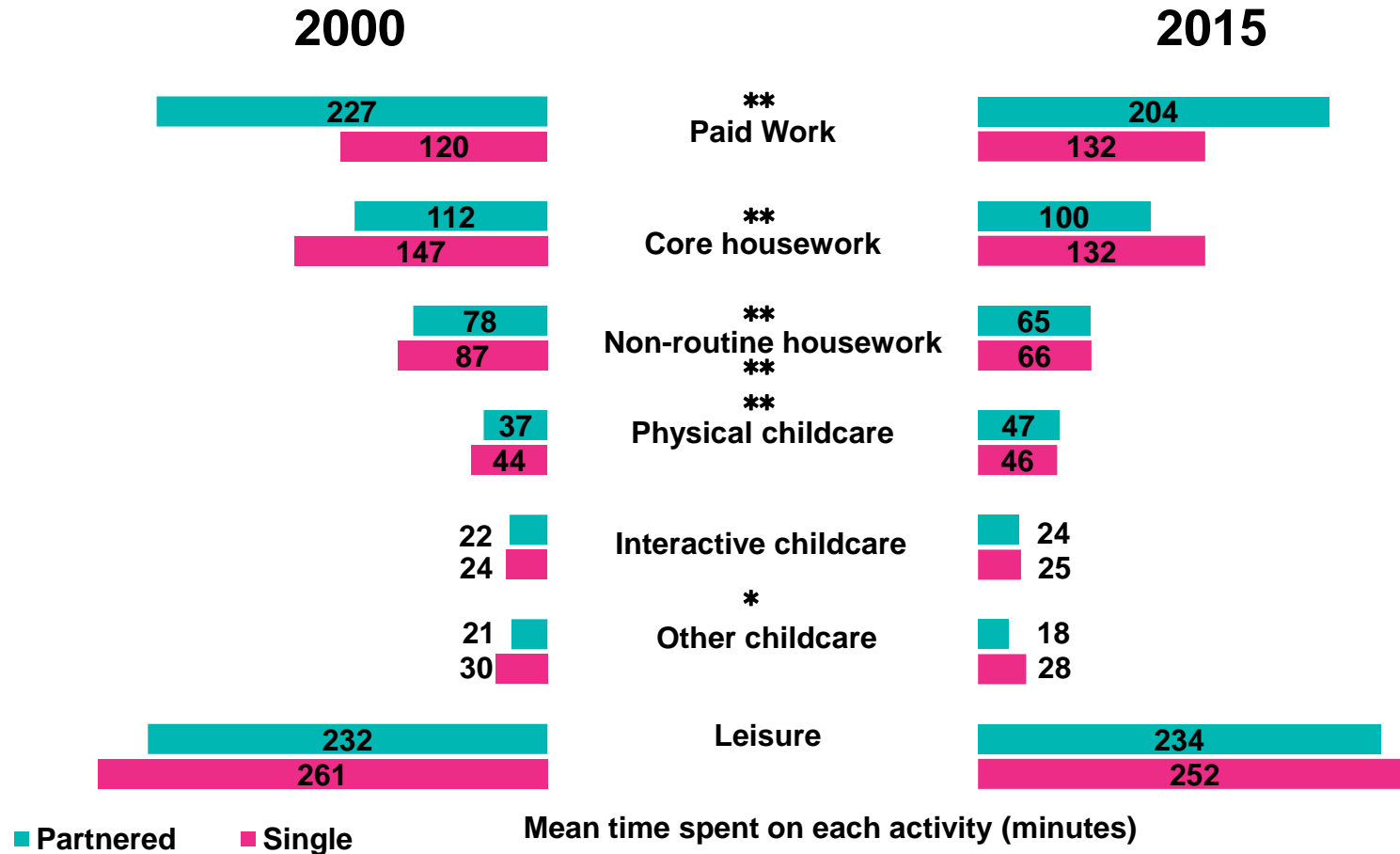
Mothers vs Fathers



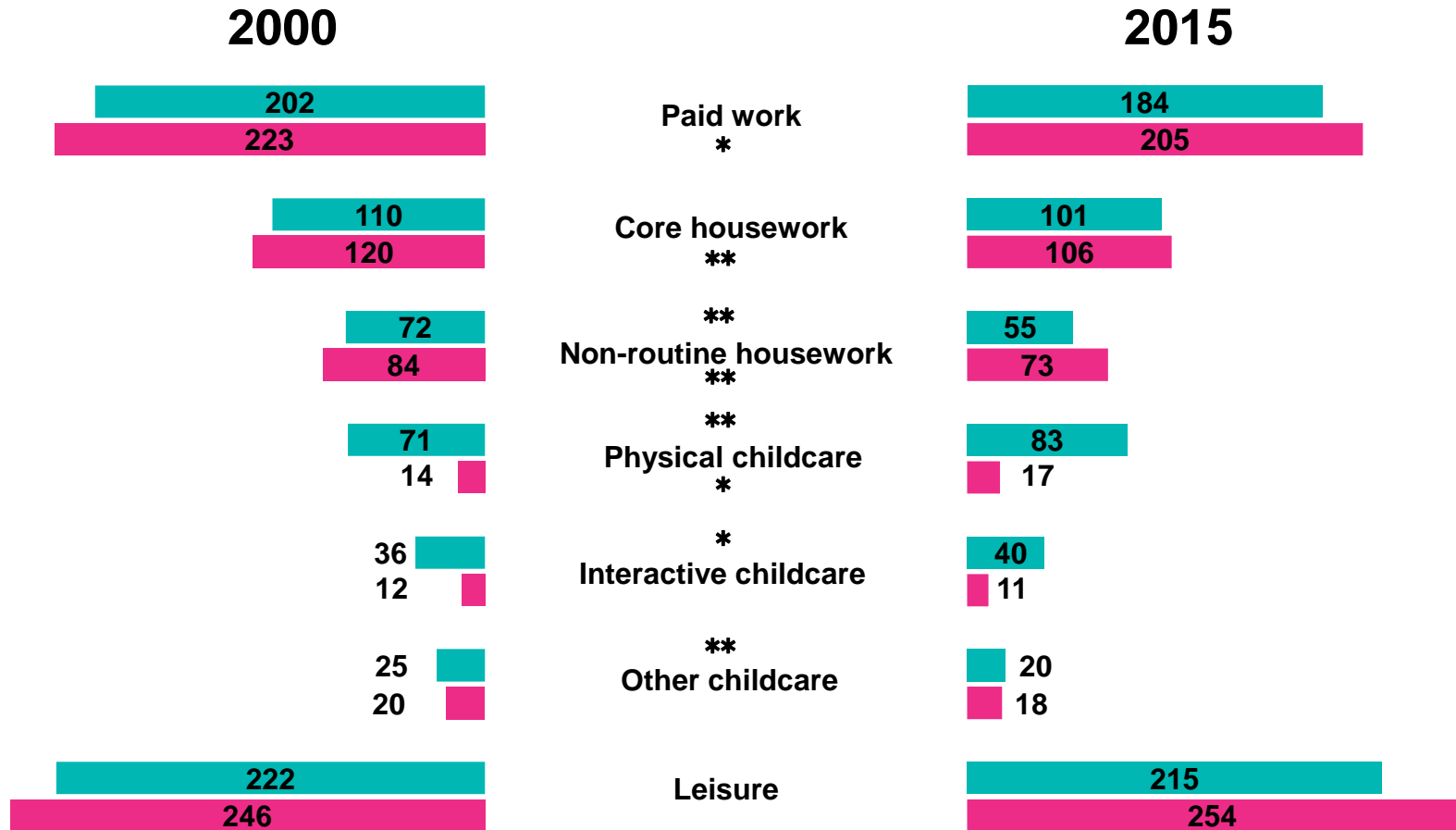
In work and out of work parents



Partnered Parents and Single Parents



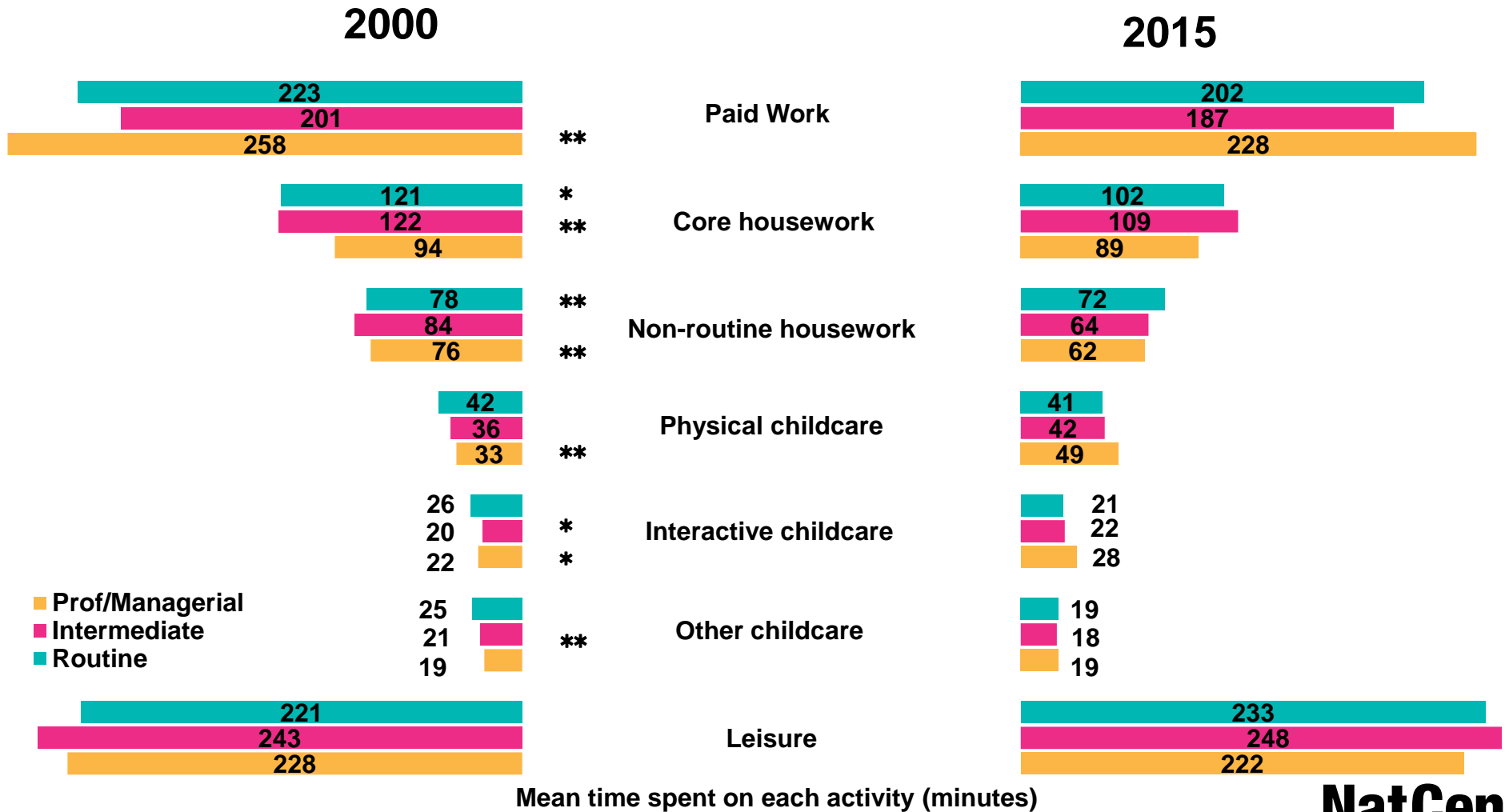
Young Children



■ Kids under 5 ■ No kids under 5

Mean time spent on each activity (minutes)

Class



Regression Analysis



4.

Regression analysis

- Weighted OLS regression analysis
- Dependent variables:
 - Core housework
 - Non-routine housework
 - Physical childcare
 - Interactive childcare
 - Other childcare
- Independent variables:
 - Year
 - Socio-economic characteristics: Gender, Social Class, Employment status, Educational qualifications
 - Household characteristics: Number of children, Young Children, Partnered or Single Parent

Core housework

2000
116 minutes

2015
104 minutes

- Women spent 87 minutes in 2000 compared with 75 minutes in 2015
- People in work spend almost an hour (52 minutes) **less** on core housework than those not in work
- Partnered people spent 11 minutes **more** on core housework in 2000
- **No difference** in time spent on core housework between partnered and single people in 2015

Non-routine housework

2000
80 minutes

2015
65 minutes

- There is **no gender gap** in time spent on non-routine housework in 2000 or 2015
- People in work spend 25 minutes **less** on non-routine housework
- People with children under 5 years old spend 10 minutes **less** on non-routine housework

Physical childcare

2000
38 minutes

2015
47 minutes

- Women spend half an hour **more** on physical childcare than men in 2000 and 2015
- People in work spend 25 minutes **less** on physical childcare than those not in work
- People with a child under 5 spend 45 minutes **more** on physical childcare

Interactive childcare

2000
22 minutes

2015
24 minutes

- Women spend 7 minutes **more** on interactive childcare than men
- People with degree level qualifications spend 9 minutes **more** on interactive childcare relative to those who only completed secondary education
- People with more than three children spend 5 minutes **less** on interactive childcare
- People with a child aged under 5 spend 27 minutes **more** on interactive childcare in 2015, relative to 22 minutes **more** in 2000

Other childcare

2000
22 minutes

2015
25 minutes

- Women spent 15 minutes **more** on other childcare in 2000 and 10 minutes **more** than men in 2015
- People in work spent 7 minutes **less** on other childcare than those not in work
- People with three or more children spent 8 minutes **more** on other childcare in 2000 but only 4 minutes **more** on 2015
- People with a child under 5 spent 5 minutes **more** on other childcare in 2000, but **no more** time on other childcare in 2015 than those with older children

Partner characteristics

- Same model specifications as the main models but using a sample of only **couple households** and incorporating the partners characteristics
- When a person's partner is in work, they will on average
 - Spend 11 minutes **more** on core housework
 - Spend 10 minutes **more** on physical childcare
 - Spend 4 minutes **more** on other childcare
- A person whose partner has a degree is likely to spend 5 minutes **more** on interactive childcare

Conclusions and next steps



5.

Conclusions

- Time spent on core and non-routine housework has fallen from in the 15 years from 2000 to 2015
- Still large gender inequalities in the domestic division of labour amongst UK parents
- Small increases in the time spent on physical childcare but no significant change in time spent on interactive or other childcare
- Time spent on interactive childcare is associated with higher levels of education of both parents
- A parent whose partner is in work will, on average, spend more time on childcare activities
- Including secondary activities changes the narrative of time spent on childcare

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