INSTITUT FÜR ARBEITSMARKT- UND BERUFSFORSCHUNG
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Work and family in times backwards for women?

8. March 2022 | Jutta Mata, Winters, Paul Setzepfand, Ipek Yükselen

In spring 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic paraly
and daycare facilities closed. Many men and
switched to short-time work. The IAB initiat
this unprecedented situation. Two IAB Brief
on the consequences of the first lockdown fo
of age in Germany. On the occasion of Intern
team asked Claudia Globisch and Michael Ober
between mothers and fathers during the pande

Who was more affected by the lockdown in Germany

Michael Oberfichtner: An online survey that we c
Economics) shows that mothers in Germany carried
Although we see similar overall losses of workin
childcare for both mothers and fathers due to th
for mothers. This fits in well with the fact tha
lockdown.

The life satisfaction of mothers dropped more

How did parents divide paid and care work during

Dr Claudia Globisch is a researcher in the staff unit Research Coordination at the IAB.

Claudia Globisch: As Michael Oberfichtner says: immensely because of the closure of schools, kin
survey a high-frequency panel in which a diver
researchers from other institutes shows that t
before and during the pandemic despite this rise

Furthermore, almost two-thirds of German mothers
However, the share of fathers who took on most o

Oberfichtner: When we consider the burden on par
This group has probably been affected particular
derive reliable, quantitative statements about t
participated in the surveys. This calls for furt

Under which framework conditions were the roles

Globisch: The decisive factor is what arrangemen
pandemic. If the parents were already using full
both parents worked to a greater extent, they al
lockdown. The place of work should not be undere
hours a week outside their home and fathers work
most in childcare. Furthermore, the findings on
are an essential factor: working fathers in shor
childcare work as compared to before the pandemi

> When fathers took on more care work, this was
> temporary.

How did the assignment of roles in families deve

Globisch: When fathers took on more care work, t
temporarily according to the latest IAB-studies
is based. By September 2020, the original role a
pandemic level. Moreover, initial figures from t
that, again, fathers took on slightly more child
additional participation, too, declined again wi

There were concerns at the beginning of the firs
facilities would lead to a major step backwards
data make of this?

Globisch: In Germany, it was debated that there
This would mean that mothers permanently withdre
work than before the pandemic. Our data does not
working hours to a greater extent than fathers,
before the pandemic. Hence, we cannot constitute
speak of progress.

Dr Michael Oberfichtner is research member in the department Active Labour Market Policies and Integration at the IAB.

Oberfichtner: Our study also shows a rapid retur However, we see a danger in the experience of un parents due to the closure of daycare facilities pandemic. If companies do not know whether mothe next day, this may affect their personnel decisi tasks. When in doubt, employers will probably pr to people at risk of being suddenly absent from absences from work of parents go well beyond the

Such concerns are also reflected in the Internat managers expect that mothers, in particular, tak assumption that you should rather not assign mot associated detrimental effects on their careers.

> If employers fear that mothers will be absent incentive not to entrust them with critical p International Women s Day motto Break the Bi

On International Women s Day, we would also like like for women in other countries that had also

Oberfichtner: Our results fit well into the pict
international point of view as well. We see in m
much more affected by the recession as compared
distribution of paid work and childcare, we see
Kingdom as in Germany.

For Germany, it is remarkable how similar the fi
based on two different surveys. Other studies in
if the focus and interpretation of the analyses
robustness of the results.

Due to the pandemic, many families had to arrang
flexibly at short notice. Do you see opportuniti
for the equalisation of gender differences in th

Globisch: Our findings show that it is not the h
of care work. It depends on who takes advantage
processes between the couples take place. Howeve
and especially when fathers work from home or in

Oberfichtner: The pandemic has proven that coope
delivers good results for companies. I, therefor
promising also beyond the pandemic. And even i
because of increased childcare obligations, I be
from this.

More time resources have positive effects on

Which conclusions can politics, the economy, and

Globisch: Well-developed and high-quality childc
able to work. There is still room for improvemen
during the lockdown little has changed in the di
it is above all engrained social roles that infl
decisively. The unequal distribution of full- an
solidifies these roles. The joint assessment of
Ehegattensplitting which leads to significan
distributed incomes, and the reduced social secu

of 450 euro the so-called minijobs harm t
even more.

In order to fundamentally change the social role
mothers working full time who are positively pre
working hours and time accounts for different ca
effects.

The fact that fathers in short-time work partici
resources also positively affect the assignment
their working hours.

Looking after young children remains a job wh

Oberfichtner: Our findings from Germany on the f
closure of schools and daycare facilities for fa
decreased life satisfaction. If you think beyond
remains a job where you are constantly on call.
alternate more in looking after children in such
individual consequences for careers but also the
many companies have learned to organise work mor
this flexibility even after the pandemic to allo
term.

Literature

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Zitationshinweis

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