

AHRC Research Network  
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# Shared parenting: Longitudinal and comparative perspectives.

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# Structure

- Background
- Comparative analysis – Generations and Gender Survey
- Longitudinal analysis of care arrangements in the UK
  - Effects of care arrangements on child outcomes
- *Work in progress – all suggestions welcome*

# Empirical social science questions

- Measuring incidence of shared parenting arrangements
- Identifying characteristics of those who share parenting
- Looking at the effects of different arrangements for looking after children on outcomes for parents/children
- Concerns about associations versus causes

# Previous studies

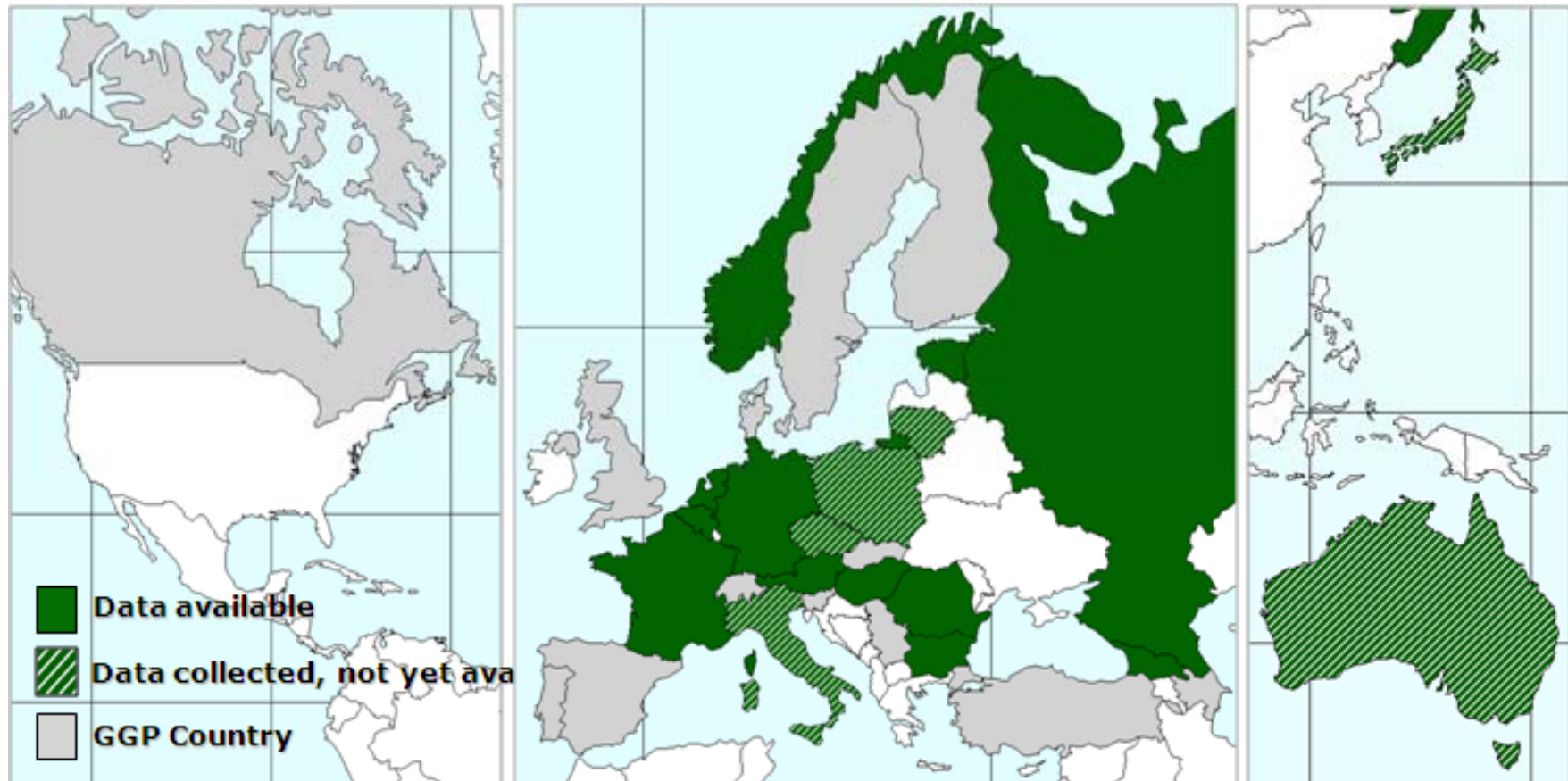
- Reviews and meta-analyses include:
  - Amato and Gilbreth (1999), Bauserman (2002), Smyth (2009), Trinder (2010), Nielsen (2011), Oxford Family Policy Briefing 7
- Many/most studies are small, with US bias (+ Australia in recent times)
- Few large-scale studies, even fewer that are longitudinal, or based on Britain, limited international comparability
- Also issues of legal/physical custody, high/low conflict samples, divorced vs ex-cohabitees, adult vs child reports

# Comparative analysis

# Generations and Gender Survey

- UN funded research programme, including new data collection
- Retrospective data on relationships and children
  - Future prospective data collection planned
- Comparable questions in each country
  - Though some countries opted out of some sections, including 'shared care' questions
- Large sample sizes, from populations aged 18-79 (except Austria 18-45)

# Data availability (late 2011)

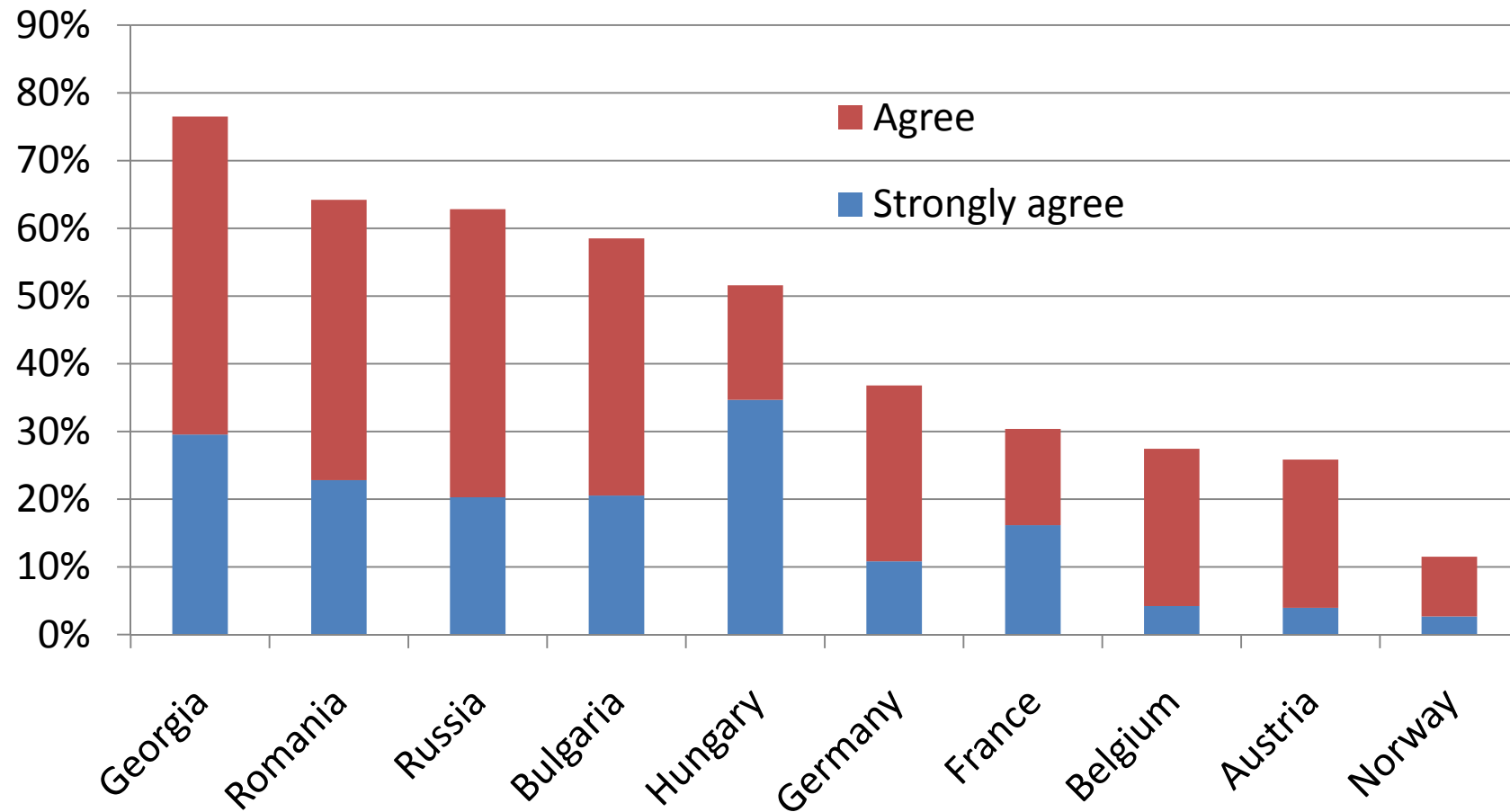


# Generations and Gender Survey: question coverage

- Household
- Children
- Partnerships
- Partnership quality
- Parents
- Fertility and intentions
- Health and well-being
- Activity, income
- Values and attitudes



# *If parents divorce it's better for child to stay with mother than father*



## Partnerships section (each previous partner)

- Start of living together; if married.
- Partner's age, education, pre-existing children
- Whether any children together.
- Residential arrangements of children in first year after separation.
- How often you and ex saw children that year.
- When/if divorced, who initiated.

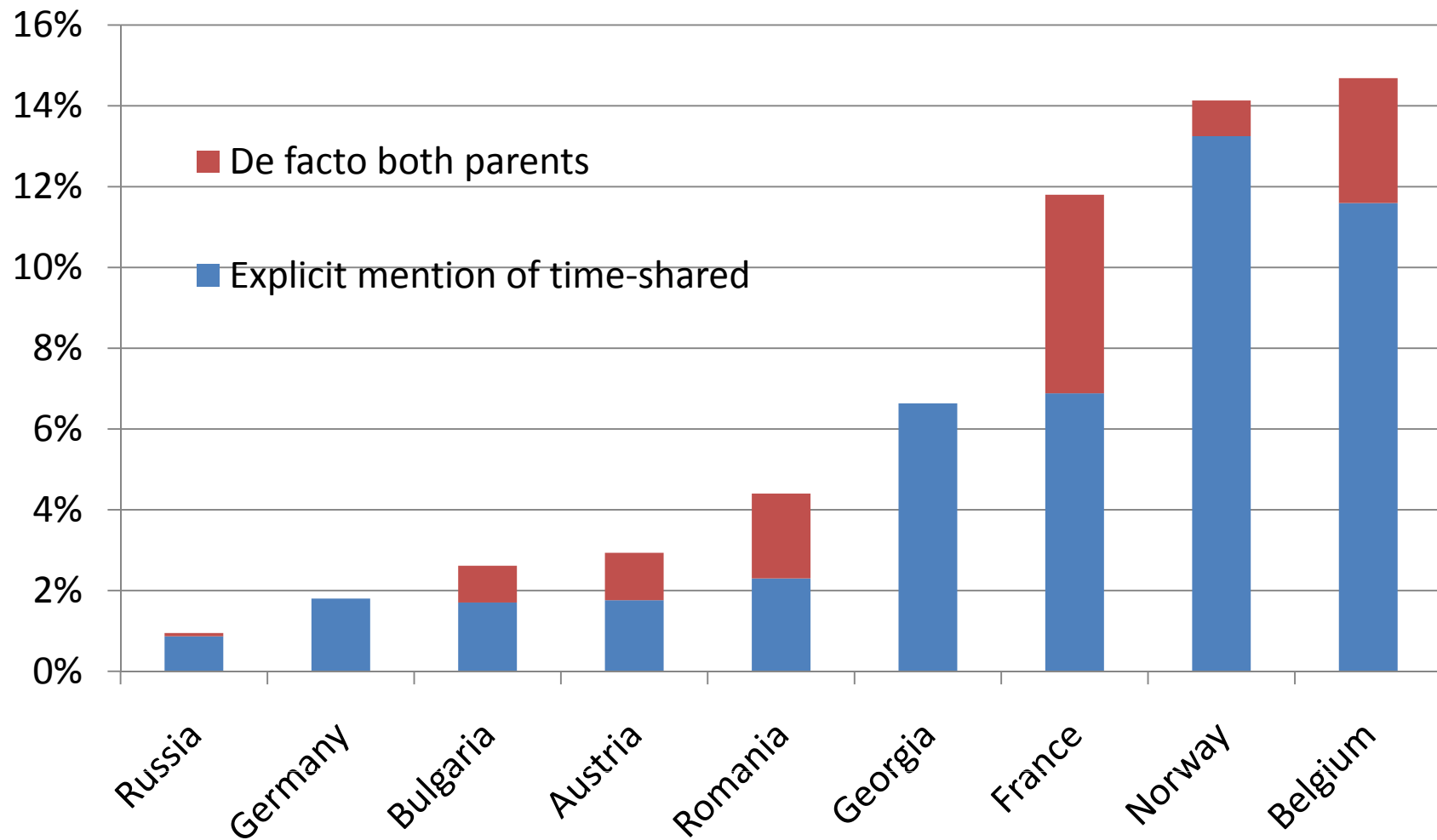
# Key questions

<p>3.46 With whom did your children mainly stay in the first year after you broke up? Please choose your answer from the card. You may choose more than one answer if your shared children mainly lived at different places from each other.</p> <p><b>Show Card 3.46: Where Did Children Mainly Stay?</b></p>	<p>1 – with me                  2 – with my ex-partner                  3 – with both of us on a time-shared basis                  4 – with relatives                  5 – with others                  6 – at a children's home                  7 – started to live independently                  8 – child was already living independently                  9 – other</p>
<p>3.47 On average, how often did you see the child(ren) who did not stay with you in the first year after you broke up?</p>	<p>times per                  W M Y                  0 – never                  99 – not applicable</p>

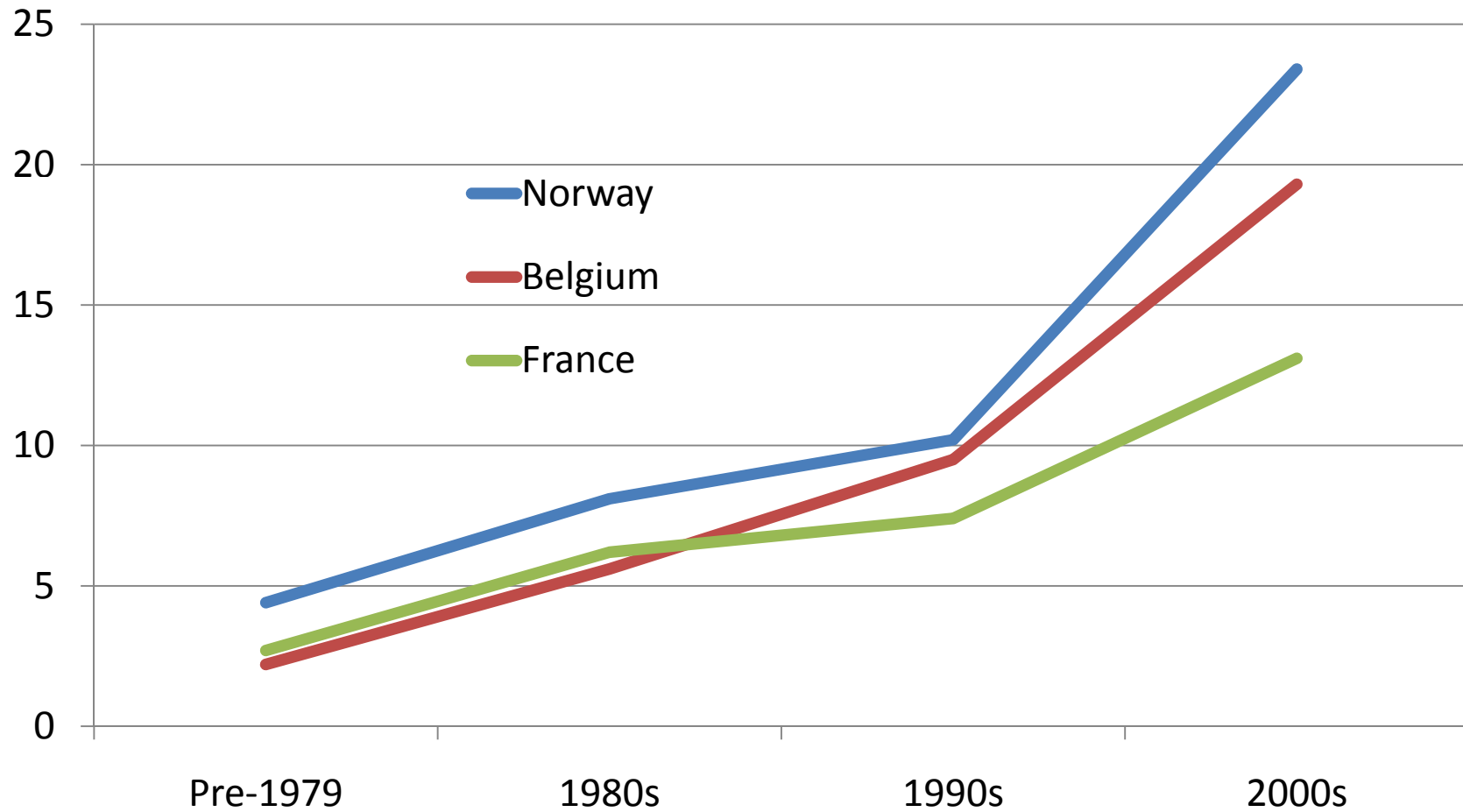
# Numbers of people and arrangements

Country	Sample size	Has a past child-bearing relationship	Mention of 'time-shared' arrangement	+ Significant time with both parents
Austria	5,000	511	9	6
Bulgaria	12,858	880	15	8
Germany	10,017	1,110	20	0
Germany - Turkish boost sample	4,045	200	5	0
Russia	11,261	2,422	21	2
Georgia	10,000	407	27	0
Romania	11,986	829	19	17
France	10,079	1,729	119	85
Belgium	7,163	1,035	120	32
Norway	14,881	2,830	375	25
Total	101,425	12,153	730	175

# Extent of shared care (per cent of relationships ending)



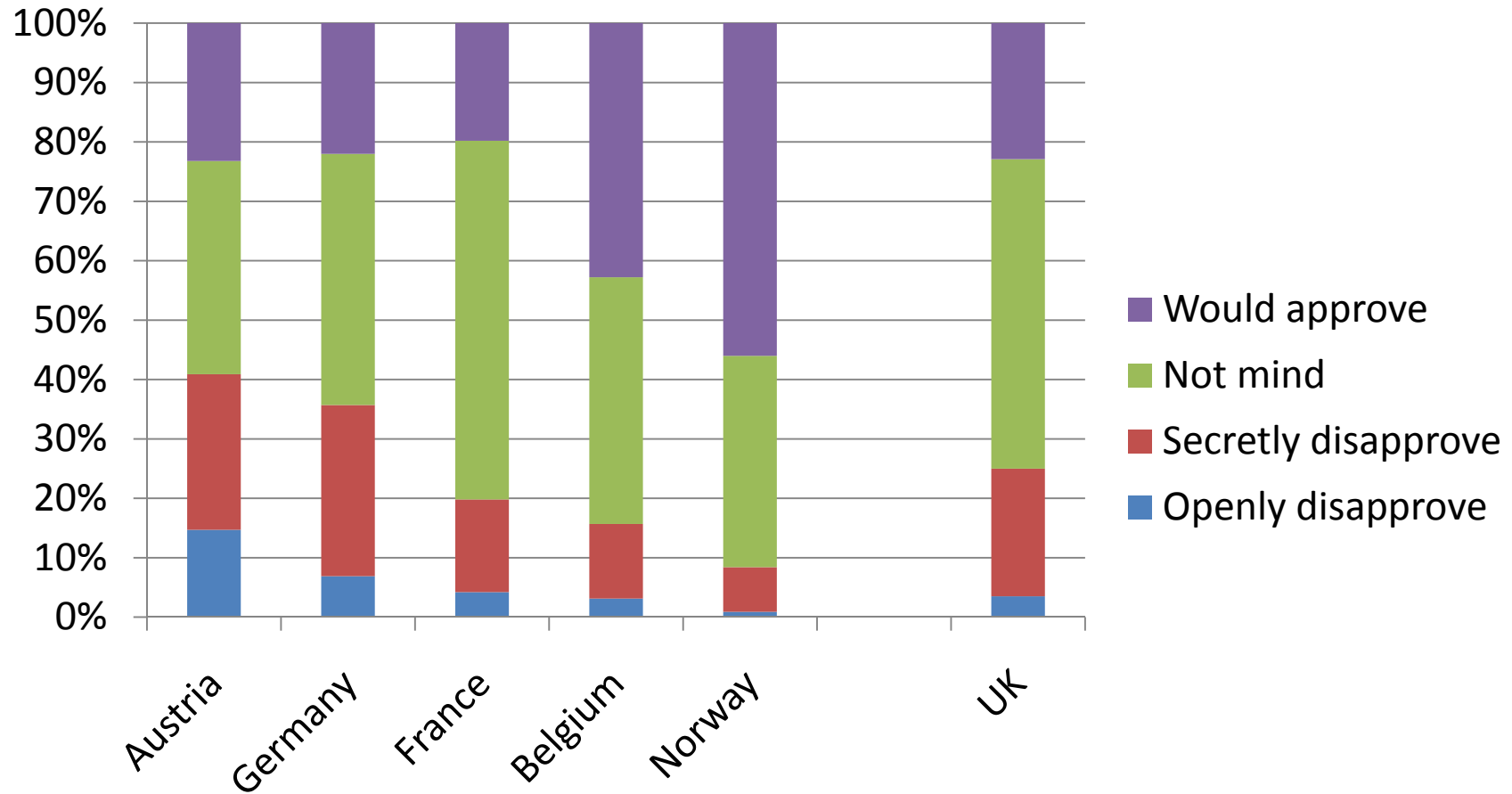
# Extent of 'time-shared' arrangements by date of separation



# Differences in W European countries

	'Shared care' rate	Fertility rate (TFR)	Welfare regime ('Three worlds')	Leitner's (2003) varieties of familialism	Family policy [Workcare project 2006-09]
Austria	1.8%	1.4	Corporatist	Explicit familialism	Long leave, PT work
Germany	1.8%	1.4	Corporatist		
Belgium	11.6%	1.8	Corporatist	Optional familialism	Extensive family policy
France	6.9%	2.0	Corporatist		
Norway	13.3%	1.9	Social-democratic	(?)	" (?)

# Attitudes towards: Having a full-time job with children aged under 3 [ESS 2006]





# Associations with shared parenting

- Positive link with educational attainment (France, Norway, Belgium).
- Linked to better-off status (France, Belgium, not Norway).
- Tend to disagree that 'if people divorce, children should stay with the mother'.
- Where people are in their 30s (Norway, 30s & 40s)
- With more past relationships

# UK longitudinal analysis

# UK-based analysis

- Many sources of data, some rarely cited (e.g. Citizenship Survey 2001, SureStart evaluation, *Northern Ireland: Life and Times Survey* – with children's reports of home arrangements: N=4,192 children).

	%	
	Boy	Girl
<b>My mum and dad in the same house</b>	79	77
<b>My mum only</b>	9	12
<b>My mum and dad alternately</b>	8	6
<b>My dad only or someone else</b>	4	4

# UK-based analysis: longitudinal

- Several longitudinal sources:
  - Household panels: FACS and BHPS;
  - Birth cohorts: Millennium Cohort study, Growing up in Scotland.

# Recent estimates

	BHPS 2002		BHPS 2007		U. Soc 2009
Arrangement	Resident	Absent	Resident	Absent	Absent
<i>Shared care 50/50</i>	1	3	1	2	3
Almost everyday	7	10	7	10	15
Several times a week	15	22	19	24	22
About once a week	16	22	20	22	19
Several times a month	14	13	13	14	13
Once a month or less	8	4	6	6	5
A few times a year	9	7	7	8	10
Never	32	19	27	14	13
<i>Sample size</i>	<b>870</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>619</b>

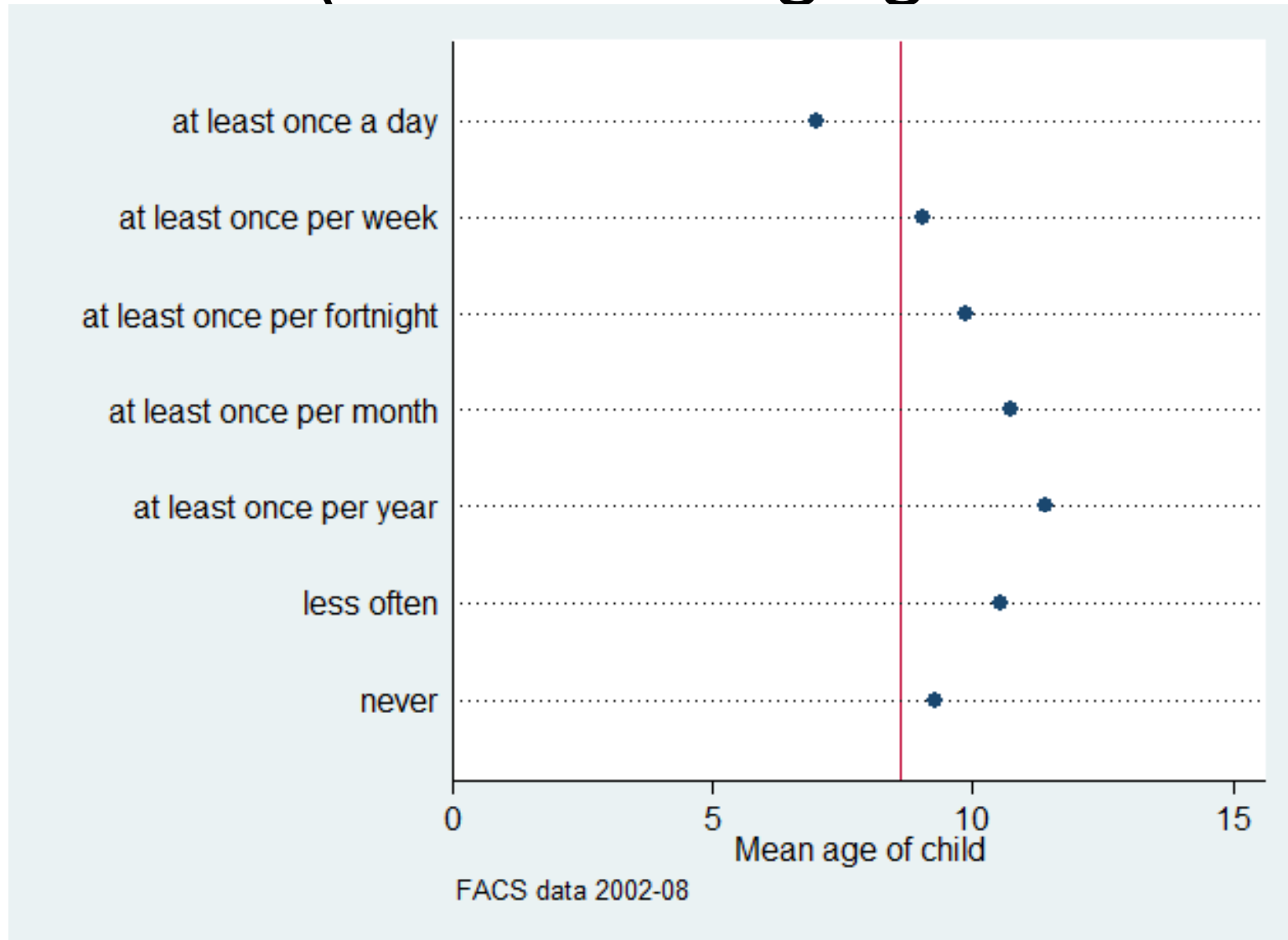
# BHPS – longitudinal

- Comparison of 2002 and 2007
- Care on average was less by non-resident
- Parenting that was ‘monthly’ was least stable arrangement
- ‘50/50 shared care’
  - Resident parent: None of the ‘50/50 shared care’ cases said this 5 years later (small sample: 0/3).
  - 1/5 of the non-resident parents said ‘50/50 shared care’ in both 2002 and 2007.

# Data

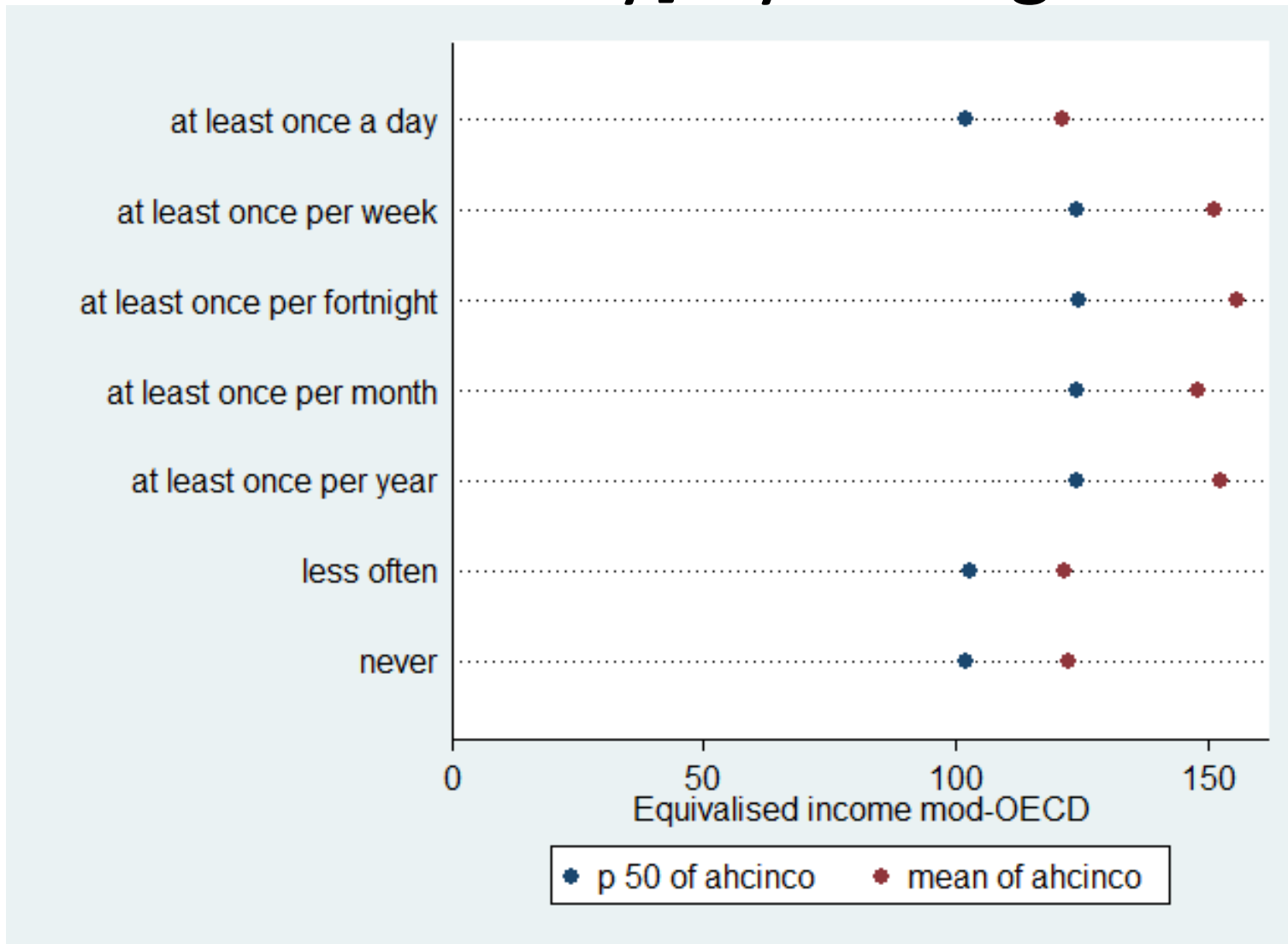
- Families and Children Study (FACS) 2002-2008
- ‘Rotating panel’, built from Child Benefit recipients
- Questions asked at *child-level* regarding contact with non-resident parent
- Same questions asked each year – hence may track over time *at child level*

# Arrangements: average ages of children (red line = avg age all children)





# Few differences in incomes [of the resident family] by arrangement



# Overview of longitudinal data

- 23,500 children with average of 3.7 years observed [87,500 'observations']
  - 13,500 some experience of being apart from parent (lone parents are over-sampled) with 27,000 observations
- Considerable change over time:
  - 9% see absent parent daily in any given year; 17% say this at least once during their survey involvement
  - 26% never see absent parent; 34% say this at least once

# *Annual* changes in contact [row %]

	This year		
Previous year	<i>More</i> frequent	Same	<i>Less</i> frequent
At least once a day	-	<b>52</b>	48
At least once a week	6	<b>73</b>	21
At least once a fortnight	21	<b>52</b>	27
At least once a month	26	<b>40</b>	34
At least once a year	22	<b>55</b>	24
Less often	43	<b>19</b>	38
Never	18	<b>82</b>	-

# Measures of child outcomes

- Parental assessments of school work, bullying, contact with school, police.
- For 3 years, child self-completion (if aged 11-15): TV viewing, contact with friends, use of alcohol and drugs, parents setting limits, ...

18 **Your appearance?**  
Please tick the box that best describes how you feel about your appearance.

276

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

19 **Your health?**  
Please tick the box that best describes how you feel about your health.

277

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

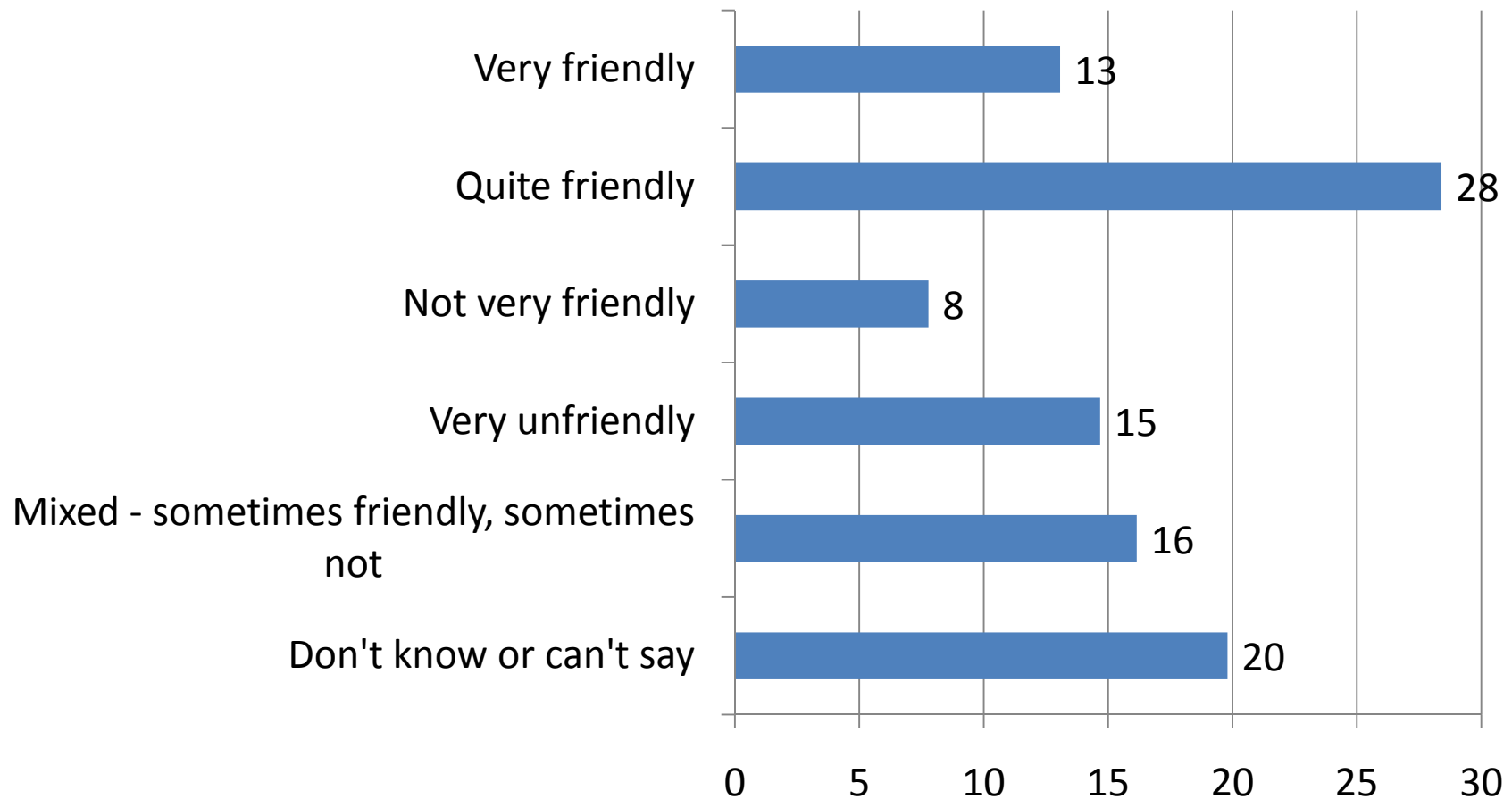
20 **Your family?**  
Please tick the box that best describes how you feel about your family.

278

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

...

# Measure of: Relationship between resident and non-resident parent



# How many children feel 'extremely happy' with:

	... Their family	... Their life
<b><i>Intact families</i></b>	63%	43%
Separated, and contact is:		
At least once a day	57%	40%
At least once a week	57%	36%
At least once a fortnight	54%	33%
At least once a month	49%	35%
At least once a year	49%	30%
Less often	55%	27%
Never	58%	38%

# Models of outcomes

$$\text{outcome}_{it} = x'_{it}B + cC_{it} + rR_{it} + v_i + u_{it}$$

x characteristics of child, mother [father]

C contact arrangements

R parental relationship

$v_i$  child effect (random intercept or fixed effect)

$u_{it}$  residual

# Regression results (random intercept models; 'random effects')

Question	Contact between child and non-resident parent	Relationship between parents
Maths	ns	Sig
English	Sig	Sig
Science	Sig	Sig
School behaviour	Sig	Sig
TV viewing extent	ns	ns
View of life	ns	ns
View of family	ns	Sig

Sig means statistically significant at the 5% level.



# Conclusions – UK longitudinal

- Arrangements for care after parental separation change over time,
  - on average becoming less frequent, but
  - some 'no contact' cases start to have contact
- Infrequent contact seemingly associated with worse outcomes than no contact, or frequent contact
- (multivariate) Some child outcomes related to both contact frequency and quality of parental relationship, though latter is more common

Ends – questions?

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