

# SSSN Seminar

## Working Fathers in Western Europe: Earning and Caring

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# Either Financial Provider Or Active Carer?

- There are various models of co-residential parenthood and fatherhood
- Looking beyond the simplistic dichotomy of fathers who provide versus fathers who care
- Do some fathers actually manage to do both?

# Study Aims and Methods

- To compare labour market outcomes of groups of fathers (ranked by childcare level), pre-fathers and non-fathers
- Uses the European Community Household Panel, 1994-2001, 14 countries
- Data are longitudinal and comparative
- Fixed effects modelling

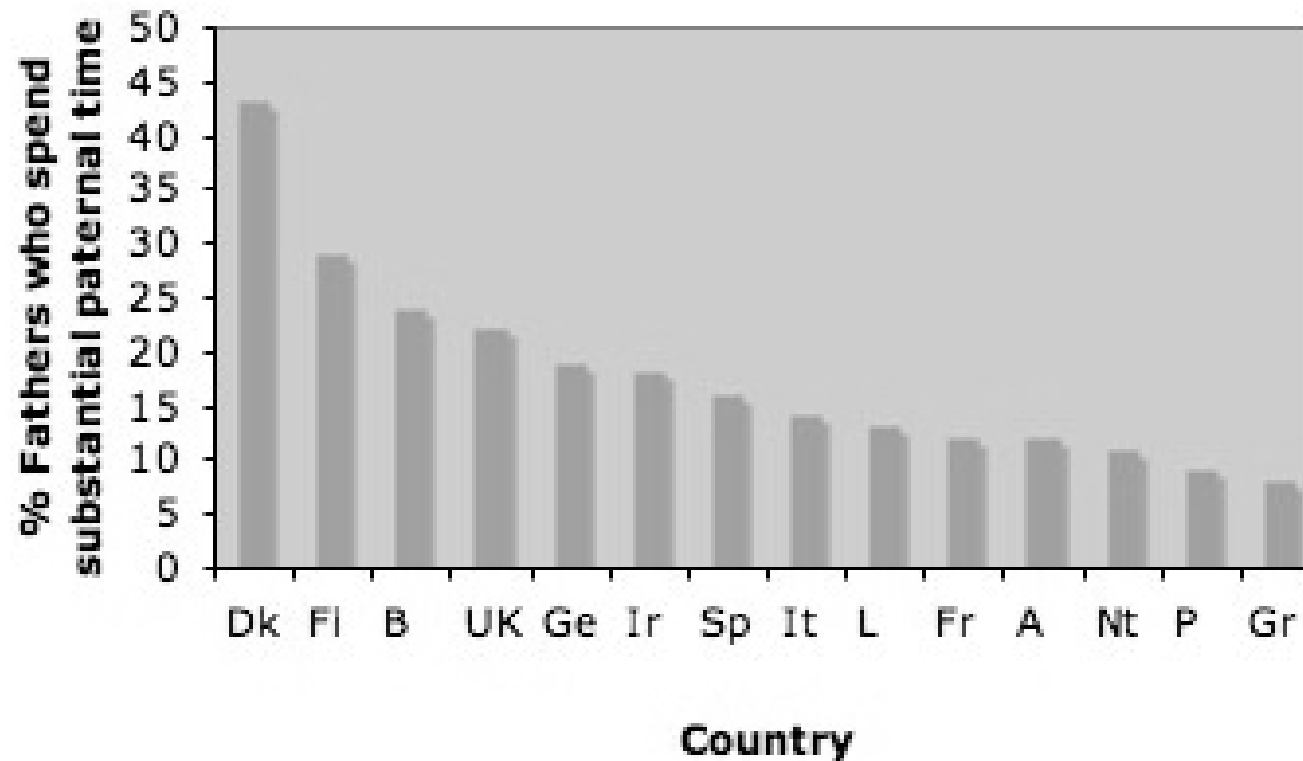
# Measuring Time Use

- One way to assess a parent's commitment to caring is to consider the quantity of time they spend looking after their children
- Data on time: Time use studies using time diaries, retrospective survey questions included in regular household surveys

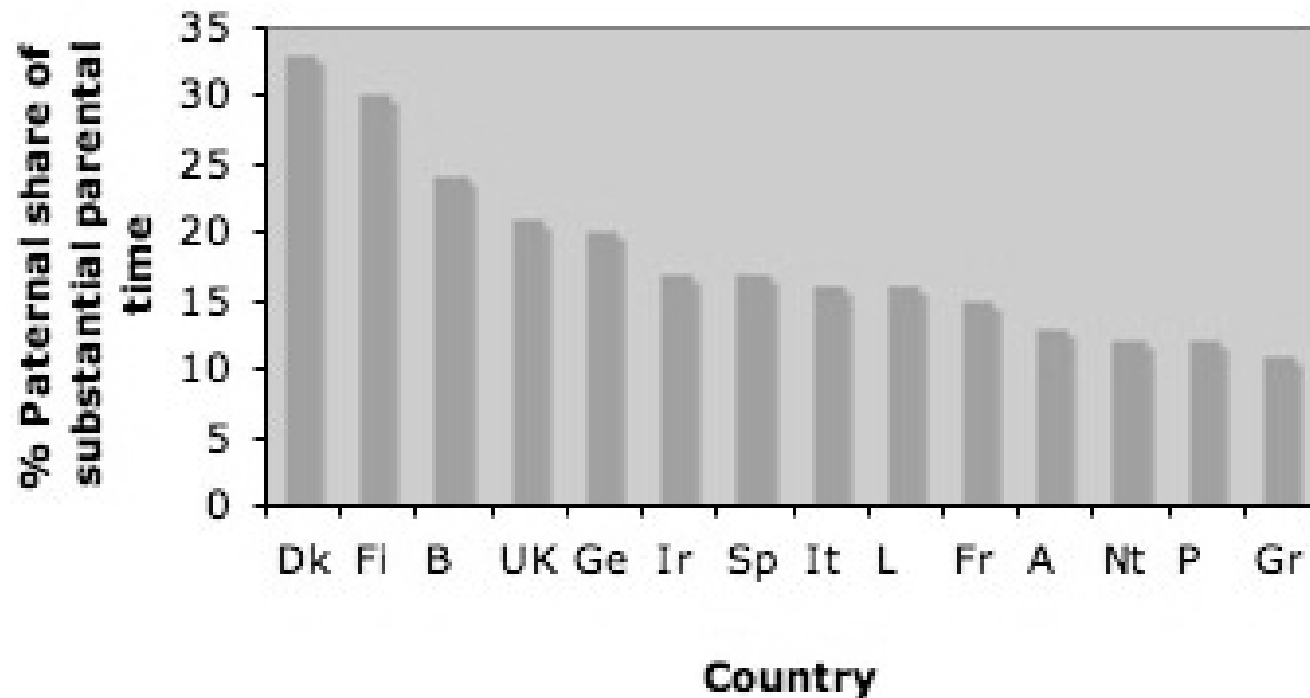
# Substantial Paternal Time

- While mothers across Europe still spend more time caring than fathers, there are considerable cross-national differences in father's participation in childcare
- There are considerable gender gaps in the amount of time parents spend looking after their children

**Figure 1.**  
**The percentage of all fathers who spend**  
**substantial child care time:**



**Figure 2.**  
**The percentage of substantial child care time done by fathers (as opposed to mothers): by country**



# Fathers and Earnings

$$Y_{it} = \alpha_i + \beta_1 \textit{nonfather}_{it} + \beta_2 \textit{prefather}_{it} + X_{it}\beta_n + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

On average, fathers across Europe earn more per hour than non-fathers, but they do not work longer hours.



# Saving for Parenthood?

In the couple of years prior to becoming fathers, fathers-to-be are already earning more per hour than other non-fathers.

# Caring and Working

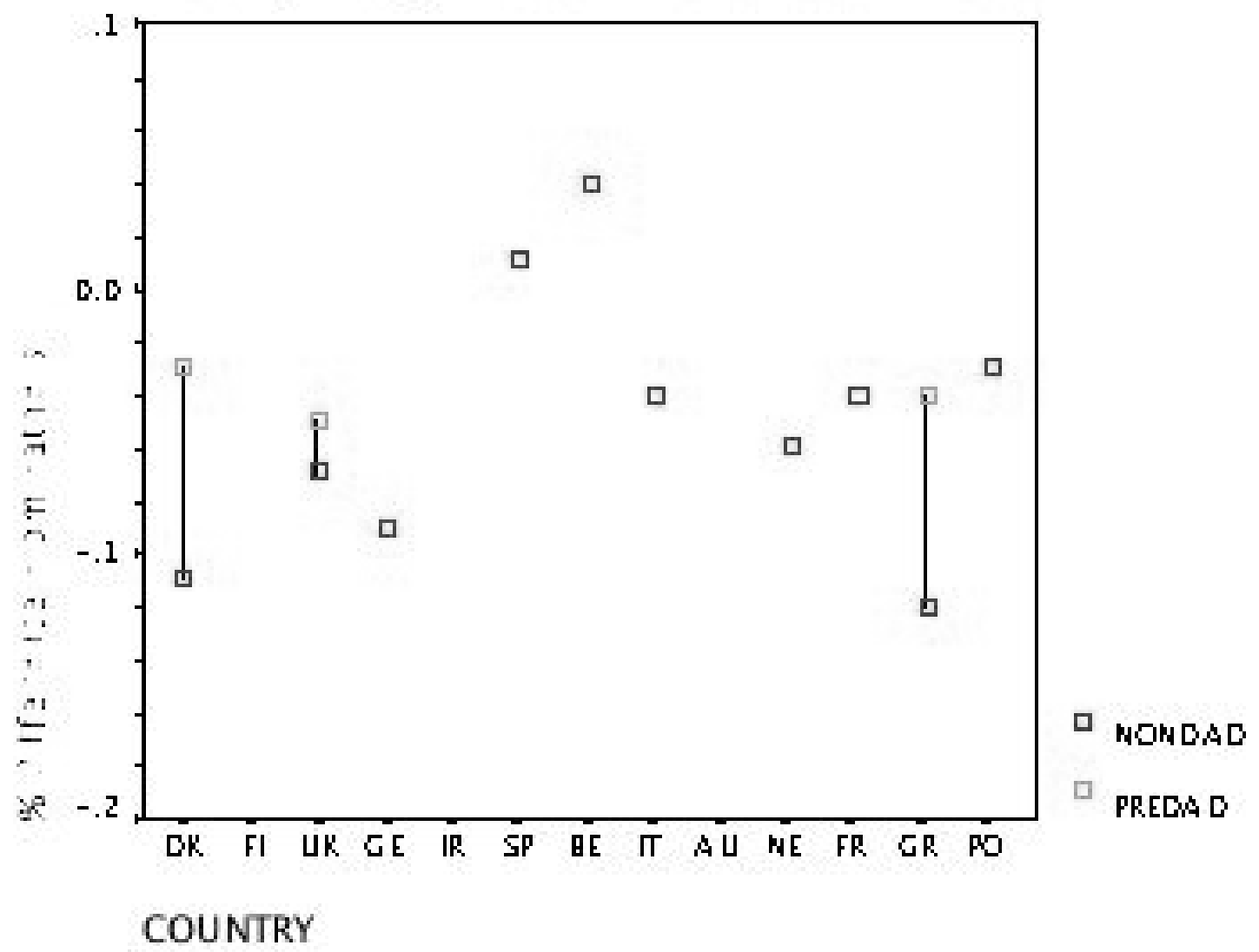
$$Y_{it} = \alpha_i + \beta_1 \text{prefather}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{fathernocare}_{it} + \beta_3 \text{fatherlowcare}_{it} + \beta_4 \text{fathermedcare}_{it} + \beta_5 \text{fatherhighcare}_{it} + X_{it} \beta_n + \varepsilon_{it}$$

(2)

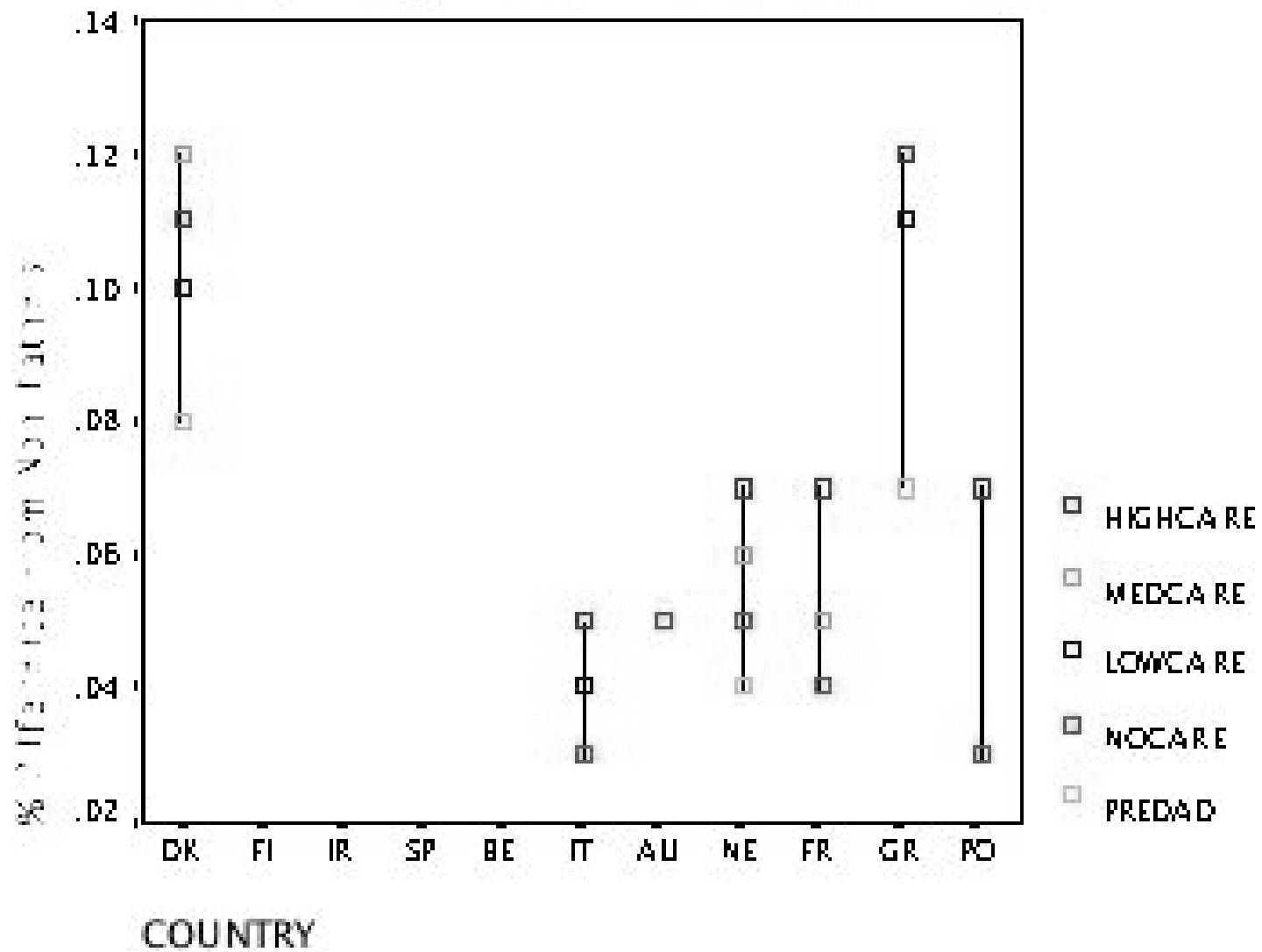
# Caring and Earning

- On average, fathers who spend more time with their children also earn more per hour and work fewer hours than those fathers who spend less time with their children

# Hourly Wage Rate Differences: Model 1B



## Hourly Wage Rate Differences: Model 2B



# Social Inequality and the Capacity for Family Life

- Categorisation of resident fathers as either good providers or active carers fails to describe modern fatherhood
- The “super-dad” is a father simultaneously involved in the labour market and as a carer
- The “ordinary-dad” is a father less involved in the labour market and also as a carer

If governments strive to increase fathers' time with children:

- Fathers should have greater access to leave from employment
- There should be high wage compensation for leave
- Fathers should be able to work flexibly
- Increased state child maintenance payments and state funded child care provision