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# Re-partnering and single mothers' mental health and life satisfaction trajectories

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Single mothers are a particularly disadvantaged group in terms of their mental health and life satisfaction. While it is plausible that re-partnering could compensate for these disadvantages by providing social, emotional, and financial resources, the evidence is inconclusive. Using annual panel data from Germany (1984-2020) and the United Kingdom (1991-2020), this study examines the life satisfaction and mental health trajectories around re-partnering transitions among single mothers. The guiding questions are whether re-partnering has positive (resource model) or negative (crisis model) effects on the outcomes, and whether the effects depend on the national context. Fixed-effects regressions reveal effects among 1,675 single mothers. Results show that life satisfaction is positively affected by re-partnering in both Germany and the UK, mainly driven by income-related factors. The effects on mental health differ more, with an increasing trajectory in Germany and a declining trajectory after the re-partnering transition in the UK. Overall, the findings indicate that re-partnering is beneficial, especially for the life satisfaction of single mothers, and highlight the importance of financial resources and family policies.

**Keywords:** maternal partnership status, single mothers, well-being, Germany, United Kingdom

## Introduction

Family exerts a strong influence on the health and well-being of its members, as it is closely associated with economic, social, and psychological resources (Carr and Springer 2010). Among family constellations, single mothers are considered a particularly vulnerable group (e.g., Burstrom et al. 2010; Nomaguchi and Milkie 2003). Their health disadvantages are often attributed to high stress levels (e.g., Avison et al. 2007; Kühn 2018), mainly caused by financial deprivation (e.g.,

Amato 2000; Cooper et al. 2009) and the lack of social resources (e.g., Avison et al. 2007; Crosier et al. 2007).

Re-partnering – here defined as a new partner joining the household – may counteract these disadvantages. However, research on single mothers' re-partnering behavior and its impact on their health and well-being have produced mixed findings (Buehler et al. 1986; Demo and Acock 1996; Ganong and Coleman 1991; Langlais et al. 2016; Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019; Weingarten 1980). Existing studies of re-partnering report both positive effects due to additional resources (Williams and Umberson 2004) and negative effects due to emerging conflicts and fragile partnership trajectories (De Graaf and Kalmijn 2003; Hughes and Waite 2009). Previous research suggests that these effects may vary depending on the national context, as family policies could shape single mothers' need to re-partner based on the levels of state support provided, and could thus affect the stability of re-partnering relationships (Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019).

In this study, we take a cross-national comparative perspective and examine how re-partnering influences life satisfaction and mental health among single mothers in Germany and the United Kingdom (UK). There are two reasons for this comparison. First, as both Germany and the UK are western European countries, but with different welfare state orientations (Thévenon 2011), we can evaluate the claim that differences in re-partnering effects can be attributed to family policies. Second, panel data for both countries including information on both family transitions and life satisfaction and mental health outcomes allow us to follow individuals over decades. Although the number of studies focusing on the relationship between re-partnering and outcomes related to life satisfaction or health has increased in recent years (e.g., Gloor et al. 2021; Langlais et al. 2016; Li et al. 2021), most neither addressed unobserved heterogeneity nor compared national contexts.

In three analytical steps, we aim to provide an in-depth and comprehensive examination of the relationship between single mothers' re-partnering behavior and their life satisfaction and mental health. Using fixed-effects models, we draw on data from the German Socio-economic Panel (SOEP), the British Household Panel Study (BHPS), and the subsequent UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS). First, we compare single mothers who re-partner to those who remain single to analyze potential selection patterns into re-partnering. Second, we examine life satisfaction and mental health trajectories around the transition into re-partnering. Third, we investigate potential mediators of the re-partnering effects. Our findings shed light on re-partnering as a transition in

the life course of single mothers and the associated effects on life satisfaction and mental health in different national contexts.

## **Theoretical background**

### **Comparison of re-partnered and stably single mothers**

Single-mother households represent the vast majority of family living arrangements following parental separation in both Germany (Geisler and Kreyenfeld 2019) and the UK (Zadeh et al. 2022). Single mothers face several disadvantages due to their role as parents and their gender (Gałezewska et al. 2017; Ivanova et al. 2013; Lampard and Peggs 1999). The proportion of single mothers increases with age, which could be explained by men preferring younger women in the partner market (De Graaf and Kalmijn 2003), or by relatively older single mothers being less interested in partnerships in general.

It is, however, possible that the health status of single mothers is linked with their likelihood of re-partnering. The assumption of social selection into re-partnering is derived from the marriage selection hypothesis, which states that individual health affects marital transitions, with the healthy being more likely to marry than the unhealthy (Barrett 2000; Carr and Springer 2010). Single mothers are assumed to be subject to health selection, as poor mental health has been found to increase separation risk (Davies et al. 1997; Pevalin and Ermisch 2004). The social selection hypothesis suggests that re-partnered mothers have better health than stably single mothers even before re-partnering. Evidence for this assumption is limited: Pevalin and Ermisch (2004) found positive social selection only for re-partnering after cohabitation, but not after marriage; while Recksiedler and Bernardi (2019) observed selection mechanisms among re-partnered single mothers, but without modeling the health trajectories longitudinally. Accordingly, we expect that re-partnered single mothers are a positively selected group compared to non-re-partnered single mothers. Thus, our first hypothesis is:

*Hypothesis 1: Re-partnered single mothers have higher life satisfaction and mental health than those who remain single already in the period before the re-partnering transition.*

### **Effects of re-partnering on life satisfaction and mental health**

Theoretical approaches in research generally assume that re-partnering has positive effects. Following the marital resource model (Williams and Umberson 2004), the main mechanisms

explaining the effects of re-partnering on health are the additional economic, social, and emotional resources that the new partner brings to the household. Most studies have found a positive association between re-partnering and life satisfaction and mental health (Demo and Acock 1996; Evans and Kelley 2004; Glenn 1981; Gloor et al. 2021; Hughes and Waite 2009; Lin et al. 2019; Noda et al. 2009; Weingarten 1980). Only Hiyoshi (2015) found evidence of a higher depression risk among individuals who re-partnered compared to those who remained separated, and Ganong and Coleman (1991) found no significant effects.

### *Resource model*

Women may benefit from marriage because it increases their financial resources (Wu and Hart 2002). This may be particularly important for single mothers, who are often economically disadvantaged (Harkness 2018; Leopold 2018). Thus, reducing economic insecurity through re-partnering could increase life satisfaction and mental health (De Graaf and Kalmijn 2003; Dziak et al. 2010; Kalmijn and Monden 2010). For example, Buehler et al. (1986) studied the effects of re-partnering on various forms of well-being and found significant positive effects only for well-being related to household income.

The assumption that social support has a positive health effect is also widespread in research on marriage and cohabitation. This is often explained in terms of protection against stress (Crosier et al. 2007), but also through better access to social networks (Perelli-Harris et al. 2018) and positive control of health behavior by the new partner (Hughes and Waite 2009). For single mothers, who experience stress from role overload, childcare support is thought to be the most important social resource (Gregg et al. 2009; Pollmann-Schult 2018). Previous research shows that sharing childcare responsibilities significantly reduces parenting stress (Cooper et al. 2009), and may therefore positively influence single mothers' life satisfaction and mental health (Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019; Thompson and Ensminger 1989). Consequently, it is generally assumed that for single mothers, living with a new partner leads to improved life satisfaction and mental health because it reduces their parenting stress (Cooper et al. 2009; Hofferth and Anderson 2003). For example, mothers who re-partner may be able to spend more time on enjoyable and rewarding activities with their children (Harkness 2016a; Meier et al. 2016). Furthermore, due to the new partner's financial resources, mothers may be able to reduce their working hours (Koster et al. 2021). These observations suggest that the effects of different types of resources on single mothers' life satisfaction and

mental health are strongly interrelated. Another social resource could be the reduction in housework. However, most studies on this topic compared housework in the first and a subsequent union. Both Beblo and Solaz (2020) and Ophir (2021) found only small decreases in time spent on housework from the first to a subsequent union.

The third component of the resource model is represented by emotional support. According to this, the emotional warmth and sexual intimacy of a romantic relationship positively affect the mother's life satisfaction and mental health (Ivanova et al. 2013; Perelli-Harris et al. 2018). These effects may be particularly pronounced during or following stressful periods (Kalmijn 2017), such as single motherhood. Langlais et al. (2016) identified emotional resources as a driver of re-partnering effects, showing positive re-partnering effects for high-quality relationships only and negative effects for low-quality relationships.

Thus, following the assumptions of the resource model, re-partnering is expected to have positive effects on single mothers' life satisfaction and mental health.

*Hypothesis 2: Re-partnering brings additional resources to a single mother's household, which improves her life satisfaction and mental health.*

#### *Crisis model*

Contrary to the assumptions of the resource model, it has been argued that re-partnering can have a negative impact on single mothers' life satisfaction and mental health. One argument is that re-partnering may drain the resources of a single mother (Hughes and Waite 2009) if, for example, she must make a residential move (Cooper et al. 2009; Sweeney 2007) or is in an unstable relationship that drains rather than adds to her emotional and financial resources (Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019). Re-partnering may also negatively affect single mothers' life satisfaction and mental health due to the role of children in stepfamily-like contexts, which can lead to role conflicts and strains (Lansford et al. 2001; Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019; van der Wiel et al. 2020). Direct conflicts may arise between the mother and the child, as a new partner may distract the mother from spending time with the child (Koster et al. 2021) and the mother-child relationship may lose closeness and warmth as the new partner also demands emotional attention (Beck et al. 2010). Assuming that this has a negative impact on the mother because of interrelations between maternal and child health, this hypothesis contradicts the resource model's social support component. In addition, there is a risk of conflict between the child and the new partner (De Graaf and Kalmijn

2003), which could lead to increased stress (Cooper et al. 2009) and reduced parenting opportunities (Koster et al. 2021), and thus to lower life satisfaction and mental health for the mother. In addition, the social stress model suggests that partnership changes are associated with upheavals in family roles and routines, and are therefore particularly stressful life events for all family members. Thus, when a single mother re-partners, it can negatively affect the life satisfaction and mental health of all of the individuals involved (Beck et al. 2010; Osborne et al. 2012).

According to the crisis model, re-partnering is expected to have a negative impact on the life satisfaction and mental health of single mothers.

*Hypothesis 3: Re-partnering is associated with potential conflicts and burdens that can cause single mothers' life satisfaction and mental health to deteriorate.*

However, following Buehler et al. (1986), we do not view these two approaches as diametrically opposed. Instead, we assume that re-partnering can lead to both resource gains and crises that produce both positive and negative effects. Through additional analyses of the contributions of potential mediators, which include both resource- and crisis-related variables, we can empirically highlight which of these processes predominates.

### **The German and British institutional contexts**

Beyond these assumptions about the individual effects of re-partnering, all single mothers are involved in macro contexts at the national level, which are characterized by different welfare state regulations and family policies. There is a growing interest in research on the moderating effects of national institutional contexts on re-partnering effects in general (Feldhaus and Preetz 2021; Gałezewska et al. 2017; Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019). Various macro-level factors could influence re-partnering behavior, which, in turn, affects the stability of re-partnering relationships. Generally, negative re-partnering effects (crisis model) are more pronounced in unstable re-partnered relationships, while more benefits are gained from additional resources in stable re-partnered relationships (see Perelli-Harris and Lyons-Amos 2015; Pevalin and Ermisch 2004; Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019). The comparison between Germany and the UK is particularly appropriate given their welfare-stated related differences in family policies (Thévenon 2011). The incidence of single mothers is similar, with around 10% of all families (excluding single households) in each country consisting of a single mother and her children in 2020 (Office for National Statistics 2021; Statistisches Bundesamt 2021).

The state-level moderating factor most extensively addressed in research is the welfare state context and the corresponding family policies. By providing varying degrees of support and incentives, these regulations can shape single mothers' need to re-partner. It may be assumed that in countries with more welfare state support for single mothers, the pressure to re-partner to gain access to financial resources is lower (Pollmann-Schult 2018). For example, tax disadvantages for dual-earner couples may encourage single mothers to remain single to maintain their eligibility for state benefits (Perelli-Harris et al. 2018). Other family policies that could influence single mothers' re-partnering behavior are those related to the reconciliation of work and family life (Harkness 2016a), including regulations on single mothers' labor market participation (Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019).

Although the German system is still considered a male-breadwinner model because it offers tax advantages for households with a high and a low earner (Burstrom et al. 2010; Perelli-Harris et al. 2018; Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019) that discourage women from working (Cooke 2006), it is important to note that in Germany, financial support for all families – including single-mother families – is above the OECD average (Thévenon 2011). During the 1990s and 2000s, several labor market and family policy reforms were introduced that included a shift away from family cash benefits and towards more in-kind benefits and employment incentives (Zagel et al. 2021). The British welfare state is defined as a liberal market economy (Schmitt 2012) with minimal state intervention based on the premise that family support and childcare are private matters (Burstrom et al. 2010; McLean 2014). In the early 2000s, the UK introduced a reform called “New Deal for Lone Parents,” which explicitly sought to encourage single parents to enter the labor market (Gregg et al. 2009; Harkness 2016b). Nevertheless, the employment rate of single mothers has been higher in Germany than in the UK since at least 2005 (OECD 2021). In addition, state-provided family benefits are higher in Germany than in the UK, and net childcare costs in Germany are among the lowest in the OECD, while they are among the highest in the UK (OECD 2021). Maternity leave policies are also more generous in Germany, as paid maternity leave and paid parental home care leave for mothers are longer and the average payment rate is almost twice as high in Germany as in the UK (OECD 2021).

It thus appears that overall, family policies for single mothers are more generous in Germany, and that, especially in terms of financial resources, single mothers in the UK fare worse than single



mothers in Germany. These observations suggest two competing hypotheses. On the one hand, British single mothers may face greater pressure find a new partner to compensate for their lack of financial resources, which could lead to more unstable re-partnering behavior, as shown by Reck-siedler and Bernardi (2019). This behavior could, in turn, amplify the effects of emerging crises and resource drain. We therefore expect re-partnering effects to be positive in Germany, and to be weaker or negative in the UK. On the other hand, given the weaker position of single mothers in the UK, re-partnering could have stronger positive effects on their life satisfaction and mental health. Accordingly, we expect positive re-partnering effects to be larger among mothers in the UK than in Germany.

*Hypothesis 4: Due to differences in family policies, the effects of re-partnering on life satisfaction and mental health among single mothers are strong in Germany, but are weaker or negative in the UK.*

*Hypothesis 5: Due to their greater need to re-partner, re-partnering has stronger positive effects on life satisfaction and mental health among single mothers in the UK than in Germany.*

## **Data and method**

### **Data**

We use comparable data sources for both countries. For Germany, we use data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP). For the UK, we use data from the British Household Panel Study (BHPS) and the subsequent UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS). SOEP is a large representative national panel study of private households in Germany that has been conducted annually since 1984 (Wagner et al. 2007). BHPS is an annual survey of a nationally representative sample of households that began in 1991. Starting in 2009, this survey evolved into UKHLS. We followed recommendations to harmonize the data sources provided by the UK Data Service (University of Essex 2022).

The data are perfectly suited to address our research question. First, both surveys cover very long time periods, which allows us to capture both the transitions of entry into single motherhood and re-partnering and the trajectories of life satisfaction and mental health around these transitions. For the German context, we can consider data from the entire survey period from 1984 to 2020, while for the UK, we can consider the period from 1996 to 2020, since key indicators for our analyses

were only surveyed from 1996 onwards. Second, the data provide detailed socio-demographic individual and household information on single mothers, their children, new and ex-partners, and children of new and ex-partners. Thus, we have access to accurate information on household composition at any point in time. Third, the data provide information that is comparable across national contexts on life satisfaction and mental health, as well as on variables that we include to test the mechanisms driving the re-partnering effects.

From these data, we use two samples for our analyses. To compare re-partnered and single mothers, we observe the transition of women into singlehood and then follow both those who re-partnered and those who remained single over a five-year period. This *Sample A* consists of 2,502 individuals, of whom 748 re-partnered, with a total of 14,156 person-years observed. In addition, we examine the effects of re-partnering transitions using *Sample B*, which includes all women for whom the transition from the single motherhood period to a re-partnered period can be traced. This sample consists of 1,675 individuals with a total of 7,556 person-years observed. Overall, the distributions for the outcome variables and the different socio-demographic characteristics for the two samples are similar.

## **Variables**

### *Re-partnering*

The key variable in our analyses is the transition from being a single mother to being a re-partnered mother. We define single mothers as women who share their household with their biological children, at least one of whom is underage. We define a re-partnering event as the year in which, after a period of single motherhood, a new male partner of the mother enters the household. We thus define a re-partnered period as the years in which this partner continues to share the household with the mother and her children.

### *Life satisfaction and mental health*

Our outcomes are maternal life satisfaction and mental health. We focus on both indicators to account for differences between dimensions of life satisfaction and mental health (Headey et al. 1993) that cannot be accounted for by combining the two concepts into a common score of “well-being” (see Demo and Acock 1996; Spanier and Furstenberg 1982). We aim to estimate the effects on both outcomes more precisely by considering the concepts separately. In doing so, we follow previous research on the effects of re-partnering on life satisfaction (Glenn 1981; Gloor et al. 2021;

Pollmann-Schult 2018) or mental health (Barrett 2000; Hiyoshi et al. 2015; Pevalin and Ermisch 2004), and thus offer a comparative perspective within a single study.

In the German sample, respondents were asked annually “How satisfied are you with your life, all things considered?” Responses ranged from 0 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied). In the British sample, life satisfaction was measured by the item “Please choose the number which you feel best describes how dissatisfied or satisfied you are with the following aspects of your current situation: Your life overall.” Responses range from 1 (completely dissatisfied) to 7 (completely satisfied). To compare the variables, we rescaled the British items to a range of 0 to 10. This item has been surveyed since 1996.

The SF-12 questionnaire contains a battery of 12 questions on eight dimensions of health-related quality of life: physical functioning, role physical, bodily pain, general health perception, energy/vitality, social functioning, role emotional, and mental health (Andersen et al. 2007). Principal component analysis is used to assign the eight subscales to one of two factors, one of which is the mental health scale (MCS-12). Information on mental health has been collected biennially in the German data since 2002 and annually in the British data since 2009.

#### *Potential mediators*

We examine potential mediators of re-partnering. We only include variables that are similarly measured in the German and British samples. First, we test two income-related variables: quintiles of monthly household net income and income satisfaction. These variables capture financial resources, which, according to the resource model, increase through re-partnering. This effect should, in turn, explain increased life satisfaction. In addition to quintiles, we tested other ways of measuring household income (continuous net household income, terciles, quartiles, net household income adjusted for household size, logarithmic income measures, poverty line of less than 60% of year-specific median household income), and found that their effects as potential mediators largely corresponded to those of the income quintiles. Additionally, we considered previous findings showing that individuals may be unaware of their position in the income distribution (Engelhardt and Wagener 2018), and that subjective social status also affects health and well-being (Präg et al. 2016). Since specific questions on the income distribution position were not asked in the panel in either dataset, we examine satisfaction with income using a subjective measure as another potential mediator. In the German sample, the question “How satisfied are you with your

household income?” is measured on a scale from 0 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied). In the UK sample, the question “How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects of your current situation? The income of your household” is measured on a scale from 0 (not satisfied at all) to 7 (completely satisfied), which we rescaled to a range from 0 to 10.

Furthermore, we consider the time spent on housework as a reflection of social resources, in line with the resource model. The German data provide annual information on the average number of hours per working day and the UK data provide the average number of hours per week.

In addition, we consider potential mediators that might capture the crisis model. First, we include residential moves. This is a dummy that indicates whether the mother’s address had changed from the previous year. Based on research showing that residential moves negatively affect the health of children in stepfamilies, we hypothesize that a residential move in the course of a re-partnering transition is a potential source of intrafamilial conflict. Another crisis-related indicator we consider to be a potential mediator of the negative impact of re-partnering is whether the partner’s children also join the new household. Although we expect this to occur only rarely, given that in both Germany and the UK children usually live with the mother after parental separation, we nevertheless see a situation in which the mother’s children have to deal with other children in the household in addition to the mother’s new partner as a potential source of conflict. We thus include dummy-coded indicators showing whether children of the new partner moved into the household in the course of re-partnering.

### *Controls*

We identify the mother’s age, the age of the youngest child, and the calendar year as potential confounders of the relationship between re-partnering and life satisfaction and between re-partnering and mental health. Research has shown that age selects individuals into different family types, as younger women are more likely to be successful in the re-partnering market (Sharma 2015; Teachman and Heckert 1985); and into health outcomes, since a general decrease in life satisfaction with age has been shown by de Ree and Alessie (2011), challenging the frequently reported U-shaped association (e.g., Blanchflower and Oswald 2008). Regarding the children’s age, there is some evidence in prior research that the older the youngest child is, the better the mother’s mental health is (Simon and Caputo 2019). In addition, the literature suggests that the age of the youngest child may have a negative impact on the mother’s likelihood of re-partnering and the

parents' re-partnering behavior (Koo et al. 1984). Previous research has also shown period effects of the calendar year on both health outcomes, with more recent cohorts showing poorer mental health (Bell 2014), and family trajectories becoming more complex over time (Van Winkle 2017).

Including these covariates as continuous variables in longitudinal regression models raises the problem of full collinearity, which many studies addressed by including single-year dummies in the models (e.g., Myrskylä and Margolis 2014). Since mental health in Germany was measured biannually, we include dummy variables capturing two-year intervals. Additional analyses with single-year dummies in all models showed that the results are robust to changes in the categories.

### Method

For all analyses, we use panel fixed-effects models with standard errors clustered at the individual level. We rely on two different model designs. The first captures the trajectories of life satisfaction and mental health for both the comparison of re-partnered and non-re-partnered single mothers and the focus on the re-partnering transition. Following the modification of Clark et al. (2008) by Myrskylä and Margolis (2014), we are able to observe changes that are short term (one to two years) and long-term (three to five years). This is modeled as

$$Y_{it} = \alpha_i + \theta_0 E_{0,it} + \theta_{1-2} A_{1-2,it} + \theta_{3-5} A_{3-5,it} + \boldsymbol{\beta}' \mathbf{X}_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

where  $Y_{it}$  is either life satisfaction or mental health for individual  $i$  at time  $t$ ;  $\alpha_i$  is the individual fixed effect; and  $\mathbf{X}$  is a vector of covariates.  $E_0$  and  $A_k$  indicate different time points on the trajectories. For the comparison of re-partnered and single mothers,  $E_0$  indicates the event of entry into single motherhood and  $A_k$  captures the effects  $k$  years after the entry into single motherhood. When focusing only on the re-partnered mothers,  $E_0$  indicates the event of re-partnering and  $A_k$  captures the effects  $k$  years after the re-partnering event. All coefficients  $\theta_k$  indicate effects relative to the reference of life satisfaction or mental health up to two years before the event.

To investigate the mechanisms that could explain the effects of re-partnering on the outcome variables, we rely on a different fixed-effects model capturing the effect of a dummy variable (single vs. re-partnered). This is modeled as

$$Y_{it} = \alpha_i + \theta_0 P_{it} + \boldsymbol{\beta}' \mathbf{X}_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

where  $P$  refers to the entire period in which the mother is re-partnered with the coefficient comparing the re-partnered period with the preceding period of singlehood. To study the influence of different variables as potential mediators, we successively include each potential mediator and compare each model with the base effect of re-partnering.

## Results

### Descriptive results

As shown in Table 1, Sample A, which we use to compare mothers who stayed single and mothers who re-partnered, consists of 1,559 individuals from Germany and 943 from the UK. Of these, 28.4% in Germany and 23.3% in the UK re-partnered within five years of entering single motherhood. Sample B, which is restricted to individuals with an observation of their transition into a re-partnering relationship, consists of 1,119 individuals from Germany and 556 from the UK. The mother's age, the number of children, and the age of the youngest child do not differ substantially between the two samples. On average at the time of re-partnering, mothers were 34 to 36 years old and had two children, of whom the youngest was slightly older than age seven in Germany and about age six in the UK. Mothers who re-partnered were five years younger when they entered single motherhood than mothers who remained single. Mothers who did not re-partner were slightly older than mothers who re-partnered when their first child was born. The number of children at the time of entry into single motherhood did not differ greatly between these two groups. However, the age of the youngest child at the time of entry into single motherhood was about two years younger among mothers who re-partnered than among mothers who remained single.

Table 1: Descriptive characteristics of single mothers in Germany and the UK

	Sample A <sup>a</sup>				Sample B <sup>b</sup>			
	Germany		UK		Germany		UK	
	Mean/ %	SD	Mean/ %	SD	Mean/ %	SD	Mean/ %	SD
Re-partnered within 5 years (%)	28.4		23.3					
Age at re-partnering	35.3	6.6	34.0	7.5	35.7	7.8	33.5	8.0
Age at entry into single motherhood if re-partnered	33.2	6.6	31.8	7.4				
Age at entry into single motherhood if not re-partnered	37.8	7.5	36.9	8.4				
Age at first birth if re-partnered	23.8	4.3	24.5	5.3				
Age at first birth if not re-partnered	25.2	5.2	26.0	6.0				

Number of children at re-partnering	1.8	0.9	1.8	0.9	1.6	0.8	1.8	0.9
Number of children at entry into single motherhood if re-partnered	1.7	0.8	1.7	0.8				
Number of children at entry into single motherhood if not re-partnered	1.7	0.9	1.8	0.9				
Age of youngest child at re-partnering	7.2	4.8	5.9	4.4	7.4	5.1	6.4	4.9
Age of youngest child at entry into single motherhood if re-partnered	6.1	3.9	4.7	3.8				
Age of youngest child at entry into single motherhood if not re-partnered	8.2	4.9	7.0	4.9				
N(individuals)		1,559	943		1,119		556	
N(person-years)		8,959	5,197		5,593		1,963	

*Source:* SOEP (1984-2020) (Germany), BHPS/UKHLS (1996-2020) (UK)

<sup>a</sup>Restricted to individuals with observation of entry into single motherhood

<sup>b</sup>Restricted to individuals with observation of re-partnering transition

Table 2 presents mean differences of the outcome and mediator variables. These results are based on Sample B, consisting of individuals with observations of the re-partnering transition. Mean differences are pooled across all person-years in this sample. In the German sample, both life satisfaction and mental health SF-12 scores are significantly higher for person-years in which mothers were re-partnered. In the British sample, life satisfaction is also significantly higher for the re-partnered person-years, but no significant difference in mental health can be observed. In both countries, the values of monthly net household income are significantly higher in the re-partnered person-years than in the observations during singlehood, as are the subjective values of satisfaction with household income. Hours of housework are significantly higher for re-partnered mothers in both countries, which contradicts the assumption that having a new partner should lead to a decrease in housework. Instead, the results suggest that having a new partner required additional resources from the mother, who remained responsible for the housework. Additionally, Table 2 shows that the number of mothers for whom re-partnering was associated with a residential move is about seven percentage points higher in Germany than in the UK. Lastly, it is shown that in more than 10% of re-partnering relationships of single mothers in the UK, at least one additional child of the new partner joined the household. In Germany, this occurred in less than 4% of re-partnering relationships.

Table 2: Mean differences in outcome and potential mediator variables for single mothers who re-partnered (based on Sample B)

	Germany			UK		
	Single	Re-partnered	Diff.	Single	Re-partnered	Diff.
Life satisfaction	6.9	7.2	***	6.5	6.8	***
Mental health (SF-12)	46.4	48.0	**	46.3	45.7	
Income	1,654.0	2,727.9	***	1,157.7	1,980.2	***
Income satisfaction	5.1	6.1	***	4.5	5.3	***
Housework hours <sup>a</sup>	2.4	2.7	***	16.5	17.1	
Residential move		31.4			24.8	
New children in HH		3.6			10.8	
N (individuals)	1,119	1,119		556	556	
N (person-years)	1,784	3,809		686	1,277	

Source: SOEP (1984-2020) (Germany), BHPS/UKHLS (1996-2020) (UK)

<sup>a</sup>SOEP: daily hours of housework; BHPS/UKHLS: weekly hours of housework

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001

### Comparison of single and re-partnered mothers

Figure 1 shows the predicted life satisfaction and mental health trajectories before and after entry into single motherhood based on Sample A. Coefficients are presented in the online appendix. Prior to their entry into single motherhood, re-partnered mothers in Germany (Figure 1A) have slightly higher levels of life satisfaction than stable single mothers, which is in line with Hypothesis 1, but the differences are not significant. However, significant differences in the predicted life satisfaction between re-partnered and stably single mothers are found from one year after entering singlehood until up to five years after. Although the decrease in life satisfaction attributable to entering single motherhood is followed by an increase in both groups in subsequent years, the increase is steeper for re-partnered mothers. This indicates that re-partnering positively affects life satisfaction among German mothers.

For mental health in Germany (Figure 1B), we find that although there is no discernible difference between stably single and re-partnered mothers before entering singlehood, the drop in the year of transition is less severe for those who re-partnered. However, these differences are not significant. We observe that for both groups, mental health improved in the first two years after they entered single motherhood, with the improvement being slightly greater for the re-partnered group, which results in the difference between the two groups being close to significance one to two years after the transition. Up to three to five years after entry into single motherhood a slight decline is found for both groups. Both differences in life satisfaction at different points in time within each country



and differences between countries at the same points in time are not significant at any point in time.

Figure 1C shows that among British mothers, those who re-partnered had better life satisfaction prior to entering single motherhood, supporting Hypothesis 1. The difference between the two groups is not significant, but is more pronounced than in the German context. After a decline in the year of entry into single motherhood, both re-partnered and stably singles experienced an increase that was steeper for those who re-partnered: one to two years after entry into single motherhood, re-partnered mothers had significantly higher life satisfaction than mothers who remained single. For the period from three to five years after entry into single motherhood, re-partnered mothers still had higher life satisfaction than mothers who remained single, but the difference was no longer significant.

In the UK, the mental health of mothers who re-partnered and mothers who remained single does not differ significantly at any point in time (Figure 1D). In addition, the differences in the trajectories of the two groups are smaller in the UK than in Germany. The mental health of both re-partnered and stably single mothers was significantly higher in the two years following entry into single motherhood than in the year of entry.

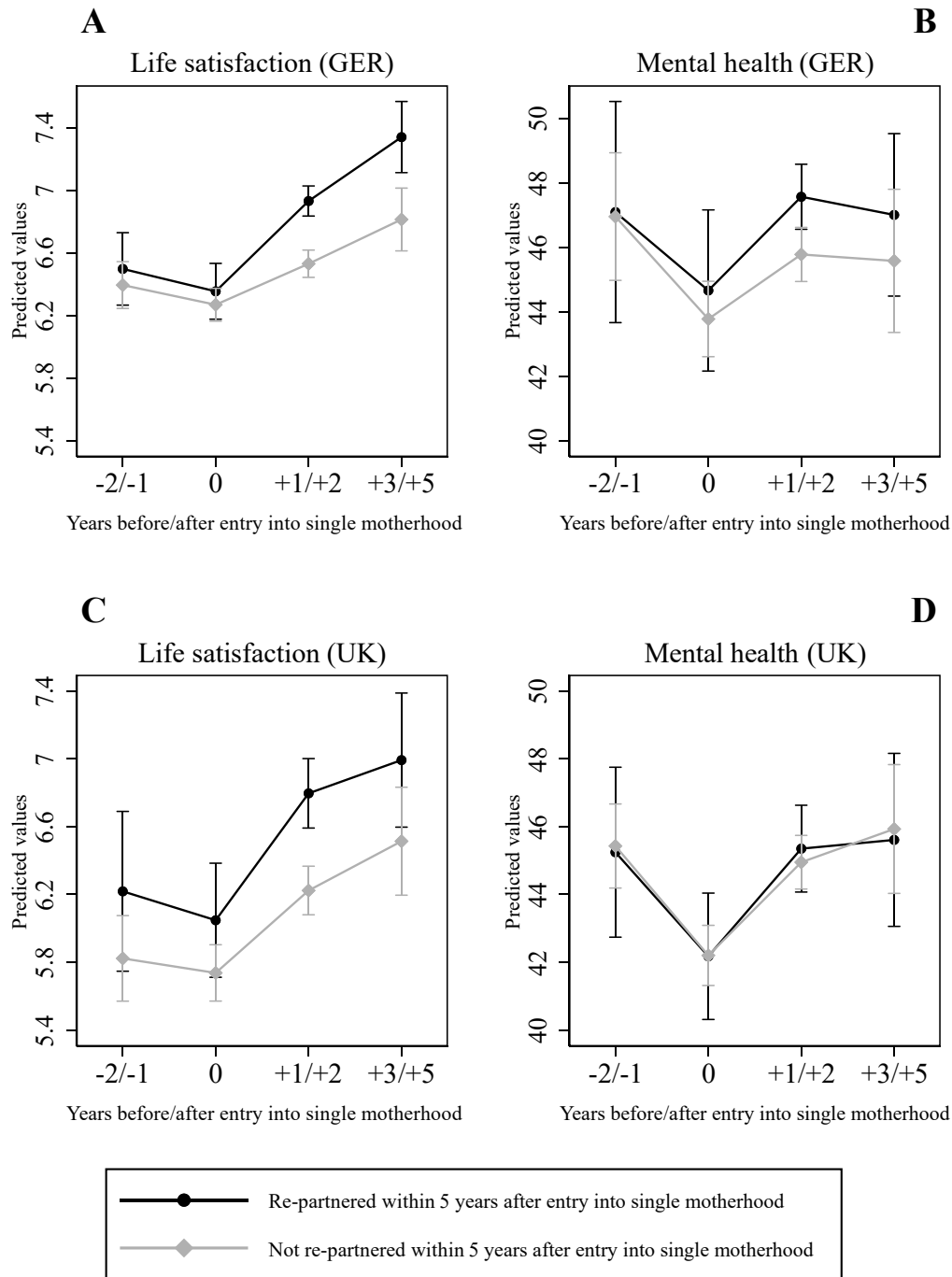


Figure 1: Life satisfaction and mental health trajectories before and after entry into single motherhood in Germany and UK

### Re-partnering transitions

Table 3 shows the effects of re-partnering on life satisfaction and mental health based on Sample A. The effect of the re-partnering period compared to the single period is positive and significant among German mothers, at 0.59 (95%-CI: 0.47;0.72). In the UK, we estimated a smaller

significant coefficient (0.33, 95%-CI: 0.03;0.62). Accordingly, re-partnering effects in both countries are consistent with Hypothesis 2 and contradict Hypothesis 3. Focusing on the trajectories, the effect in Germany in the year of re-partnering is 0.56 (95%-CI: 0.43;0.69), and it remains significant two years after re-partnering, at 0.36 (95%-CI: 0.16;0.56). After three years, the re-partnering effect becomes insignificant. In the UK, we estimated a significant effect of 0.38 (95%-CI: 0.07;0.70) in the year of re-partnering, while the effects are small and insignificant after the first year of re-partnering. The differences in effect sizes support the expectations of re-partnering being more beneficial for single mothers in Germany, as stated in Hypothesis 4.

The overall effect of re-partnering on mental health in Germany is positive with borderline significance ( $p < 0.10$ ), at 1.39 (95%-CI: -0.13;2.91). In the UK, the overall effect is negative and non-significant. Considering the trajectory coefficients, the effect of the first two years following re-partnering in Germany is positive but non-significant, and, while non-significant, becomes negative. In the UK, the coefficient for the year of re-partnering transition is negative and non-significant. In the following period, the negative effect is stronger, at -3.34 (95%-CI: -6.68;0.00) with borderline significance ( $p < 0.10$ ), and is even stronger but non-significant three to five years after re-partnering. Here as well, differences in the effects between Germany and UK are in line with Hypothesis 4.

Table 3: Fixed effects of re-partnering trajectories on life satisfaction and mental health (based on Sample B)

	Life satisfaction				Mental health (SF-12)			
	Germany		UK		Germany		UK	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Re-partnering dummy (Ref.: Not re-partnered)	0.59***		0.33*		1.39 <sup>†</sup>		-1.53	
	(0.06)		(0.15)		(0.78)		(1.14)	
Re-partnering trajectory (Ref.: -2/-1)								
0		0.56***		0.38*		0.98		-1.41
		(0.07)		(0.16)		(0.86)		(1.25)
+1/+2		0.36***		0.04		0.53		-3.34 <sup>†</sup>
		(0.10)		(0.23)		(1.32)		(1.70)
+3/+5		0.20		0.05		-0.54		-4.03
		(0.16)		(0.38)		(2.07)		(2.96)
Controls <sup>a</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N (person-years)	5,591	5,591	1,962	1,962	1,736	1,736	860	860
N (individuals)	1,119	1,119	556	556	804	804	322	322

Source: SOEP (1984-2020) (Germany), BHPS/UKHLS (1996-2020) (UK)

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; all standard errors clustered at the individual level; all models control for age, age of the youngest child, and calendar year

<sup>a</sup>Coefficients of control variables are shown in the online appendix (Table A2)

<sup>†</sup>p<0.10, \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001

The trajectories of the predicted values derived from these coefficients are presented in Figure 3. The life satisfaction trajectories show that for mothers in both countries, the lowest values are before the re-partnering event and the highest values are at the time of the event. In both contexts, a decline in life satisfaction follows the transition. For all time points modeled, the values are higher in Germany than in the UK. These differences were significant in the year of the re-partnering transition and one to two years afterwards, supporting Hypothesis 4.

Focusing on the mental health trajectories, we observe an increase in the German context between two to one years before re-partnering and in the year of the event. In subsequent years, mental health declines, resulting in values that are lower in the period three to five years after re-partnering than in the period two to one years before the transition. The trajectories for the UK show a relatively constant decline in mental health from two years before re-partnering until five years after the transition.

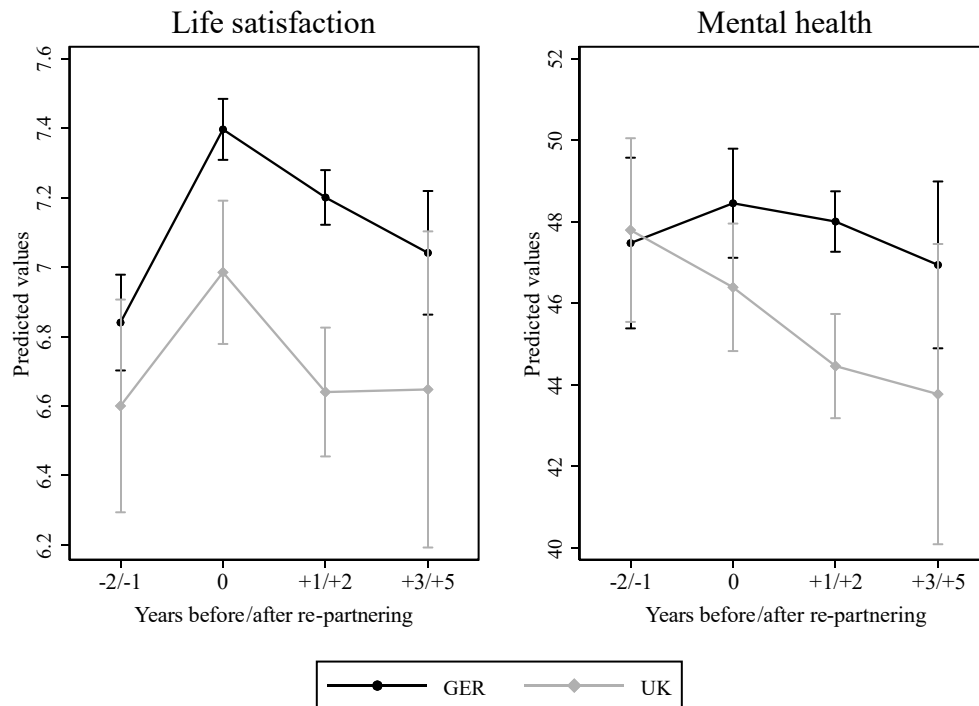


Figure 2: Life satisfaction and mental health trajectories before and after re-partnering in Germany and the UK (sample B)

## Mechanisms

The effects of the base model present the coefficients of the re-partnering dummy shown in Table 3. In order to identify the main factors driving the effects, we stepwise included different variables as covariates in the models. Figure 4 (coefficients are presented in Tables A3-A4 in the online appendix) shows that in Germany, the positive effect of re-partnering on life satisfaction is partially explained by household income, and an even greater share of the effect is explained by satisfaction with household income. While the effect of the base model is 0.59 (95%-CI: 0.47;0.72), it is 0.47 (95%-CI: 0.33;0.60) when household income is included and 0.40 (95%-CI: 0.28;0.52) when income satisfaction is included. Accordingly, household income reduces the re-partnering effect by approximately 20%, and income satisfaction reduces the re-partnering effect by approximately 32%, despite overlapping confidence intervals, which shows that income is a resource driving positive re-partnering effects (Hypothesis 2). However, the re-partnering effect on life satisfaction in Germany is hardly changed by the inclusion of the variables of hours of housework (0.59, 95%-CI: 0.48;0.72), residential move (0.62, 95%-CI: 0.48;0.76), and the new partner's children moving into the household (0.59, 95%-CI: 0.47;0.72). The inclusion of all potential mediator variables results in a re-partnering effect of 0.44 (95%-CI: 0.30;0.58), similar to that in the models including household income and satisfaction with income.

In the UK, the income-related variables are also the strongest drivers of the significant re-partnering effect among the variables we examine as potential mediators. The inclusion of either income variable takes away the statistical significance and the effect size of the initial significant re-partnering effect of 0.33 (95%-CI: 0.03;0.62), which is consistent with Hypothesis 2. Moreover, in the UK, the significant effects observed when hours of housework (0.33, 95%-CI: 0.03;0.62), residential move (0.39, 95%-CI: 0.06;0.71), or the new partner's children moving into the household (0.36, 95%-CI: 0.06;0.65) are included are very close to the effect of the base model. Including all potential mediator variables leads to an effect of 0.33 (95%-CI: -0.01;0.66) with borderline significance at  $p < 0.10$ .

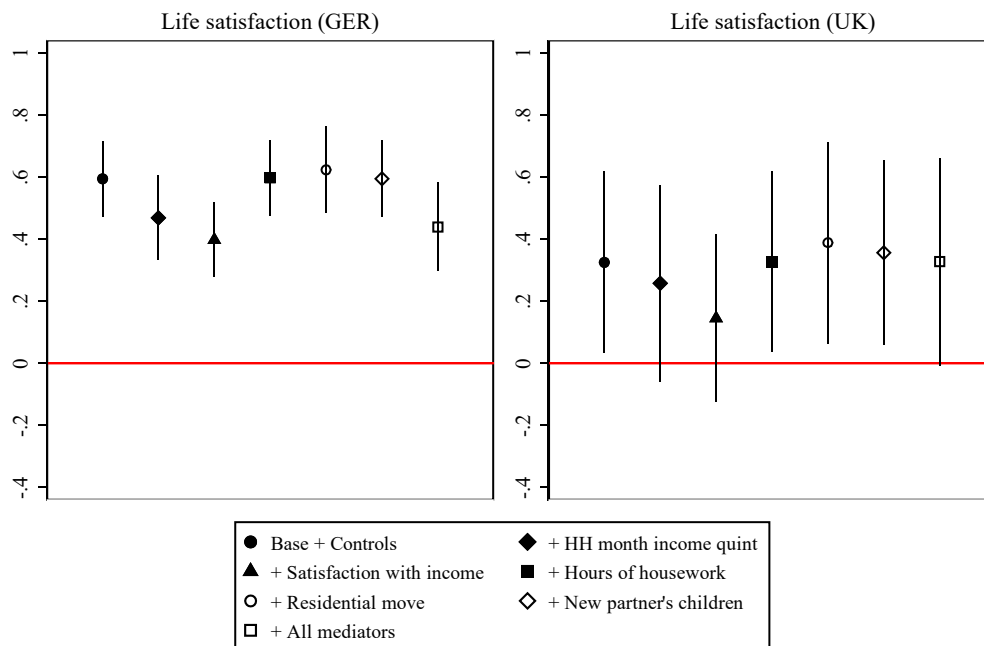


Figure 3: Inclusion of potential mediators of re-partnering effects on life satisfaction in Germany and the UK

The drivers of the effects are less systematic when the potential mediators are included in the models with mental health as the outcome. The borderline significant effect ( $p < 0.10$ ) of re-partnering on mental health in Germany of 1.39 increases to a significant effect of 1.81 when household income is included, contradicting Hypothesis 2. When the variable of either income satisfaction, hours of housework, residential move, or the new partner's children moving into the household is included, the initial effect size hardly changes and each re-partnering effect is non-significant. Moreover, including all potential mediator variables does not considerably change the re-partnering effect.

In the UK, the effect of re-partnering on mental health in the base model is -1.53 and non-significant. When household income is included as a potential mediator, the effect becomes more negative, reaching a borderline significant ( $p < 0.10$ ) effect of -2.09. This indicates that household income is positively influenced by re-partnering, which, in turn, has a positive effect on mental health. The inclusion of satisfaction with household income, hours of housework, and the new partner's children moving into the household hardly changes the re-partnering effect. The residential move indicator changes the re-partnering effect to an effect of borderline significance ( $p < 0.10$ ) of -2.05. This indicates that a residential move positively influences mental health, and accordingly

changes the re-partnering effect to an extent comparable to that of the effect of increased household income. The inclusion of all potential mediator variables results in a re-partnering effect of -2.25 with borderline statistical significance ( $p < 0.10$ ).

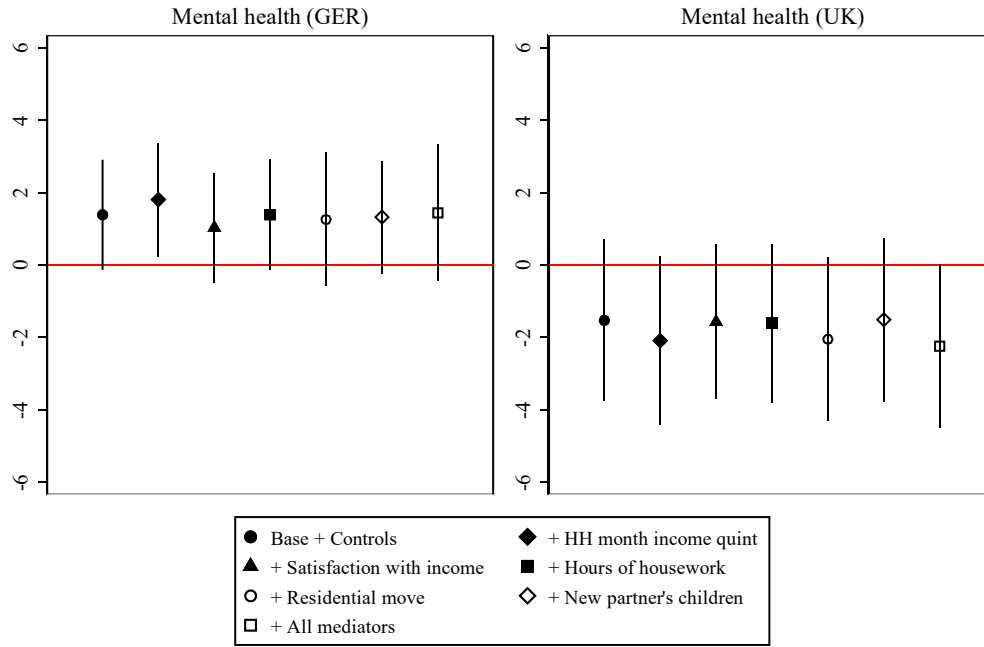


Figure 4: Inclusion of potential mediators of re-partnering effects on mental health in Germany and the UK

## Discussion

In modern societies, single mothers are increasingly re-partnering. Various theoretical approaches to studying this phenomenon have been proposed in the literature, including those that examine the relationship between re-partnering and single mothers' health and life satisfaction by comparing re-partnered former single mothers with stably single mothers, and those that investigate the effects of the re-partnering transition and the main drivers of such effects. We provide the first study that addressed all three of these questions and additionally examined contextual differences in the effects in Germany and the UK.

Our analyses yielded three main findings. First, in both Germany and the UK, life satisfaction was higher among re-partnered mothers than among stably single mothers before entering singlehood. This is consistent with previous research suggesting that there are positive health selection effects on re-partnering behavior in general (Pevalin and Ermisch 2004), and among single mothers in

particular (Recksiedler and Bernardi 2019). However, we found no differences in mental health trajectories prior to entry into singlehood.

Second, our results showed that re-partnering had positive effects on mothers' life satisfaction in both countries. In Germany, the overall effect of re-partnering on life satisfaction was more than four times larger than the effect of having a first childbirth (Pollmann-Schult 2014), and was more than twice as large as the effect of having a non-co-residing partner (Stutzer and Frey 2006). Life satisfaction trajectories in both countries showed a strong increase in the year of re-partnering, followed by a decline, which reflects a "honeymoon effect" (Kalmijn 2017, p. 1612) of re-partnering. Significant positive overall effects of re-partnering on life satisfaction are consistent with the resource model (see Gloor et al. 2021; Williams and Umberson 2004). Differing effect sizes depending on the national context support our assumption that positive re-partnering effects are larger in Germany than in the UK because of their different welfare state settings (Thévenon 2011).

In Germany, the positive re-partnering effect on mental health was slightly stronger than the effect of non-co-residential partnering as measured by SF-12 (Otterbach et al. 2021). In the UK, the trend of the mental health trajectories was negative, which could be explained by potential conflicts and burdens associated with re-partnering. The negative overall effect of re-partnering on mental health found in the UK contrasts with the positive effect of marriage on the mental health SF-12 score reported in previous research on the UK (Kamerāde et al. 2019) and indicates that the endowment of social resources is lower in re-partnering than in first-time marriages and marriage-like cohabitations in the UK.

Third, our results revealed the income-related variables of household income and income satisfaction as the main drivers of positive re-partnering effects. Especially in life satisfaction, we found that the inclusion of household income (and of income satisfaction in Germany) greatly reduced the magnitude of the re-partnering coefficients, which is in line with the resource model (see De Graaf and Kalmijn 2003). Although changes in mental health were less clearly consistent with the resource model, income satisfaction explained a large share of the re-partnering effect on mental health in Germany, while this was not evident for the UK.

Our analyses revealed much clearer patterns for life satisfaction than for mental health. One potential explanation for the weaker expression of the trajectories and effects in Germany is the sensitivity of life satisfaction to changes by short-term events. This may have been reflected in the



magnitude of the increase and the subsequent decline around the re-partnering transition (see Zimmermann and Easterlin 2006). Furthermore, life satisfaction has been defined as a dimension of mental health that differs from other dimensions, such as anxiety (Headey et al. 1993). However, the negative mental health trajectories observed in the UK may be related to lower levels of state support for single mothers. Furthermore, we did not expect the non-income indicators to have so little explanatory power as potential mediators. An exception was the residential move variable in the UK, which influenced the re-partnering effect on mental health to a similar extent as the household income variable. As Nieuwenhuis and Zagel (2022) showed that single mothers in the UK have a significantly higher likelihood of experiencing housing deprivation than single mothers in Germany, single mothers in the UK could perceive a residential move as an opportunity to gain access to better housing. Furthermore, our failure to find that hours of housework acted as a mediator, in accordance with the resource model, was already indicated in the descriptive comparisons of single and re-partnered mothers, which showed that the number of hours spent doing housework was significantly higher among re-partnered mothers than among single mothers. Because previous research on housework and re-partnering focused on comparing the first union with a subsequent union, our findings are difficult to fit into existing research. However, recent research indicates that there is only a small decrease in housework between the first and a subsequent union, which suggests that the gendered division of housework persists in re-partnering relationships (Beblo and Solaz 2020; Ophir 2021). This is supported by our findings.

The strength of our analyses lies in the long-term panel data and the use of fixed-effects analyses, which allowed us to control for time-invariant unobserved heterogeneity. Nevertheless, we encountered some methodological issues that we addressed through sensitivity analyses. First, we did not explicitly consider single mothers by childbirth (see Bastin 2016; Kühn et al. 2022). Our data show that 11% of all single mothers in the German sample and 10% in the British sample entered single motherhood without a partner in the household. In the German context, this share corresponds closely to that reported in previous studies based on SOEP data (1984-2009), which showed that 10% of single mothers are single at the time of childbirth (Ott et al. 2011). In the UK context, the percentage in our data is slightly lower than the 15% reported by official statistics in 2020 (Office for National Statistics 2020). As previous research has shown that the effects of childbirth on life satisfaction and mental health (Hansen 2012; Myrskylä and Margolis 2014) differ from the effects of separation (Leopold 2018; van Scheppingen and Leopold 2019), when

comparing re-partnered and stably single mothers, we only considered mothers who became single due to a partner leaving the joint household; i.e., single mothers by separation. In addition, we conducted robustness checks on the trajectories around the re-partnering transition and mediating effects based on a sample of mothers for whom entry into singlehood by separation could be traced (see Appendix). Neither the trajectories nor the mediation analyses revealed substantially different patterns. Second, when examining the transitions to re-partnering, we did not consider how long the mothers were single before re-partnering. Although previous research suggests that the duration of single motherhood should not alter the effects of re-partnering on our outcomes (Gloor et al. 2021), we conducted robustness checks on this. The results (see Appendix) showed trajectories and coefficients similar to those in our main analyses, supporting the robustness of our findings.

Beyond the scope of our study, three limitations deserve further attention. First, we did not distinguish between marriage and cohabitation in our analyses, either at the separation causing entry into single motherhood or at the re-partnering. This issue has been addressed in previous research (Bastin 2019; Perelli-Harris et al. 2018), which argues for distinguishing between marriage and cohabitation when studying (re-)partnering behavior. Moreover, our focus on joint households did not allow us to obtain information on how re-partnering into living-apart-together relationships (see van der Wiel et al. 2020), in which certain resources are shared, affected the outcomes. Second, we did not consider in our analyses whether the re-partnering event captured co-residing with a new partner or reconciliation with the former partner, even though the importance of the latter has been demonstrated in research several times (Kiernan et al. 2011; Nepomnyaschy and Teitler 2013). Third, we did not distinguish between West and East Germany. Given the small number of observations in East Germany, doing so would have greatly reduced our sample size, and would have resulted in the analysis of potential mediators in particular having little explanatory power. As there are still East-West differences, especially in the prevalence and importance of cohabitation, even after German reunification in 1990 (Perelli-Harris et al. 2018), distinguishing between East and West could reveal further contextual moderating effects when examining the effects of re-partnering.

The results of our study offer promising pathways for gaining a better understanding of the association between re-partnering and single mothers' life satisfaction and mental health from a cross-comparative perspective. Our results provide evidence for both Germany and the UK that re-

partnering has a positive impact on life satisfaction among single mothers, at least in the short term, partly due to mothers' increased household income, and an improvement in their subjective income satisfaction. These results should encourage policy-makers to consider the extent to which increased financial support can benefit single mothers even in the absence of a new partner. The differences between Germany and the UK also suggest that more generous family policies and other welfare state measures in Germany might be associated with less pressure to re-partner, which may increase the stability of partnerships, making re-partnering less stressful for both mothers and their children. Accordingly, re-partnering effects on life satisfaction and mental health are more positive in Germany compared to the UK. Overall, our cross-comparative approach to comparing both single mothers and re-partnered mothers, and to examining re-partnering transitions across multiple time points, and potential drivers of these effects, provided a nuanced picture of the interplay of re-partnering and single mothers' life satisfaction and mental health trajectories.

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# Re-partnering and single mothers' mental health and life satisfaction trajectories

## Online Appendix

### **Main analyses:**

- Figure S1, Tables S1-S4

### **Robustness checks:**

- Observation of entry into singlehood by separation
  - Tables S5-S7
- Re-partnered within 5 years after entry into singlehood
  - Tables S8-S10

# 1 Main analyses

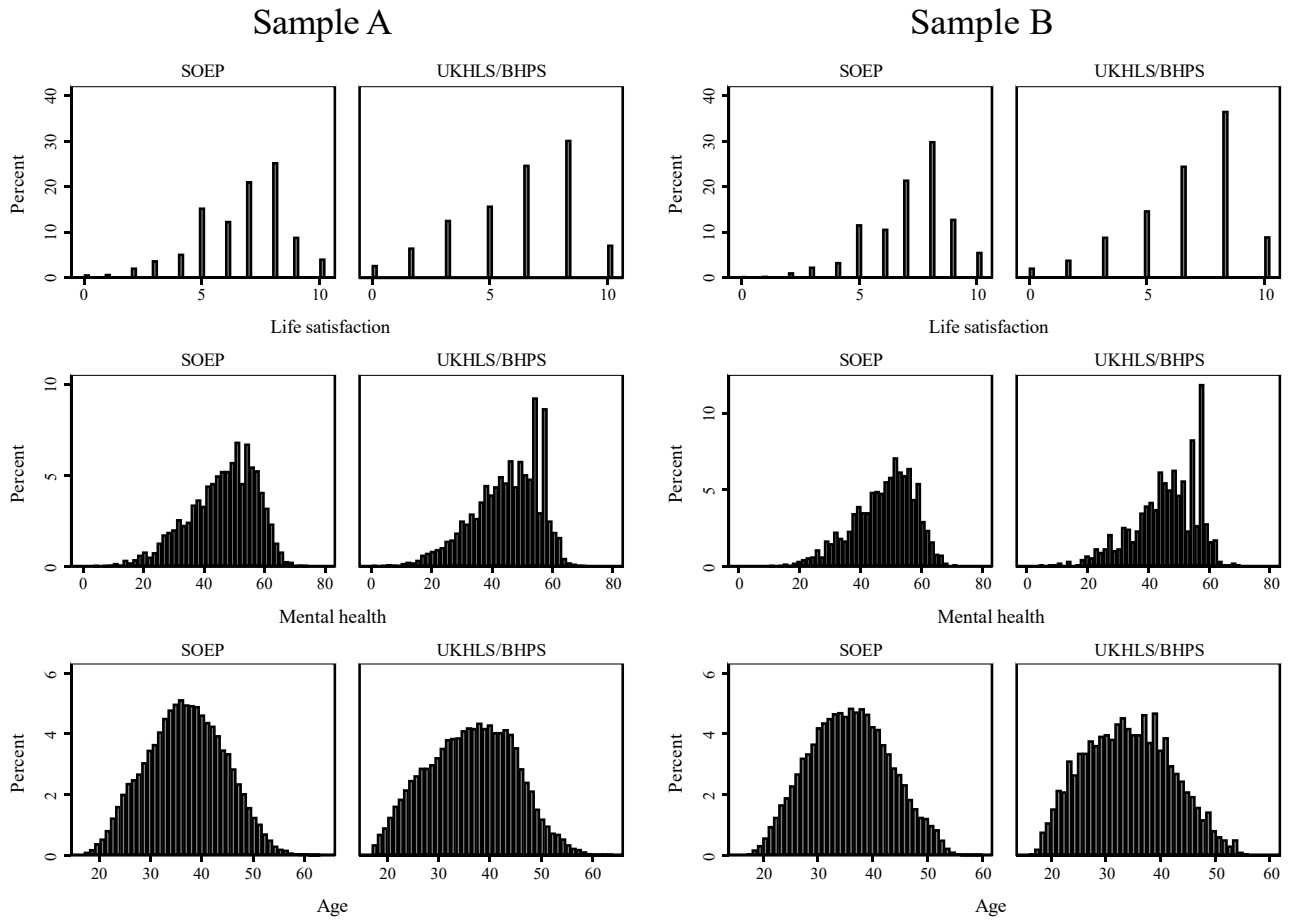


Figure S1: Distributions of outcomes and age

Table S1: Estimates of comparison of non-re-partnered and re-partnered mothers

Trajectory coefficient (Ref.: -2/-1)	Life satisfaction				Mental health (SF-12)			
	SOEP		BHPS/UKHLS		SOEP		BHPS/UKHLS	
	Not re-partnered	Re-partnered	Not re-partnered	Re-partnered	Not re-partnered	Re-partnered	Not re-partnered	Re-partnered
0	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.14 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.14)	-0.17 (0.24)	-3.18*** (0.90)	-2.43+ (1.45)	-3.23*** (0.73)	-3.07* (1.44)
+1/+2	0.14 (0.11)	0.43** (0.15)	0.40* (0.19)	0.58+ (0.29)	-1.18 (1.32)	0.47 (1.85)	-0.48 (0.97)	0.10 (1.62)
+3/+5	0.42* (0.17)	0.84*** (0.23)	0.69* (0.28)	0.77+ (0.42)	-1.38 (2.10)	-0.09 (2.97)	0.50 (1.55)	0.36 (2.44)
Age – Ref.: 16			Yes	Yes			Yes	
Age – Ref.: 18	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes
18			-1.31 (1.32)	2.18*** (0.42)			-13.19* (6.46)	
20	-0.91 (0.56)	0.83 (0.53)	-2.26+ (1.36)	0.80 (0.51)	2.90 (5.98)	9.82*** (2.81)	-16.65** (5.06)	-2.69 (2.04)
22	-1.48* (0.59)	0.39 (0.59)	-2.32+ (1.37)	0.78 (0.62)	-8.53 (12.11)	8.14* (3.21)	-18.62** (5.63)	-3.07 (3.20)
24	-1.43* (0.60)	-0.25 (0.63)	-2.49+ (1.44)	1.46+ (0.77)	-17.47 (17.67)	7.91* (3.93)	-17.01** (6.22)	2.36 (4.67)
26	-1.75** (0.63)	-0.23 (0.67)	-2.54+ (1.47)	1.21 (0.94)	-26.29 (23.59)	12.15* (4.92)	-20.02** (6.63)	1.22 (5.27)
28	-2.19** (0.67)	-0.50 (0.71)	-2.56+ (1.52)	1.42 (1.11)	-34.06 (29.36)	14.67* (6.12)	-20.20** (7.00)	-1.70 (6.60)
30	-2.20** (0.70)	-0.60 (0.77)	-2.96+ (1.57)	1.40 (1.23)	-44.02 (35.12)	17.66* (7.31)	-21.54** (7.42)	-3.40 (7.49)
32	-2.36** (0.74)	-0.91 (0.83)	-3.54* (1.63)	1.31 (1.41)	-49.08 (40.75)	17.05* (8.13)	-22.97** (7.69)	-2.47 (7.99)
34	-2.62*** (0.78)	-1.10 (0.88)	-3.47* (1.68)	1.84 (1.53)	-57.76 (46.55)	20.85* (9.12)	-25.02** (8.09)	-0.95 (9.28)
36	-2.45** (0.82)	-1.33 (0.94)	-3.76* (1.75)	1.25 (1.67)	-65.27 (52.25)	19.29+ (9.98)	-25.50** (8.56)	-1.88 (9.83)
38	-2.61** (0.86)	-1.31 (1.00)	-3.77* (1.80)	1.82 (1.81)	-72.09 (57.99)	20.95+ (10.85)	-25.06** (8.87)	1.02 (10.51)
40	-2.62** (0.89)	-1.55 (1.07)	-3.81* (1.87)	1.48 (1.96)	-78.09 (63.70)	19.90 (12.11)	-26.49** (9.26)	0.60 (11.55)
42	-2.63** (0.94)	-1.63 (1.13)	-3.97* (1.93)	1.90 (2.11)	-84.58 (69.43)	25.18+ (13.12)	-25.95** (9.59)	2.85 (12.32)
44	-2.43* (0.98)	-1.60 (1.21)	-4.09* (2.00)	2.48 (2.30)	-90.63 (75.13)	27.44* (13.68)	-24.34* (10.02)	3.46 (13.01)
46	-2.71** (1.02)	-1.83 (1.30)	-3.78+ (2.07)	2.95 (2.50)	-97.25 (80.87)	29.98* (14.98)	-23.37* (10.48)	4.49 (14.27)
48	-2.77* (1.08)	-2.13 (1.37)	-4.15+ (2.14)	2.39 (2.71)	-105.24 (86.60)	35.62* (15.73)	-23.14* (10.85)	4.57 (15.56)
50	-2.51* (1.14)	-1.80 (1.49)	-4.72* (2.22)	2.36 (2.86)	-110.60 (92.34)	32.97+ (17.24)	-24.21* (11.28)	2.70 (16.69)
52	-2.61* (1.20)	-1.91 (1.53)	-4.80* (2.34)	2.41 (3.08)	-116.98 (98.14)	39.55* (18.62)	-20.01+ (11.80)	1.83 (17.65)
54	-3.04* (1.33)	-2.37 (2.08)	-4.81+ (2.48)	1.14 (3.27)	-125.10 (103.90)	45.35* (21.68)	-22.27+ (12.45)	3.27 (18.71)
56	-2.58+ (1.37)	-0.64 (1.82)	-4.71+ (2.64)	2.66 (3.47)	-114.67 (109.64)		-21.11 (13.04)	5.77 (19.70)
58	-4.83** (1.73)	-0.98 (1.92)	-4.94+ (2.77)		-121.75 (115.42)		-25.88+ (13.43)	
60	-3.31* (1.56)	-0.64 (1.95)	-3.32 (2.88)		14.28* (5.86)			
62	-2.24 (1.63)		-4.49 (2.99)					
Age of the youngest child (Ref.: 0)								
2	-0.19 (0.12)	-0.38*** (0.11)	-0.25 (0.19)	-0.11 (0.16)	0.70 (1.40)	0.18 (1.25)	-0.42 (0.85)	-0.47 (1.17)
4	-0.22 (0.13)	-0.44*** (0.12)	-0.29 (0.22)	-0.11 (0.24)	1.23 (1.66)	-1.08 (1.46)	-0.23 (1.03)	0.37 (1.35)
6	-0.33* (0.15)	-0.49*** (0.15)	-0.39 (0.26)	0.08 (0.24)	0.74 (1.93)	-1.21 (1.59)	-0.61 (1.14)	2.04 (2.19)
8	-0.28 (0.19)	-0.42* (0.18)	-0.58+ (0.32)	0.12 (0.32)	-0.51 (2.39)	-0.68 (1.86)	-1.41 (1.28)	-0.79 (2.30)
10	-0.14 (1.63)	-0.33 (1.95)	-0.71+ (2.88)	-0.12 (2.99)	-2.12 (5.86)	-1.27 (1.51)	-1.51 (1.51)	0.64 (1.51)



	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.38)	(0.40)	(2.84)	(2.09)	(1.52)	(2.42)
12	-0.20	-0.26	-0.76 <sup>+</sup>	0.13	-2.56	-0.18	-0.41	-0.24
	(0.28)	(0.24)	(0.45)	(0.44)	(3.43)	(2.33)	(1.70)	(3.00)
14	-0.21	-0.35	-0.71	-0.72	-2.94	-2.01	-0.61	0.92
	(0.33)	(0.29)	(0.54)	(0.65)	(4.04)	(2.81)	(2.09)	(3.66)
16	-0.23	0.03	-0.92	-0.29	-3.98	-6.45 <sup>+</sup>	1.41	2.04
	(0.38)	(0.38)	(0.65)	(0.91)	(4.72)	(3.41)	(2.52)	(4.87)
Calendar year – Ref.: 1984	Yes	Yes						
Calendar year – Ref.: 1996			Yes	Yes				
Calendar year – Ref.: 2002					Yes	Yes		
Calendar year – Ref.: 2008							Yes	Yes
1986	0.62 <sup>+</sup>	0.09						
	(0.36)	(0.42)						
1988	0.69 <sup>+</sup>	0.29						
	(0.37)	(0.58)						
1990	0.90 <sup>*</sup>	0.81						
	(0.40)	(0.54)						
1992	0.53	0.43						
	(0.45)	(0.60)						
1994	0.88 <sup>+</sup>	0.99						
	(0.51)	(0.68)						
1996	0.81	1.02						
	(0.56)	(0.74)						
1998	0.86	0.89	-0.06	0.09				
	(0.61)	(0.80)	(0.28)	(0.34)				
2000	0.85	1.07	0.13	0.05				
	(0.67)	(0.86)	(0.40)	(0.43)				
2002	0.50	0.87	0.62	0.13				
	(0.72)	(0.92)	(0.49)	(0.61)				
2004	0.26	0.97	0.25	-0.59	8.10	1.65		
	(0.78)	(0.98)	(0.56)	(0.71)	(5.90)	(1.40)		
2006	0.18	1.02	0.40	-0.48	15.62	1.90		
	(0.83)	(1.07)	(0.66)	(0.92)	(11.63)	(1.57)		
2008	0.15	0.82	0.30	-0.65	23.61	-0.09		
	(0.89)	(1.14)	(0.74)	(1.03)	(17.37)	(1.64)		
2010	0.25	1.29	0.24	-1.11	31.02	0.73	0.72	-3.96 <sup>*</sup>
	(0.95)	(1.21)	(0.84)	(1.22)	(23.12)	(1.74)	(1.02)	(1.88)
2012	0.13	1.05	-0.19	-1.97	38.48	-1.91	-0.68	-3.78
	(1.00)	(1.28)	(0.93)	(1.34)	(28.90)	(1.82)	(1.42)	(2.54)
2014	0.31	1.35	0.08	-1.55	49.43	0.96	0.25	-4.01
	(1.06)	(1.35)	(1.02)	(1.47)	(34.65)	(1.69)	(1.84)	(3.50)
2016	0.07	1.29	-0.33	-2.08	59.25	1.00	-0.66	-6.93
	(1.11)	(1.43)	(1.11)	(1.61)	(40.45)	(1.52)	(2.28)	(4.21)
2018	0.11	1.03	-0.22	-2.70	67.78	-0.19	-1.24	-7.42
	(1.16)	(1.49)	(1.21)	(1.80)	(46.11)	(1.63)	(2.80)	(5.43)
2020	0.17	0.87			75.93			
	(1.20)	(1.57)			(51.78)			
N (observations)	5759	2811	3304	1221	2076	793	2249	620
N (individuals)	1115	443	715	217	863	312	507	104

Table S2: Fixed-effects of re-partnering trajectories on life satisfaction and mental health

	Life satisfaction				Mental health (SF-12)			
	SOEP		BHPS/UKHLS		SOEP		BHPS/UKHLS	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Re-partnering dummy (Ref.: Not re-partnered)	0.59*** (0.06)		0.33* (0.15)		1.39+ (0.78)		-1.53 (1.14)	
Re-partnering trajectory (Ref.: -2/-1)								
0		0.56*** (0.07)		0.38* (0.16)		0.98 (0.86)		-1.41 (1.25)
+1/+2		0.36*** (0.10)		0.04 (0.23)		0.53 (1.32)		-3.34+ (1.70)
+3/+5		0.20 (0.16)		0.05 (0.38)		-0.54 (2.07)		-4.03 (2.96)
Age – Ref.: 16	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Age – Ref.: 18					Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
18	-0.85 (0.98)	-0.79 (0.96)	-0.20 (0.83)	-0.19 (0.84)				
20	-0.60 (0.82)	-0.48 (0.80)	-0.13 (1.01)	-0.01 (1.02)	3.81 (2.51)	4.41+ (2.64)	-3.35 (5.41)	-3.12 (5.40)
22	-0.80 (0.83)	-0.59 (0.82)	-0.59 (1.08)	-0.42 (1.09)	5.15* (2.56)	6.42* (2.92)	1.32 (9.70)	1.49 (9.71)
24	-1.06 (0.86)	-0.78 (0.85)	-0.74 (1.16)	-0.51 (1.18)	5.24 (3.34)	7.04+ (3.89)	7.71 (13.37)	7.80 (13.37)
26	-1.10 (0.88)	-0.75 (0.87)	-0.66 (1.23)	-0.37 (1.25)	5.54 (3.47)	8.01+ (4.42)	7.83 (16.86)	7.94 (16.85)
28	-1.37 (0.90)	-0.96 (0.90)	-0.98 (1.30)	-0.65 (1.33)	6.53+ (3.86)	9.72+ (5.16)	3.83 (20.53)	3.91 (20.53)
30	-1.28 (0.92)	-0.80 (0.93)	-0.79 (1.37)	-0.39 (1.41)	5.52 (4.02)	9.37+ (5.69)	6.09 (24.05)	6.16 (24.06)
32	-1.49 (0.95)	-0.94 (0.96)	-0.76 (1.47)	-0.34 (1.51)	5.22 (4.16)	9.72 (6.30)	4.90 (28.05)	4.86 (28.07)
34	-1.52 (0.97)	-0.91 (0.99)	-0.56 (1.54)	-0.10 (1.58)	5.01 (4.40)	10.11 (6.95)	5.45 (31.83)	5.14 (31.87)
36	-1.63 (1.00)	-0.96 (1.02)	-0.82 (1.62)	-0.32 (1.67)	4.76 (4.74)	10.55 (7.72)	6.53 (35.54)	6.19 (35.60)
38	-1.54 (1.02)	-0.80 (1.05)	-0.61 (1.70)	-0.05 (1.76)	5.18 (4.87)	11.65 (8.33)	7.45 (39.01)	7.07 (39.06)
40	-1.54 (1.05)	-0.74 (1.08)	-0.41 (1.80)	0.17 (1.88)	6.51 (5.21)	13.62 (9.03)	5.89 (42.55)	5.27 (42.62)
42	-1.44 (1.08)	-0.58 (1.12)	-0.64 (1.91)	0.00 (1.99)	6.26 (5.50)	14.06 (9.84)	5.84 (46.32)	5.29 (46.40)
44	-1.43 (1.11)	-0.50 (1.15)	-0.63 (2.03)	0.04 (2.12)	6.67 (5.89)	15.11 (10.56)	4.26 (49.96)	3.61 (50.04)
46	-1.60 (1.15)	-0.61 (1.19)	-0.53 (2.14)	0.19 (2.24)	5.41 (6.33)	14.49 (11.45)	4.76 (53.49)	4.11 (53.58)
48	-1.58 (1.18)	-0.53 (1.24)	-0.55 (2.28)	0.20 (2.37)	7.20 (6.74)	16.94 (12.12)	5.16 (57.19)	4.34 (57.30)
50	-1.36 (1.22)	-0.25 (1.28)	-0.91 (2.43)	-0.10 (2.53)	3.18 (7.20)	13.55 (13.03)	3.08 (61.11)	2.17 (61.21)
52	-1.74 (1.27)	-0.57 (1.34)	-0.45 (2.55)	0.41 (2.67)	6.78 (8.31)	17.67 (14.24)	2.53 (64.48)	1.48 (64.57)
54	-1.08 (1.37)	0.16 (1.44)	-0.42 (2.72)	0.48 (2.83)	7.13 (8.75)	18.64 (15.05)	8.91 (68.02)	8.01 (68.16)
56	-1.63 (1.38)	-0.34 (1.45)	-2.32 (2.89)	-1.45 (2.99)	2.61 (9.77)	15.00 (16.34)	17.89 (71.44)	16.60 (71.55)
58	-1.15 (1.43)	0.19 (1.51)						
60	-1.80 (1.46)	-0.40 (1.54)						
Age of the youngest child (Ref.: 0)								
2	-0.25** (0.08)	-0.25** (0.08)	-0.12 (0.15)	-0.14 (0.16)	-0.86 (0.84)	-0.83 (0.85)	-0.33 (0.98)	-0.41 (0.97)
4	-0.31*** (0.08)	-0.33*** (0.09)	0.08 (0.22)	0.03 (0.22)	-1.71+ (1.03)	-1.79+ (1.06)	0.31 (1.34)	0.13 (1.34)
6	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.09 (0.10)	0.03 (0.21)	-0.01 (0.22)	-1.69 (1.16)	-1.78 (1.17)	0.57 (1.68)	0.32 (1.70)
8	-0.15 (0.11)	-0.17 (0.11)	-0.33 (0.23)	-0.37 (0.23)	-1.09 (1.37)	-1.18 (1.37)	-1.61 (1.66)	-1.97 (1.68)
10	-0.19 (1.46)	-0.20+ (1.54)	-0.26 (2.89)	-0.30 (2.99)	-1.30 (9.77)	-1.42 (16.34)	0.21 (71.44)	-0.08 (71.55)

	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.27)	(0.27)	(1.35)	(1.35)	(1.67)	(1.69)
12	-0.29*	-0.29*	-0.46	-0.49	-1.43	-1.52	-0.28	-0.59
	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.31)	(0.31)	(1.50)	(1.50)	(2.08)	(2.08)
14	-0.45**	-0.44**	-0.86*	-0.87*	-0.83	-0.92	1.39	1.23
	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.37)	(0.37)	(1.78)	(1.77)	(2.57)	(2.59)
16	-0.23	-0.22	-0.64	-0.67	-0.79	-0.80	1.09	0.82
	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.53)	(0.53)	(2.30)	(2.30)	(3.27)	(3.24)
Calendar year – Ref.: 1984	Yes	Yes						
Calendar year – Ref.: 1996			Yes	Yes				
Calendar year – Ref.: 2002					Yes	Yes		
Calendar year – Ref.: 2008							Yes	Yes
1986	0.32	0.40						
	(0.32)	(0.31)						
1988	0.13	0.29						
	(0.35)	(0.35)						
1990	0.23	0.47						
	(0.39)	(0.39)						
1992	0.02	0.32						
	(0.45)	(0.45)						
1994	-0.07	0.31						
	(0.48)	(0.49)						
1996	-0.18	0.26						
	(0.51)	(0.53)						
1998	-0.46	0.05	0.21	0.33				
	(0.55)	(0.57)	(0.32)	(0.32)				
2000	-0.37	0.22	0.48	0.63				
	(0.59)	(0.61)	(0.41)	(0.43)				
2002	-0.65	-0.00	0.75	0.97+				
	(0.62)	(0.65)	(0.49)	(0.53)				
2004	-0.77	-0.04	0.40	0.68	0.55	0.55		
	(0.65)	(0.68)	(0.60)	(0.67)	(1.04)	(1.04)		
2006	-0.85	-0.05	0.67	1.03	2.07+	2.08+		
	(0.70)	(0.74)	(0.70)	(0.79)	(1.11)	(1.12)		
2008	-0.97	-0.11	0.39	0.80	1.13	1.12		
	(0.74)	(0.78)	(0.80)	(0.91)	(1.22)	(1.21)		
2010	-0.71	0.22	1.01	1.41	0.27	0.27	-0.53	-0.18
	(0.78)	(0.83)	(1.14)	(1.24)	(1.32)	(1.32)	(2.40)	(2.59)
2012	-0.65	0.35	0.96	1.46	-0.38	-0.40	1.10	2.48
	(0.82)	(0.87)	(1.28)	(1.39)	(1.37)	(1.37)	(5.46)	(5.94)
2014	-0.98	0.10	1.30	1.86	-1.33	-1.32	1.37	3.77
	(0.86)	(0.92)	(1.39)	(1.51)	(1.07)	(1.07)	(9.06)	(9.88)
2016	-0.97	0.19	1.05	1.67	0.16	0.17	1.25	4.65
	(0.89)	(0.96)	(1.50)	(1.66)	(1.08)	(1.08)	(12.77)	(13.95)
2018	-1.03	0.19	0.84	1.52	-0.48	-0.45	-0.73	3.66
	(0.93)	(1.00)	(1.63)	(1.80)	(0.99)	(0.99)	(16.59)	(18.09)
2020	-1.07	0.22						
	(0.97)	(1.05)						
N (person-years)	5591	5591	1962	1962	1736	1736	860	860
N (individuals)	1119	1119	556	556	804	804	322	322

Table S1: Coefficients of models testing potential mediators on life satisfaction

Outcome: Life satisfaction		SOEP							BHPS/UKHLS						
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
Re-partnering dummy (Ref.: Not re-partnered)		0.59***	0.47***	0.40***	0.60***	0.62***	0.59***	0.44***	0.33*	0.26	0.14	0.33*	0.39*	0.36*	0.33+
		(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.17)
HH-income quintiles (Ref.: 1 <sup>st</sup> quintile)															
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile			0.24**					0.06		0.14					-0.07
			(0.09)					(0.08)		(0.15)					(0.14)
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile			0.17+					-0.06		-0.01					-0.29
			(0.10)					(0.09)		(0.23)					(0.20)
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile			0.48***					0.11		0.05					-0.36+
			(0.10)					(0.09)		(0.23)					(0.22)
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile			0.48***					-0.02		0.30					-0.23
			(0.11)					(0.11)		(0.25)					(0.22)
Satisfaction with HH-income				0.22***				0.21***			0.34***				0.35***
				(0.01)				(0.01)			(0.03)				(0.03)
Hours per week on housework					-0.06**			-0.03				-0.00			-0.00
					(0.02)			(0.02)				(0.01)			(0.01)
Residential move dummy						-0.09		-0.17+					-0.20		-0.31
						(0.10)		(0.09)					(0.21)		(0.20)
New partner's children dummy							0.00	0.20						-0.26	-0.26
							(0.20)	(0.18)						(0.30)	(0.26)
Age (Ref.: 16)															
18		-0.85	-0.74	-1.02	-0.79	-0.85	-0.85	-1.00	-0.20	-0.10	0.40	-0.19	-0.16	-0.24	0.30
		(0.98)	(0.84)	(0.79)	(1.05)	(0.99)	(0.98)	(0.86)	(0.83)	(0.84)	(0.89)	(0.84)	(0.80)	(0.83)	(0.85)
20		-0.60	-0.42	-0.63	-0.49	-0.59	-0.60	-0.54	-0.13	0.00	0.56	-0.10	-0.08	-0.19	0.46
		(0.82)	(0.69)	(0.65)	(0.87)	(0.83)	(0.82)	(0.71)	(1.01)	(1.02)	(1.01)	(1.01)	(0.97)	(1.00)	(0.97)
22		-0.80	-0.58	-0.83	-0.66	-0.79	-0.80	-0.73	-0.59	-0.44	0.23	-0.55	-0.54	-0.66	0.13
		(0.83)	(0.70)	(0.67)	(0.88)	(0.85)	(0.83)	(0.74)	(1.08)	(1.09)	(1.04)	(1.09)	(1.04)	(1.08)	(1.00)
24		-1.06	-0.81	-0.96	-0.92	-1.05	-1.06	-0.85	-0.74	-0.57	0.21	-0.69	-0.68	-0.81	0.11
		(0.86)	(0.73)	(0.70)	(0.91)	(0.88)	(0.86)	(0.76)	(1.16)	(1.17)	(1.11)	(1.17)	(1.12)	(1.15)	(1.08)
26		-1.10	-0.88	-0.99	-0.94	-1.09	-1.10	-0.87	-0.66	-0.45	0.31	-0.61	-0.60	-0.74	0.19
		(0.88)	(0.75)	(0.72)	(0.93)	(0.89)	(0.88)	(0.78)	(1.23)	(1.25)	(1.17)	(1.24)	(1.20)	(1.23)	(1.15)
28		-1.37	-1.18	-1.28+	-1.21	-1.37	-1.37	-1.15	-0.98	-0.77	-0.11	-0.94	-0.92	-1.07	-0.24
		(0.90)	(0.78)	(0.74)	(0.95)	(0.91)	(0.90)	(0.80)	(1.30)	(1.33)	(1.25)	(1.32)	(1.28)	(1.30)	(1.22)
30		-1.28	-1.13	-1.17	-1.12	-1.28	-1.28	-1.04	-0.79	-0.58	0.13	-0.74	-0.73	-0.88	-0.00
		(0.92)	(0.80)	(0.76)	(0.97)	(0.93)	(0.92)	(0.82)	(1.37)	(1.39)	(1.31)	(1.39)	(1.35)	(1.37)	(1.29)
32		-1.49	-1.36	-1.38+	-1.33	-1.49	-1.49	-1.26	-0.76	-0.57	0.01	-0.71	-0.69	-0.84	-0.07
		(0.95)	(0.83)	(0.79)	(0.99)	(0.96)	(0.95)	(0.85)	(1.47)	(1.48)	(1.39)	(1.48)	(1.44)	(1.47)	(1.37)
34		-1.52	-1.42+	-1.40+	-1.36	-1.52	-1.52	-1.27	-0.56	-0.38	0.16	-0.50	-0.49	-0.64	0.08
		(0.97)	(0.86)	(0.82)	(1.01)	(0.98)	(0.97)	(0.87)	(1.54)	(1.55)	(1.46)	(1.55)	(1.51)	(1.53)	(1.44)
36		-1.63	-1.57+	-1.52+	-1.47	-1.63	-1.63	-1.39	-0.82	-0.66	-0.22	-0.76	-0.75	-0.89	-0.31
		(1.00)	(0.89)	(0.85)	(1.04)	(1.01)	(1.00)	(0.90)	(1.62)	(1.63)	(1.54)	(1.63)	(1.59)	(1.61)	(1.52)
38		-1.54	-1.49	-1.43	-1.37	-1.53	-1.54	-1.29	-0.61	-0.47	-0.01	-0.55	-0.54	-0.67	-0.09
		(1.02)	(0.91)	(0.87)	(1.06)	(1.03)	(1.02)	(0.92)	(1.70)	(1.71)	(1.61)	(1.71)	(1.68)	(1.70)	(1.59)
40		-1.54	-1.50	-1.46	-1.38	-1.54	-1.54	-1.32	-0.41	-0.28	0.21	-0.35	-0.34	-0.46	0.12
		(1.05)	(0.94)	(0.90)	(1.09)	(1.06)	(1.05)	(0.95)	(1.80)	(1.81)	(1.71)	(1.81)	(1.78)	(1.80)	(1.69)
42		-1.44	-1.42	-1.37	-1.30	-1.45	-1.44	-1.24	-0.64	-0.52	-0.01	-0.58	-0.58	-0.71	-0.12
		(1.08)	(0.98)	(0.94)	(1.12)	(1.09)	(1.08)	(0.99)	(1.91)	(1.92)	(1.81)	(1.92)	(1.89)	(1.91)	(1.79)
44		-1.43	-1.41	-1.43	-1.29	-1.43	-1.43	-1.29	-0.63	-0.56	0.08	-0.57	-0.57	-0.71	-0.05
		(1.11)	(1.01)	(0.96)	(1.15)	(1.11)	(1.11)	(1.01)	(2.03)	(2.04)	(1.91)	(2.04)	(2.01)	(2.03)	(1.89)
46		-1.60	-1.55	-1.61	-1.47	-1.60	-1.60	-1.46	-0.53	-0.43	0.07	-0.45	-0.46	-0.61	-0.09
		(1.15)	(1.05)	(1.01)	(1.18)	(1.15)	(1.14)	(1.06)	(2.14)	(2.14)	(2.01)	(2.15)	(2.11)	(2.13)	(1.98)
48		-1.58	-1.52	-1.58	-1.46	-1.58	-1.58	-1.45	-0.55	-0.47	0.06	-0.46	-0.49	-0.62	-0.11
		(1.18)	(1.09)	(1.05)	(1.22)	(1.19)	(1.18)	(1.09)	(2.28)	(2.28)	(2.14)	(2.29)	(2.26)	(2.28)	(2.12)
50		-1.36	-1.29	-1.44	-1.24	-1.37	-1.36	-1.29	-0.91	-0.82	-0.28	-0.83	-0.83	-0.99	-0.39
		(1.22)	(1.13)	(1.09)	(1.26)	(1.23)	(1.22)	(1.13)	(2.43)	(2.43)	(2.28)	(2.44)	(2.41)	(2.42)	(2.25)
52		-1.74	-1.59	-1.81	-1.62	-1.75	-1.74	-1.65	-0.45	-0.40	-0.32	-0.36	-0.38	-0.55	-0.55
		(1.27)	(1.18)	(1.14)	(1.30)	(1.28)	(1.27)	(1.18)	(2.55)	(2.56)	(2.40)	(2.57)	(2.53)	(2.55)	(2.37)
54		-1.08	-0.87	-1.06	-0.95	-1.10	-1.07	-0.93	-0.42	-0.40	-0.18	-0.31	-0.37	-0.53	-0.44
		(1.37)	(1.29)	(1.25)	(1.40)	(1.37)	(1.37)	(1.28)	(2.72)	(2.73)	(2.55)	(2.74)	(2.70)	(2.72)	(2.53)
56		-1.63	-1.42	-1.79	-1.50	-1.66	-1.63	-1.64	-2.32	-2.31	-1.96	-2.22	-2.27	-2.42	-2.25
		(1.38)	(1.29)	(1.24)	(1.41)	(1.38)	(1.38)	(1.27)	(2.89)	(2.91)	(2.71)	(2.91)	(2.87)	(2.89)	(2.69)
58		-1.15	-1.00	-1.59	-0.97	-1.20	-1.15	-1.41							







## 2 Robustness checks

### 2.1 Sample of those with observation of entry into singlehood by separation

Table S3: Fixed-effects of re-partnering trajectories on life satisfaction and mental health (based on sample restricted to those with observation of entry into singlehood by separation)

	Life satisfaction				Mental health (SF-12)			
	SOEP		BHPS/UKHLS		SOEP		BHPS/UKHLS	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Re-partnering dummy (Ref.: Not re-partnered)	0.74*** (0.10)		0.80*** (0.23)		3.26** (1.11)		-0.03 (2.38)	
Trajectory coefficient (Ref.: -2/-1)								
0		0.69*** (0.10)		0.82*** (0.24)		3.57** (1.25)		0.72 (2.87)
+1/+2		0.55*** (0.16)		0.48 (0.35)		4.05* (2.01)		-3.00 (4.00)
+3/+5		0.36 (0.25)		0.40 (0.57)		4.88 (3.19)		-3.65 (6.52)
Age – Ref.: 18			Yes	Yes				
Age – Ref.: 20	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes		
Age – Ref.: 22							Yes	Yes
20			0.25 (0.24)	0.38 (0.27)				
22	-0.08 (0.37)	-0.04 (0.36)	-0.81 (0.91)	-0.63 (0.91)	-3.58 (3.50)	-3.97 (3.51)		
24	-0.78+ (0.40)	-0.65 (0.41)	-0.57 (0.90)	-0.31 (0.94)	-5.40* (2.52)	-6.39* (3.17)	15.55+ (8.89)	14.99+ (8.76)
26	-0.50 (0.42)	-0.30 (0.44)	-0.68 (0.95)	-0.31 (1.01)	-5.30* (2.44)	-6.86+ (3.76)	9.76+ (5.43)	11.77+ (6.08)
28	-1.09* (0.50)	-0.83 (0.53)	-1.62 (1.09)	-1.19 (1.15)	-3.90 (3.38)	-6.03 (4.95)	-0.69 (7.52)	2.83 (9.41)
30	-1.02+ (0.57)	-0.69 (0.61)	-1.76 (1.17)	-1.22 (1.26)	-4.76 (3.60)	-7.48 (6.06)	7.22 (9.72)	12.52 (12.96)
32	-1.26* (0.64)	-0.87 (0.68)	-1.79 (1.31)	-1.20 (1.46)	-4.65 (3.65)	-7.91 (6.99)	0.16 (11.26)	7.14 (13.39)
34	-1.30+ (0.70)	-0.85 (0.76)	-1.06 (1.43)	-0.43 (1.57)	-3.87 (4.07)	-7.71 (8.04)	4.97 (11.40)	12.60 (15.99)
36	-1.57* (0.77)	-1.07 (0.84)	-1.51 (1.60)	-0.78 (1.77)	-4.69 (4.36)	-9.07 (9.31)	3.40 (12.95)	12.95 (18.14)
38	-1.50+ (0.82)	-0.94 (0.91)	-0.99 (1.69)	-0.19 (1.87)	-4.79 (4.72)	-9.76 (10.50)	5.28 (14.26)	16.34 (20.39)
40	-1.65+ (0.89)	-1.02 (0.98)	-0.94 (1.83)	-0.08 (2.03)	-4.58 (5.31)	-10.18 (11.66)	-0.75 (16.51)	11.60 (23.30)
42	-1.49 (0.95)	-0.80 (1.06)	-0.88 (1.99)	0.06 (2.18)	-4.21 (5.72)	-10.37 (13.16)	-3.22 (18.43)	10.64 (25.81)
44	-1.72+ (0.99)	-0.98 (1.11)	-1.33 (2.19)	-0.33 (2.38)	-2.94 (6.20)	-9.59 (14.25)	-3.72 (21.56)	11.16 (29.11)
46	-1.85+ (1.09)	-1.05 (1.21)	-0.69 (2.38)	0.39 (2.55)	-4.08 (6.73)	-11.33 (15.66)	4.42 (23.54)	22.27 (32.12)
48	-2.10+ (1.17)	-1.24 (1.30)	-1.38 (2.64)	-0.27 (2.80)	-2.36 (7.26)	-10.19 (16.37)	5.39 (25.69)	24.02 (34.74)
50	-1.27 (1.26)	-0.35 (1.40)	-2.44 (2.99)	-1.18 (3.16)	-3.06 (8.03)	-11.46 (17.78)	-9.33 (29.39)	12.47 (39.08)
52	-1.83 (1.31)	-0.86 (1.46)	-2.18 (3.16)	-0.85 (3.32)	-2.98 (10.25)	-11.65 (19.12)	-7.27 (30.56)	15.02 (40.61)
54	-1.16 (1.53)	-0.11 (1.67)	-2.51 (3.48)	-1.17 (3.60)	-0.76 (10.54)	-10.01 (20.62)	-4.33 (32.33)	19.80 (43.09)
56	-1.24 (1.47)	-0.15 (1.63)			-13.65 (10.35)	-23.72 (21.82)		
58	-1.04 (1.55)	0.09 (1.72)						
60	-1.70 (1.59)	-0.54 (1.76)						
Age of the youngest child (Ref.: 0)								
2	-0.28+ (0.15)	-0.27+ (0.15)	-0.00 (0.27)	-0.05 (0.28)	-0.29 (1.27)	-0.27 (1.29)	1.54 (3.16)	1.23 (3.17)
4	-0.16 (0.13)	-0.18 (0.13)	0.39 (0.34)	0.34 (0.35)	-1.05 (1.65)	-0.97 (1.73)	0.26 (3.01)	0.14 (3.06)
6	-0.04 (0.17)	-0.06 (0.17)	0.31 (0.33)	0.26 (0.34)	-0.48 (1.84)	-0.42 (1.84)	0.31 (5.75)	-0.55 (5.83)



8	-0.13 (0.17)	-0.15 (0.17)	-0.04 (0.38)	-0.09 (0.39)	0.18 (1.99)	0.25 (2.02)	-2.46 (9.25)	-3.02 (8.72)
10	-0.14 (0.17)	-0.14 (0.17)	-0.10 (0.45)	-0.15 (0.46)	-2.55 (1.93)	-2.45 (1.95)	-2.43 (10.27)	-4.43 (10.05)
12	-0.24 (0.20)	-0.23 (0.20)	-0.09 (0.47)	-0.14 (0.48)	-2.06 (2.02)	-1.96 (2.07)	-3.19 (12.68)	-4.78 (12.22)
14	-0.39 <sup>+</sup> (0.23)	-0.39 <sup>+</sup> (0.23)	-0.61 (0.58)	-0.65 (0.59)	-1.32 (2.15)	-1.17 (2.20)	-1.47 (14.55)	-2.92 (13.91)
16	-0.24 (0.30)	-0.22 (0.30)	-0.50 (0.95)	-0.54 (0.96)	-2.50 (3.04)	-2.51 (3.06)	-7.98 (16.81)	-9.27 (15.93)
Calendar year – Ref.: 1984	Yes	Yes						
Calendar year – Ref.: 1996			Yes	Yes				
Calendar year – Ref.: 2002					Yes	Yes		
Calendar year – Ref.: 2010							Yes	Yes
1986	1.11* (0.55)	1.15* (0.53)						
1988	1.53 <sup>+</sup> (0.80)	1.62* (0.78)						
1990	1.92** (0.74)	2.10** (0.72)						
1992	2.08** (0.78)	2.31** (0.76)						
1994	2.19** (0.83)	2.49** (0.83)						
1996	1.98* (0.88)	2.35** (0.88)						
1998	1.94* (0.92)	2.38* (0.94)	0.30 (0.52)	0.44 (0.54)				
2000	2.10* (0.96)	2.61** (0.98)	0.70 (0.55)	0.91 (0.62)				
2002	1.95 <sup>+</sup> (1.02)	2.53* (1.05)	0.86 (0.68)	1.12 (0.77)				
2004	1.94 <sup>+</sup> (1.06)	2.58* (1.09)	0.53 (0.86)	0.88 (1.01)	0.83 (1.42)	0.90 (1.42)		
2006	1.82 (1.14)	2.52* (1.19)	1.05 (0.97)	1.49 (1.15)	1.60 (1.59)	1.63 (1.59)		
2008	1.44 (1.19)	2.21 <sup>+</sup> (1.26)	0.60 (1.09)	1.10 (1.28)	2.81 (1.83)	2.84 (1.84)		
2010	1.70 (1.25)	2.54 <sup>+</sup> (1.32)	2.29* (1.16)	1.96 (1.27)	0.95 (1.86)	0.98 (1.86)		
2012	1.72 (1.29)	2.62 <sup>+</sup> (1.37)	0.77 (0.83)	0.52 (0.91)	0.58 (1.89)	0.63 (1.88)	-9.15** (3.16)	-8.89** (3.22)
2014	1.87 (1.35)	2.84* (1.44)	0.44 (0.53)	0.27 (0.58)	-1.88 (1.62)	-1.86 (1.60)	-3.58 (2.85)	-3.47 (3.05)
2016	1.79 (1.41)	2.83 <sup>+</sup> (1.50)	0.73 <sup>+</sup> (0.44)	0.65 (0.44)	-2.22 (1.56)	-2.19 (1.56)	-0.35 (2.22)	-0.16 (2.34)
2018	1.78 (1.46)	2.88 <sup>+</sup> (1.57)			-1.89 (1.38)	-1.88 (1.38)		
2020	1.73 (1.52)	2.90 <sup>+</sup> (1.63)						
N (observations)	2196	2196	742	742	754	754	168	168
N (individuals)	442	442	185	185	339	339	64	64



2	-0.28 <sup>+</sup> (0.15)	-0.28 <sup>+</sup> (0.15)	-0.25 <sup>+</sup> (0.14)	-0.28 <sup>+</sup> (0.15)	-0.28 <sup>+</sup> (0.15)	-0.28 <sup>+</sup> (0.15)	-0.00 (0.27)	-0.04 (0.28)	0.06 (0.25)	-0.00 (0.27)	0.00 (0.27)	-0.00 (0.27)
4	-0.16 (0.13)	-0.14 (0.13)	-0.20 (0.13)	-0.18 (0.13)	-0.15 (0.13)	-0.16 (0.13)	0.39 (0.34)	0.33 (0.35)	0.34 (0.31)	0.39 (0.34)	0.37 (0.34)	0.39 (0.34)
6	-0.04 (0.17)	-0.03 (0.16)	-0.10 (0.16)	-0.07 (0.17)	-0.02 (0.16)	-0.04 (0.17)	0.31 (0.33)	0.27 (0.33)	0.26 (0.29)	0.30 (0.33)	0.29 (0.33)	0.34 (0.33)
8	-0.13 (0.17)	-0.10 (0.17)	-0.20 (0.16)	-0.17 (0.17)	-0.12 (0.17)	-0.13 (0.17)	-0.04 (0.38)	-0.05 (0.38)	-0.05 (0.34)	-0.04 (0.39)	-0.05 (0.38)	0.03 (0.38)
10	-0.14 (0.17)	-0.14 (0.17)	-0.23 (0.17)	-0.18 (0.18)	-0.13 (0.17)	-0.14 (0.17)	-0.10 (0.45)	-0.11 (0.46)	-0.03 (0.40)	-0.11 (0.45)	-0.13 (0.44)	-0.03 (0.45)
12	-0.24 (0.20)	-0.25 (0.20)	-0.38 <sup>+</sup> (0.20)	-0.29 (0.21)	-0.23 (0.20)	-0.24 (0.20)	-0.09 (0.47)	-0.15 (0.50)	-0.12 (0.46)	-0.10 (0.47)	-0.16 (0.48)	0.01 (0.48)
14	-0.39 <sup>+</sup> (0.23)	-0.42 <sup>+</sup> (0.23)	-0.44 <sup>+</sup> (0.22)	-0.44 <sup>+</sup> (0.24)	-0.38 <sup>+</sup> (0.23)	-0.39 <sup>+</sup> (0.23)	-0.61 (0.58)	-0.61 (0.59)	-0.49 (0.56)	-0.63 (0.58)	-0.66 (0.58)	-0.52 (0.60)
16	-0.24 (0.30)	-0.29 (0.29)	-0.34 (0.28)	-0.30 (0.31)	-0.23 (0.30)	-0.24 (0.30)	-0.50 (0.95)	-0.66 (0.96)	-0.52 (0.89)	-0.52 (0.96)	-0.50 (0.94)	-0.39 (0.96)
Calendar year – Ref.: 1984	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Calendar year – Ref.: 1996							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1986	1.11 <sup>*</sup> (0.55)	1.15 <sup>*</sup> (0.50)	1.34 <sup>**</sup> (0.41)	1.11 <sup>*</sup> (0.55)	1.08 <sup>+</sup> (0.55)	1.11 <sup>*</sup> (0.55)						
1988	1.53 <sup>+</sup> (0.80)	1.58 <sup>*</sup> (0.76)	1.74 <sup>**</sup> (0.63)	1.54 <sup>+</sup> (0.80)	1.45 <sup>+</sup> (0.80)	1.53 <sup>+</sup> (0.80)						
1990	1.92 <sup>**</sup> (0.74)	1.88 <sup>**</sup> (0.70)	1.93 <sup>***</sup> (0.55)	1.94 <sup>**</sup> (0.74)	1.84 <sup>*</sup> (0.74)	1.92 <sup>**</sup> (0.74)						
1992	2.08 <sup>**</sup> (0.78)	2.00 <sup>**</sup> (0.74)	2.11 <sup>***</sup> (0.60)	2.09 <sup>**</sup> (0.78)	1.98 <sup>*</sup> (0.78)	2.08 <sup>**</sup> (0.78)						
1994	2.19 <sup>**</sup> (0.83)	2.13 <sup>**</sup> (0.80)	2.27 <sup>***</sup> (0.67)	2.20 <sup>**</sup> (0.83)	2.06 <sup>*</sup> (0.83)	2.19 <sup>**</sup> (0.83)						
1996	1.98 <sup>*</sup> (0.88)	1.85 <sup>*</sup> (0.86)	2.00 <sup>**</sup> (0.73)	1.99 <sup>*</sup> (0.88)	1.83 <sup>*</sup> (0.89)	1.98 <sup>*</sup> (0.88)						
1998	1.94 <sup>*</sup> (0.92)	1.78 <sup>*</sup> (0.90)	1.95 <sup>*</sup> (0.77)	1.95 <sup>*</sup> (0.92)	1.77 <sup>+</sup> (0.93)	1.95 <sup>*</sup> (0.92)	0.30 (0.52)	0.31 (0.51)	-0.08 (0.44)	0.31 (0.52)	0.31 (0.53)	0.39 (0.51)
2000	2.10 <sup>*</sup> (0.96)	1.92 <sup>*</sup> (0.94)	2.11 <sup>**</sup> (0.81)	2.12 <sup>*</sup> (0.96)	1.91 <sup>*</sup> (0.97)	2.11 <sup>*</sup> (0.96)	0.70 (0.55)	0.67 (0.55)	0.32 (0.48)	0.71 (0.55)	0.71 (0.56)	0.80 (0.54)
2002	1.95 <sup>+</sup> (1.02)	1.77 <sup>+</sup> (0.99)	2.07 <sup>*</sup> (0.88)	1.97 <sup>+</sup> (1.02)	1.76 <sup>+</sup> (1.03)	1.95 <sup>+</sup> (1.02)	0.86 (0.68)	0.91 (0.69)	0.17 (0.63)	0.87 (0.68)	0.93 (0.69)	0.99 (0.67)
2004	1.94 <sup>+</sup> (1.06)	1.73 <sup>+</sup> (1.04)	2.16 <sup>*</sup> (0.93)	1.96 <sup>+</sup> (1.06)	1.75 (1.06)	1.94 <sup>+</sup> (1.06)	0.53 (0.86)	0.62 (0.88)	-0.20 (0.81)	0.54 (0.86)	0.59 (0.87)	0.68 (0.86)
2006	1.82 (1.14)	1.59 (1.12)	1.99 <sup>*</sup> (1.01)	1.85 (1.14)	1.65 (1.14)	1.82 (1.14)	1.05 (0.97)	1.18 (0.99)	0.21 (0.91)	1.06 (0.97)	1.12 (0.97)	1.21 (0.96)
2008	1.44 (1.19)	1.19 (1.18)	1.63 (1.07)	1.48 (1.19)	1.28 (1.20)	1.44 (1.19)	0.60 (1.09)	0.75 (1.11)	-0.22 (1.02)	0.61 (1.09)	0.66 (1.10)	0.75 (1.09)
2010	1.70 (1.25)	1.42 (1.23)	1.77 (1.14)	1.74 (1.25)	1.57 (1.26)	1.71 (1.25)	2.29 <sup>*</sup> (1.16)	1.73 (1.12)	1.88 <sup>+</sup> (1.05)	2.30 <sup>*</sup> (1.16)	2.48 <sup>*</sup> (1.19)	2.37 <sup>*</sup> (1.16)
2012	1.72 (1.29)	1.46 (1.28)	1.81 (1.19)	1.75 (1.30)	1.59 (1.30)	1.72 (1.30)	0.77 (0.83)	0.26 (0.84)	0.94 (0.76)	0.77 (0.83)	0.90 (0.85)	0.84 (0.83)
2014	1.87 (1.35)	1.57 (1.34)	1.94 (1.25)	1.90 (1.35)	1.74 (1.36)	1.87 (1.35)	0.44 (0.53)	0.14 (0.55)	0.49 (0.47)	0.44 (0.53)	0.50 (0.54)	0.51 (0.53)
2016	1.79 (1.41)	1.48 (1.40)	1.87 (1.31)	1.83 (1.41)	1.66 (1.41)	1.79 (1.41)	0.73 <sup>+</sup> (0.44)	0.62 (0.43)	0.63 <sup>+</sup> (0.35)	0.73 <sup>+</sup> (0.44)	0.76 <sup>+</sup> (0.45)	0.76 <sup>+</sup> (0.44)
2018	1.78 (1.46)	1.45 (1.45)	1.77 (1.37)	1.82 (1.46)	1.67 (1.46)	1.78 (1.46)						
2020	1.73 (1.52)	1.42 (1.52)	1.70 (1.43)	1.77 (1.52)	1.64 (1.52)	1.73 (1.52)						
N (observations)	2196	2196	2196	2196	2196	2196	742	742	742	742	742	742
N (individuals)	442	442	442	442	442	442	185	185	185	185	185	185

Table S5: Coefficients of models testing potential mediators on mental health (based on sample restricted to those with observation of entry into singlehood by separation)

Outcome: Mental health (SF-12)	SOEP						BHPS/UKHLS					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Re-partnering dummy (Ref.: Not re-partnered)	3.26** (1.11)	3.20** (1.19)	2.78* (1.12)	3.31** (1.12)	4.07** (1.34)	3.31** (1.14)	-0.03 (2.38)	-0.97 (2.28)	-0.87 (2.21)	-0.82 (2.40)	-0.11 (2.46)	0.07 (2.44)
HH-income quintiles (Ref.: 1 <sup>st</sup> quintile)												
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile		-0.60 (1.77)						Ref.				
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile		-1.70 (1.96)						4.51 (4.06)				
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile		0.86 (1.96)						2.32 (3.34)				
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile		-0.93 (2.06)						5.58 <sup>+</sup> (3.34)				
Satisfaction with HH-income			0.55* (0.21)						1.00* (0.42)			
Hours per week on housework				-0.53 (0.33)							-0.18 <sup>+</sup> (0.10)	
Residential move dummy					-1.91 (1.62)						1.40 (4.03)	
New partner's children dummy						-0.88 (4.01)						-2.76 (4.92)
Age – Ref.: 20	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Age – Ref.: 22												
22	-3.58 (3.50)	-2.25 (3.84)	-4.77 (3.50)	-2.89 (3.55)	-3.55 (3.46)	-3.66 (3.50)						
24	-5.40* (2.52)	-4.76 <sup>+</sup> (2.81)	-6.39* (2.60)	-4.75 <sup>+</sup> (2.55)	-5.43* (2.58)	-5.49* (2.51)	15.55 <sup>+</sup> (8.89)	16.05 <sup>+</sup> (9.16)	17.86* (7.07)	16.68 <sup>+</sup> (8.85)	15.10 <sup>+</sup> (8.63)	15.37 <sup>+</sup> (8.90)
26	-5.30* (2.44)	-4.67 <sup>+</sup> (2.72)	-6.08* (2.48)	-4.60 <sup>+</sup> (2.38)	-5.33* (2.48)	-5.41* (2.40)	9.76 <sup>+</sup> (5.43)	11.30 <sup>+</sup> (6.63)	11.03** (3.60)	10.85 <sup>+</sup> (5.85)	9.24 <sup>+</sup> (5.53)	9.56 <sup>+</sup> (5.42)
28	-3.90 (3.38)	-2.99 (3.57)	-4.84 (3.42)	-3.08 (3.43)	-3.81 (3.41)	-4.06 (3.34)	-0.69 (7.52)	1.52 (8.06)	2.03 (5.52)	0.87 (8.89)	-1.25 (7.16)	-0.83 (7.53)
30	-4.76 (3.60)	-4.30 (3.87)	-5.81 (3.67)	-3.88 (3.61)	-4.55 (3.64)	-4.87 (3.57)	7.22 (9.72)	10.48 (10.90)	9.84 (8.22)	8.99 (10.18)	6.77 (9.44)	6.61 (9.91)
32	-4.65 (3.65)	-3.81 (3.99)	-5.88 (3.74)	-3.90 (3.65)	-4.49 (3.70)	-4.76 (3.62)	0.16 (11.26)	3.77 (12.13)	2.96 (9.69)	2.99 (11.43)	-0.23 (10.94)	0.15 (11.31)
34	-3.87 (4.07)	-3.00 (4.50)	-5.00 (4.12)	-3.12 (4.09)	-3.95 (4.10)	-4.00 (4.05)	4.97 (11.40)	8.31 (12.21)	7.32 (10.04)	8.12 (11.75)	4.44 (11.15)	5.06 (11.53)
36	-4.69 (4.36)	-3.69 (4.97)	-6.14 (4.37)	-3.91 (4.38)	-4.61 (4.41)	-4.81 (4.34)	3.40 (12.95)	6.49 (14.21)	5.79 (11.85)	6.14 (13.12)	2.81 (12.77)	3.60 (13.15)
38	-4.79 (4.72)	-3.67 (5.38)	-6.28 (4.70)	-3.90 (4.73)	-4.62 (4.76)	-4.92 (4.72)	5.28 (14.26)	8.17 (15.68)	7.16 (13.16)	8.15 (14.35)	4.73 (14.10)	5.57 (14.51)
40	-4.58 (5.31)	-3.25 (6.08)	-6.03 (5.30)	-3.65 (5.28)	-4.28 (5.35)	-4.68 (5.31)	-0.75 (16.51)	-0.11 (17.77)	2.78 (15.73)	2.23 (16.44)	-1.18 (16.39)	-0.43 (16.80)
42	-4.21 (5.72)	-2.85 (6.54)	-5.77 (5.69)	-3.51 (5.70)	-3.89 (5.76)	-4.33 (5.73)	-3.22 (18.43)	-2.42 (19.31)	0.76 (17.60)	-0.19 (18.31)	-3.92 (18.38)	-2.93 (18.71)
44	-2.94 (6.20)	-1.39 (7.03)	-4.76 (6.18)	-2.09 (6.18)	-2.75 (6.22)	-3.05 (6.27)	-3.72 (21.56)	-4.93 (22.45)	3.23 (20.68)	-1.02 (21.28)	-4.42 (21.52)	-3.43 (21.84)
46	-4.08 (6.73)	-2.51 (7.61)	-6.09 (6.71)	-3.19 (6.71)	-3.88 (6.74)	-4.19 (6.77)	4.42 (23.54)	1.19 (24.70)	10.98 (22.63)	8.32 (23.25)	3.74 (23.50)	4.75 (23.82)
48	-2.36 (7.26)	-0.69 (8.16)	-4.38 (7.28)	-1.73 (7.26)	-2.17 (7.28)	-2.46 (7.29)	5.39 (25.69)	4.44 (26.10)	12.56 (24.56)	10.86 (25.55)	4.72 (25.69)	5.72 (25.95)
50	-3.06 (8.03)	-1.60 (8.76)	-5.83 (7.98)	-2.10 (8.02)	-2.73 (8.05)	-3.19 (8.07)	-9.33 (29.39)	-11.98 (30.28)	-2.16 (28.37)	-1.59 (29.39)	-10.03 (29.38)	-8.94 (29.71)
52	-2.98 (10.25)	-0.63 (10.91)	-5.99 (10.24)	-2.55 (10.26)	-2.97 (10.32)	-3.12 (10.30)	-7.27 (30.56)	-11.07 (31.44)	-0.36 (29.29)	0.24 (30.49)	-8.00 (30.63)	-6.83 (30.91)
54	-0.76 (10.54)	1.89 (11.02)	-3.51 (10.42)	-0.07 (10.54)	-1.24 (10.57)	-0.91 (10.59)	-4.33 (32.33)	-9.03 (32.88)	2.64 (31.22)	3.19 (32.37)	-5.14 (32.44)	-3.86 (32.67)
56	-13.65 (10.35)	-11.32 (10.94)	-16.77 (10.27)	-12.96 (10.33)	-13.98 (10.33)	-13.86 (10.45)						
Age of the youngest child (Ref.: 0)												
2	-0.29 (1.27)	-0.21 (1.24)	-0.19 (1.28)	-0.21 (1.28)	-0.26 (1.27)	-0.30 (1.27)	1.54 (3.16)	1.37 (3.09)	2.29 (2.84)	0.91 (3.03)	1.61 (3.19)	1.52 (3.18)
4	-1.05 (1.65)	-1.04 (1.66)	-1.04 (1.64)	-1.38 (1.67)	-0.95 (1.65)	-1.02 (1.66)	0.26 (3.01)	0.43 (2.74)	-0.05 (3.00)	-0.40 (2.85)	0.37 (3.03)	0.09 (3.06)
6	-0.48	-0.33	-0.74	-0.82	-0.26	-0.43	0.31	0.53	0.88	0.01	0.33	0.34

8	(1.84)	(1.84)	(1.84)	(1.87)	(1.86)	(1.82)	(5.75)	(5.57)	(5.07)	(5.64)	(5.84)	(5.79)
	0.18	0.13	-0.03	-0.27	0.26	0.21	-2.46	-1.34	-3.19	-2.89	-2.70	-2.48
10	(1.99)	(2.02)	(1.98)	(1.96)	(1.99)	(1.97)	(9.25)	(9.14)	(8.05)	(9.55)	(9.28)	(9.30)
	-2.55	-2.70	-2.78	-3.04	-2.50	-2.52	-2.43	0.44	-2.44	-3.08	-2.58	-2.54
12	(1.93)	(1.95)	(1.90)	(1.94)	(1.92)	(1.92)	(10.27)	(10.43)	(8.97)	(10.62)	(10.32)	(10.35)
	-2.06	-2.10	-2.17	-2.38	-2.08	-2.06	-3.19	1.15	-3.64	-3.76	-3.22	-3.28
14	(2.02)	(2.03)	(2.00)	(2.02)	(2.00)	(2.02)	(12.68)	(12.90)	(11.05)	(13.15)	(12.85)	(12.78)
	-1.32	-1.50	-1.46	-1.92	-1.26	-1.28	-1.47	3.26	-1.02	-2.03	-1.39	-1.67
16	(2.15)	(2.17)	(2.12)	(2.17)	(2.14)	(2.17)	(14.55)	(14.57)	(12.86)	(15.09)	(14.83)	(14.68)
	-2.50	-2.98	-2.58	-3.06	-2.38	-2.47	-7.98	-1.39	-8.52	-8.87	-7.89	-8.23
	(3.04)	(3.07)	(2.99)	(3.02)	(3.01)	(3.05)	(16.81)	(16.58)	(14.99)	(17.47)	(17.13)	(16.96)
Calendar year – Ref.: 2002	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Calendar year – Ref.: 2010							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2004	0.83	0.83	1.19	0.86	0.79	0.82						
	(1.42)	(1.42)	(1.42)	(1.43)	(1.42)	(1.42)						
2006	1.60	1.52	1.81	1.59	1.59	1.57						
	(1.59)	(1.59)	(1.61)	(1.59)	(1.59)	(1.60)						
2008	2.81	2.87	3.12 <sup>+</sup>	2.90	2.76	2.79						
	(1.83)	(1.86)	(1.82)	(1.83)	(1.83)	(1.82)						
2010	0.95	0.74	1.13	1.01	1.04	0.94						
	(1.86)	(1.90)	(1.86)	(1.86)	(1.87)	(1.86)						
2012	0.58	0.67	0.77	0.57	0.64	0.58	-9.15 <sup>**</sup>	-7.87 <sup>*</sup>	-7.76 <sup>*</sup>	-9.11 <sup>**</sup>	-9.15 <sup>**</sup>	-9.00 <sup>**</sup>
	(1.89)	(1.96)	(1.89)	(1.89)	(1.90)	(1.89)	(3.16)	(3.08)	(3.16)	(2.95)	(3.14)	(3.25)
2014	-1.88	-1.92	-1.64	-1.85	-1.78	-1.90	-3.58	-3.10	-2.63	-4.21	-3.48	-3.39
	(1.62)	(1.65)	(1.59)	(1.62)	(1.62)	(1.62)	(2.85)	(2.62)	(2.77)	(2.76)	(2.94)	(3.03)
2016	-2.22	-2.26	-2.11	-2.23	-2.27	-2.26	-0.35	-0.25	-0.14	-0.29	-0.30	-0.29
	(1.56)	(1.58)	(1.53)	(1.56)	(1.54)	(1.56)	(2.22)	(2.15)	(2.17)	(2.17)	(2.27)	(2.24)
2018	-1.89	-1.66	-1.78	-1.86	-1.90	-1.95						
	(1.38)	(1.35)	(1.35)	(1.40)	(1.38)	(1.44)						
N (observations)	754	754	754	754	754	754	168	168	168	168	168	168
N (individuals)	339	339	339	339	339	339	64	64	64	64	64	64

## 2.2 Sample of those who re-partnered within 5 years after entry into single motherhood

Table S8: Fixed-effects of re-partnering trajectories on life satisfaction and mental health (based on sample restricted to those who re-partnered within 5 years after entry into single motherhood)

	Life satisfaction				Mental health (SF-12)			
	SOEP		BHPS/UKHLS		SOEP		BHPS/UKHLS	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Re-partnering dummy (Ref.: Not re-partnered)	0.74*** (0.11)		0.96*** (0.26)		3.53** (1.20)		1.64 (2.53)	
Trajectory coefficient (Ref.: -2/-1)								
0		0.71*** (0.11)		1.05*** (0.26)		3.79** (1.31)		2.43 (3.01)
+1/+2		0.58*** (0.17)		0.73+ (0.38)		3.17 (2.08)		-1.82 (4.08)
+3/+5		0.46+ (0.27)		0.82 (0.63)		3.56 (3.32)		-2.83 (6.91)
Age – Ref.: 18			Yes	Yes				
Age – Ref.: 20	Yes	Yes			Yes	Yes		
Age – Ref.: 22							Yes	Yes
20			-0.03 (0.26)	0.05 (0.29)				
22	-0.07 (0.37)	-0.04 (0.37)	-1.19 (0.91)	-1.10 (0.91)	-3.92 (3.61)	-3.97 (3.57)		
24	-0.79+ (0.41)	-0.69+ (0.42)	-1.05 (0.92)	-0.91 (0.95)	-5.86* (2.69)	-5.67+ (3.35)	13.81 (8.43)	13.22 (8.31)
26	-0.54 (0.43)	-0.39 (0.45)	-1.26 (1.00)	-1.05 (1.04)	-6.04* (2.69)	-5.94 (4.04)	7.96+ (4.72)	10.38+ (5.48)
28	-1.16* (0.51)	-0.97+ (0.54)	-2.06+ (1.20)	-1.83 (1.23)	-5.31 (3.52)	-5.14 (5.20)	0.64 (7.81)	4.76 (9.83)
30	-1.04+ (0.58)	-0.79 (0.63)	-2.48+ (1.31)	-2.18 (1.36)	-5.38 (3.77)	-5.21 (6.39)	7.18 (10.08)	13.47 (13.60)
32	-1.32* (0.66)	-1.03 (0.71)	-2.50+ (1.48)	-2.20 (1.59)	-6.12 (3.88)	-5.94 (7.43)	0.87 (11.48)	9.19 (14.16)
34	-1.38+ (0.72)	-1.04 (0.79)	-1.63 (1.66)	-1.32 (1.74)	-5.36 (4.34)	-5.05 (8.55)	5.01 (11.71)	14.18 (16.86)
36	-1.65* (0.80)	-1.27 (0.88)	-2.20 (1.85)	-1.83 (1.98)	-5.81 (4.73)	-5.54 (9.83)	3.70 (13.56)	15.10 (19.26)
38	-1.54+ (0.86)	-1.12 (0.96)	-1.75 (1.96)	-1.34 (2.08)	-6.00 (5.06)	-5.55 (11.06)	5.61 (14.90)	18.89 (21.95)
40	-1.63+ (0.93)	-1.16 (1.03)	-1.96 (2.10)	-1.56 (2.24)	-5.38 (5.72)	-4.97 (12.13)	0.24 (17.12)	15.06 (25.25)
42	-1.48 (1.00)	-0.97 (1.12)	-1.81 (2.29)	-1.34 (2.42)	-3.70 (6.14)	-3.30 (13.67)	-3.11 (19.43)	13.59 (28.36)
44	-1.54 (1.07)	-1.00 (1.19)	-2.59 (2.58)	-2.09 (2.67)	-2.15 (6.62)	-1.72 (14.46)	-6.85 (22.60)	10.96 (32.10)
46	-1.70 (1.17)	-1.10 (1.29)	-1.76 (2.82)	-1.19 (2.90)	-2.38 (7.24)	-1.80 (16.10)	1.04 (24.87)	22.21 (35.34)
48	-1.93 (1.27)	-1.29 (1.40)	-2.71 (3.21)	-2.15 (3.25)	-0.61 (7.76)	-0.07 (16.70)	1.59 (27.15)	23.75 (38.42)
50	-0.66 (1.30)	0.02 (1.46)	-3.46 (3.62)	-2.79 (3.65)	-0.86 (8.49)	-0.50 (18.18)	-5.05 (30.36)	21.18 (42.79)
52	-1.46 (1.40)	-0.75 (1.55)	-3.82 (3.89)	-3.10 (3.91)	-1.32 (13.13)	-1.14 (21.28)	-4.60 (31.88)	22.24 (45.03)
54	0.95 (2.37)	1.72 (2.49)	-4.12 (4.15)	-3.38 (4.13)	-0.67 (15.00)	-0.11 (23.72)	-1.66 (33.21)	26.91 (46.71)
Age of the youngest child (Ref.: 0)								
2	-0.30+ (0.15)	-0.30+ (0.15)	-0.08 (0.27)	-0.13 (0.28)	-0.25 (1.34)	-0.28 (1.35)	0.48 (3.07)	0.17 (3.14)
4	-0.18 (0.14)	-0.20 (0.14)	0.24 (0.35)	0.18 (0.36)	-1.19 (1.74)	-1.33 (1.82)	-0.56 (3.11)	-0.63 (3.16)
6	-0.09 (0.18)	-0.10 (0.18)	0.11 (0.34)	0.06 (0.35)	-0.82 (1.90)	-0.83 (1.92)	-2.64 (6.31)	-3.49 (6.35)
8	-0.20 (0.19)	-0.21 (0.19)	-0.33 (0.40)	-0.37 (0.41)	0.73 (2.05)	0.69 (2.07)	-0.51 (9.78)	-0.89 (8.93)
10	-0.28 (0.20)	-0.29 (0.20)	-0.41 (0.54)	-0.47 (0.55)	-3.21 (1.95)	-3.21 (1.97)	-2.47 (10.74)	-4.62 (10.28)
12	-0.36 (0.23)	-0.36 (0.23)	-0.42 (0.64)	-0.47 (0.65)	-2.70 (2.19)	-2.75 (2.21)	-3.24 (13.19)	-4.65 (12.40)
14	-0.71** (0.26)	-0.70** (0.26)	-0.95 (0.83)	-1.03 (0.83)	-1.99 (2.42)	-1.96 (2.42)	-4.30 (14.99)	-5.71 (13.95)

16	-0.48 (0.36)	-0.46 (0.36)	-0.69 (1.31)	-0.75 (1.33)	-5.64 (3.48)	-5.64 (3.46)	-10.11 (17.17)	-11.14 (15.67)
Calendar year – Ref.: 1984	Yes	Yes						
Calendar year – Ref.: 1996			Yes	Yes				
Calendar year – Ref.: 2002					Yes	Yes		
Calendar year – Ref.: 2010							Yes	Yes
1986	1.10* (0.54)	1.14* (0.53)						
1988	1.55* (0.78)	1.61* (0.77)						
1990	1.94** (0.73)	2.08** (0.72)						
1992	2.12** (0.77)	2.30** (0.77)						
1994	2.29** (0.84)	2.52** (0.85)						
1996	2.28* (0.89)	2.56** (0.90)						
1998	2.16* (0.94)	2.49* (0.97)	0.20 (0.54)	0.31 (0.56)				
2000	2.28* (0.99)	2.67** (1.02)	0.43 (0.59)	0.56 (0.69)				
2002	2.20* (1.06)	2.64* (1.09)	0.94 (0.76)	1.10 (0.88)				
2004	2.23* (1.09)	2.71* (1.14)	0.49 (0.97)	0.70 (1.16)	0.83 (1.51)	0.80 (1.50)		
2006	2.14+ (1.17)	2.68* (1.23)	1.02 (1.12)	1.28 (1.36)	0.95 (1.76)	0.96 (1.75)		
2008	1.76 (1.22)	2.35+ (1.30)	0.83 (1.27)	1.11 (1.53)	1.28 (1.89)	1.21 (1.89)		
2010	2.04 (1.30)	2.68+ (1.38)	2.08 (1.26)	1.92 (1.39)	-0.21 (1.90)	-0.22 (1.90)		
2012	2.05 (1.34)	2.74+ (1.44)	0.57 (0.90)	0.46 (0.99)	0.22 (2.02)	0.13 (2.02)	-8.51** (3.19)	-8.18* (3.24)
2014	2.25 (1.40)	2.99* (1.51)	0.18 (0.60)	0.12 (0.66)	-1.24 (1.55)	-1.35 (1.52)	-3.90 (2.80)	-3.76 (3.05)
2016	2.16 (1.47)	2.96+ (1.58)	0.43 (0.49)	0.42 (0.49)	-1.77 (1.60)	-1.75 (1.59)	-2.20 (2.39)	-1.87 (2.54)
2018	2.14 (1.53)	2.98+ (1.65)			-1.41 (1.44)	-1.43 (1.44)		
2020	2.15 (1.60)	3.04+ (1.73)						
N (observations)	1917	1917	632	632	654	654	155	155
N (individuals)	388	388	159	159	294	294	58	58

Table S9: Coefficients of models testing potential mediators on life satisfaction (based on sample restricted to those who re-partnered within 5 years after entry into single motherhood)

Outcome: Life satisfaction	SOEP							BHPS/UKHLS				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Re-partnering dummy (Ref.: Not re-partnered)	0.74***	0.50***	0.47***	0.74***	0.80***	0.74***	0.96***	0.88**	0.62*	0.96***	1.04***	1.05***
	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.26)	(0.27)	(0.24)	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.25)
HH-income quintiles (Ref.: 1 <sup>st</sup> quintile)												
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile		0.31+						0.35				
		(0.17)						(0.25)				
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile		0.32+						-0.04				
		(0.19)						(0.51)				
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile		0.73***						-0.18				
		(0.19)						(0.40)				
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile		0.74**						-0.02				
		(0.23)						(0.43)				
Satisfaction with HH-income			0.23***						0.31***			
			(0.02)						(0.04)			
Hours per week on housework				-0.02						-0.00		
				(0.03)						(0.01)		
Residential move dummy					-0.18						-0.29	
					(0.17)						(0.45)	
New partner's children dummy						0.05						-0.63
						(0.29)						(0.56)
Age – Ref.: 18							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Age – Ref.: 20	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes						
20							-0.03	0.06	1.12***	-0.07	0.18	-0.11
							(0.26)	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.26)	(0.45)	(0.26)
22	-0.07	-0.07	0.11	-0.07	-0.09	-0.07	-1.19	-1.01	0.84	-1.24	-0.93	-1.37
	(0.37)	(0.36)	(0.38)	(0.37)	(0.37)	(0.37)	(0.91)	(0.88)	(0.99)	(0.90)	(1.04)	(0.89)
24	-0.79+	-0.81*	-0.51	-0.78+	-0.81+	-0.79+	-1.05	-0.86	1.14	-1.06	-0.74	-1.27
	(0.41)	(0.38)	(0.39)	(0.41)	(0.41)	(0.41)	(0.92)	(0.87)	(1.04)	(0.92)	(1.05)	(0.89)
26	-0.54	-0.65	-0.36	-0.52	-0.57	-0.54	-1.26	-1.08	0.97	-1.29	-0.95	-1.54
	(0.43)	(0.43)	(0.44)	(0.43)	(0.44)	(0.43)	(1.00)	(0.99)	(1.09)	(0.99)	(1.17)	(0.97)
28	-1.16*	-1.27*	-0.98+	-1.13*	-1.18*	-1.15*	-2.06+	-1.94	0.16	-2.08+	-1.73	-2.38*
	(0.51)	(0.53)	(0.51)	(0.51)	(0.51)	(0.51)	(1.20)	(1.19)	(1.23)	(1.19)	(1.36)	(1.16)
30	-1.04+	-1.24*	-0.88	-1.01+	-1.07+	-1.03+	-2.48+	-2.37+	0.02	-2.49+	-2.15	-2.85*
	(0.58)	(0.60)	(0.58)	(0.59)	(0.59)	(0.58)	(1.31)	(1.31)	(1.32)	(1.30)	(1.48)	(1.27)
32	-1.32*	-1.54*	-1.15+	-1.29+	-1.36*	-1.32*	-2.50+	-2.39	0.00	-2.51+	-2.18	-2.82+
	(0.66)	(0.69)	(0.66)	(0.66)	(0.66)	(0.66)	(1.48)	(1.48)	(1.44)	(1.47)	(1.64)	(1.45)
34	-1.38+	-1.67*	-1.21+	-1.35+	-1.42+	-1.37+	-1.63	-1.51	0.79	-1.64	-1.32	-1.98
	(0.72)	(0.75)	(0.71)	(0.73)	(0.73)	(0.72)	(1.66)	(1.65)	(1.60)	(1.65)	(1.79)	(1.62)
36	-1.65*	-2.01*	-1.48+	-1.62*	-1.69*	-1.64*	-2.20	-2.19	0.22	-2.22	-1.89	-2.55
	(0.80)	(0.83)	(0.78)	(0.80)	(0.80)	(0.80)	(1.85)	(1.86)	(1.77)	(1.84)	(1.96)	(1.81)
38	-1.54+	-1.92*	-1.41+	-1.50+	-1.58+	-1.54+	-1.75	-1.81	0.70	-1.76	-1.46	-2.06
	(0.86)	(0.89)	(0.84)	(0.86)	(0.86)	(0.86)	(1.96)	(1.96)	(1.85)	(1.95)	(2.07)	(1.93)
40	-1.63+	-2.00*	-1.48	-1.59+	-1.67+	-1.62+	-1.96	-1.96	0.51	-1.99	-1.68	-2.26
	(0.93)	(0.96)	(0.91)	(0.93)	(0.94)	(0.93)	(2.10)	(2.09)	(2.00)	(2.08)	(2.19)	(2.07)
42	-1.48	-1.85+	-1.31	-1.45	-1.53	-1.48	-1.81	-1.80	0.58	-1.83	-1.51	-2.17
	(1.00)	(1.02)	(0.98)	(1.00)	(1.00)	(1.00)	(2.29)	(2.27)	(2.12)	(2.28)	(2.41)	(2.27)
44	-1.54	-1.91+	-1.43	-1.51	-1.59	-1.54	-2.59	-2.59	0.18	-2.60	-2.29	-2.96
	(1.07)	(1.09)	(1.05)	(1.07)	(1.07)	(1.07)	(2.58)	(2.54)	(2.33)	(2.57)	(2.69)	(2.55)
46	-1.70	-2.04+	-1.65	-1.66	-1.75	-1.70	-1.76	-1.95	0.55	-1.76	-1.46	-2.17
	(1.17)	(1.18)	(1.14)	(1.17)	(1.17)	(1.17)	(2.82)	(2.79)	(2.56)	(2.82)	(2.94)	(2.80)
48	-1.93	-2.22+	-1.81	-1.90	-1.98	-1.93	-2.71	-2.72	-0.25	-2.71	-2.37	-3.07
	(1.27)	(1.28)	(1.23)	(1.28)	(1.28)	(1.27)	(3.21)	(3.17)	(2.92)	(3.21)	(3.35)	(3.21)
50	-0.66	-0.83	-0.65	-0.64	-0.71	-0.66	-3.46	-3.55	-0.60	-3.45	-3.08	-3.80
	(1.30)	(1.31)	(1.27)	(1.30)	(1.31)	(1.30)	(3.62)	(3.59)	(3.27)	(3.62)	(3.78)	(3.62)
52	-1.46	-1.49	-1.37	-1.44	-1.53	-1.45	-3.82	-3.99	-1.05	-3.80	-3.48	-4.22
	(1.40)	(1.41)	(1.35)	(1.40)	(1.40)	(1.39)	(3.89)	(3.85)	(3.54)	(3.89)	(4.03)	(3.89)
54	0.95	1.19	1.10	0.97	0.83	0.95	-4.12	-4.38	-1.29	-4.06	-3.77	-4.51
	(2.37)	(2.46)	(2.49)	(2.38)	(2.37)	(2.37)	(4.15)	(4.12)	(3.76)	(4.18)	(4.30)	(4.16)
Age of the youngest child (Ref.: 0)												
2	-0.30+	-0.29+	-0.27+	-0.30+	-0.30+	-0.30+	-0.08	-0.10	0.02	-0.09	-0.08	-0.08
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.27)	(0.28)	(0.25)	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.27)
4	-0.18	-0.15	-0.22+	-0.19	-0.17	-0.18	0.24	0.20	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.24
	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.14)	(0.35)	(0.35)	(0.32)	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.34)
6	-0.09	-0.06	-0.15	-0.10	-0.07	-0.09	0.11	0.08	0.12	0.09	0.11	0.13
	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.30)	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.34)



8	-0.20 (0.19)	-0.16 (0.18)	-0.24 (0.17)	-0.23 (0.19)	-0.19 (0.19)	-0.20 (0.19)	-0.33 (0.40)	-0.35 (0.40)	-0.24 (0.37)	-0.34 (0.40)	-0.33 (0.40)	-0.27 (0.40)
10	-0.28 (0.20)	-0.29 (0.20)	-0.32 (0.20)	-0.31 (0.21)	-0.27 (0.20)	-0.29 (0.20)	-0.41 (0.54)	-0.42 (0.58)	-0.16 (0.50)	-0.44 (0.53)	-0.40 (0.54)	-0.37 (0.54)
12	-0.36 (0.23)	-0.38 <sup>+</sup> (0.23)	-0.47 <sup>*</sup> (0.23)	-0.40 <sup>+</sup> (0.24)	-0.35 (0.23)	-0.37 (0.23)	-0.42 (0.64)	-0.44 (0.70)	-0.26 (0.66)	-0.45 (0.63)	-0.43 (0.64)	-0.32 (0.65)
14	-0.71 <sup>**</sup> (0.26)	-0.73 <sup>**</sup> (0.26)	-0.67 <sup>**</sup> (0.26)	-0.74 <sup>**</sup> (0.27)	-0.69 <sup>**</sup> (0.26)	-0.71 <sup>**</sup> (0.26)	-0.95 (0.83)	-0.95 (0.88)	-0.59 (0.80)	-0.99 (0.83)	-0.96 (0.82)	-0.92 (0.84)
16	-0.48 (0.36)	-0.54 (0.35)	-0.50 (0.34)	-0.53 (0.37)	-0.47 (0.36)	-0.49 (0.36)	-0.69 (1.31)	-0.80 (1.35)	-0.54 (1.24)	-0.75 (1.33)	-0.68 (1.30)	-0.62 (1.33)
Calendar year – Ref.: 1984	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Calendar year – Ref.: 1996							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1986	1.10 <sup>*</sup> (0.54)	1.14 <sup>*</sup> (0.50)	1.36 <sup>***</sup> (0.41)	1.10 <sup>*</sup> (0.55)	1.08 <sup>*</sup> (0.55)	1.10 <sup>*</sup> (0.54)						
1988	1.55 <sup>*</sup> (0.78)	1.63 <sup>*</sup> (0.77)	1.79 <sup>**</sup> (0.62)	1.55 <sup>*</sup> (0.79)	1.50 <sup>+</sup> (0.79)	1.55 <sup>*</sup> (0.79)						
1990	1.94 <sup>**</sup> (0.73)	1.91 <sup>**</sup> (0.70)	1.99 <sup>***</sup> (0.54)	1.96 <sup>**</sup> (0.73)	1.88 <sup>*</sup> (0.73)	1.95 <sup>**</sup> (0.73)						
1992	2.12 <sup>**</sup> (0.77)	2.08 <sup>**</sup> (0.74)	2.20 <sup>***</sup> (0.59)	2.13 <sup>**</sup> (0.77)	2.06 <sup>**</sup> (0.77)	2.12 <sup>**</sup> (0.77)						
1994	2.29 <sup>**</sup> (0.84)	2.28 <sup>**</sup> (0.82)	2.37 <sup>***</sup> (0.68)	2.30 <sup>**</sup> (0.84)	2.20 <sup>**</sup> (0.84)	2.29 <sup>**</sup> (0.84)						
1996	2.28 <sup>*</sup> (0.89)	2.21 <sup>*</sup> (0.87)	2.31 <sup>**</sup> (0.73)	2.29 <sup>*</sup> (0.89)	2.18 <sup>*</sup> (0.89)	2.28 <sup>*</sup> (0.89)						
1998	2.16 <sup>*</sup> (0.94)	2.05 <sup>*</sup> (0.92)	2.19 <sup>**</sup> (0.79)	2.17 <sup>*</sup> (0.94)	2.04 <sup>*</sup> (0.95)	2.16 <sup>*</sup> (0.94)	0.20 (0.54)	0.18 (0.54)	-0.26 (0.45)	0.21 (0.54)	0.21 (0.55)	0.28 (0.52)
2000	2.28 <sup>*</sup> (0.99)	2.13 <sup>*</sup> (0.96)	2.30 <sup>**</sup> (0.84)	2.29 <sup>*</sup> (0.99)	2.15 <sup>*</sup> (0.99)	2.28 <sup>*</sup> (0.99)	0.43 (0.59)	0.36 (0.60)	0.03 (0.52)	0.44 (0.59)	0.44 (0.60)	0.51 (0.58)
2002	2.20 <sup>*</sup> (1.06)	2.08 <sup>*</sup> (1.03)	2.34 <sup>*</sup> (0.92)	2.22 <sup>*</sup> (1.06)	2.07 <sup>+</sup> (1.06)	2.20 <sup>*</sup> (1.06)	0.94 (0.76)	0.93 (0.77)	0.16 (0.69)	0.95 (0.75)	0.98 (0.77)	1.10 (0.75)
2004	2.23 <sup>*</sup> (1.09)	2.06 <sup>+</sup> (1.07)	2.47 <sup>*</sup> (0.96)	2.24 <sup>*</sup> (1.09)	2.10 <sup>+</sup> (1.10)	2.23 <sup>*</sup> (1.10)	0.49 (0.97)	0.50 (0.99)	-0.31 (0.91)	0.52 (0.97)	0.53 (0.98)	0.67 (0.97)
2006	2.14 <sup>+</sup> (1.17)	1.98 <sup>+</sup> (1.15)	2.32 <sup>*</sup> (1.04)	2.16 <sup>+</sup> (1.17)	2.03 <sup>+</sup> (1.17)	2.14 <sup>+</sup> (1.17)	1.02 (1.12)	1.04 (1.14)	0.07 (1.05)	1.03 (1.12)	1.05 (1.12)	1.21 (1.12)
2008	1.76 (1.22)	1.57 (1.21)	1.95 <sup>+</sup> (1.10)	1.79 (1.23)	1.66 (1.23)	1.77 (1.23)	0.83 (1.27)	0.83 (1.29)	-0.18 (1.18)	0.85 (1.27)	0.86 (1.27)	1.00 (1.27)
2010	2.04 (1.30)	1.79 (1.28)	2.12 <sup>+</sup> (1.18)	2.07 (1.30)	1.96 (1.30)	2.04 (1.30)	2.08 (1.26)	1.69 (1.23)	1.84 (1.13)	2.09 <sup>+</sup> (1.26)	2.17 <sup>+</sup> (1.28)	2.14 <sup>+</sup> (1.26)
2012	2.05 (1.34)	1.81 (1.33)	2.17 <sup>+</sup> (1.24)	2.08 (1.35)	1.98 (1.34)	2.06 (1.35)	0.57 (0.90)	0.22 (0.91)	0.91 (0.82)	0.57 (0.90)	0.63 (0.91)	0.64 (0.90)
2014	2.25 (1.40)	1.98 (1.39)	2.37 <sup>+</sup> (1.30)	2.28 (1.41)	2.18 (1.41)	2.26 (1.41)	0.18 (0.60)	-0.03 (0.61)	0.38 (0.52)	0.17 (0.59)	0.20 (0.60)	0.25 (0.60)
2016	2.16 (1.47)	1.89 (1.45)	2.31 <sup>+</sup> (1.37)	2.19 (1.47)	2.09 (1.47)	2.17 (1.48)	0.43 (0.49)	0.35 (0.48)	0.42 (0.39)	0.43 (0.48)	0.44 (0.49)	0.46 (0.48)
2018	2.14 (1.53)	1.83 (1.51)	2.19 (1.43)	2.17 (1.53)	2.08 (1.53)	2.14 (1.53)						
2020	2.15 (1.60)	1.89 (1.59)	2.20 (1.50)	2.18 (1.60)	2.10 (1.60)	2.16 (1.60)						
N (observations)	1917	1917	1917	1917	1917	1917	632	632	632	632	632	632
N (individuals)	388	388	388	388	388	388	159	159	159	159	159	159

Table S10: Coefficients of models testing potential mediators on mental health (based on sample restricted to those who re-partnered within 5 years after entry into single motherhood)

Outcome: Mental health (SF-12)	SOEP						BHPS/UKHLS					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Re-partnering dummy (Ref.: Not re-partnered)	3.53**	3.30*	3.02*	3.60**	4.19**	3.49**	1.64	0.86	0.65	0.76	1.55	1.80
	(1.20)	(1.36)	(1.23)	(1.21)	(1.45)	(1.21)	(2.53)	(2.48)	(2.27)	(2.56)	(2.59)	(2.59)
HH-income quintiles (Ref.: 1 <sup>st</sup> quintile)												
2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile		-1.22						Ref.				
		(1.90)										
3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile		-0.75						2.54				
		(2.05)						(4.60)				
4 <sup>th</sup> quintile		1.44						0.57				
		(2.11)						(3.63)				
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile		-0.53						4.34				
		(2.22)						(3.46)				
Satisfaction with HH-income			0.56*						0.85*			
			(0.22)						(0.42)			
Hours per week on housework				-0.67+							-0.28*	
				(0.37)							(0.11)	
Residential move dummy					-1.63						1.81	
					(1.71)						(4.23)	
New partner's children dummy						0.70						-3.73
						(4.59)						(4.66)
Age – Ref.: 20	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Age – Ref.: 22							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
22	-3.92	-2.64	-5.00	-2.93	-3.86	-3.88						
	(3.61)	(3.87)	(3.54)	(3.63)	(3.47)	(3.62)						
24	-5.86*	-5.34+	-6.71*	-4.90+	-5.85*	-5.81*	13.81	14.10+	16.05*	15.42+	13.23	13.54
	(2.69)	(2.90)	(2.71)	(2.64)	(2.58)	(2.69)	(8.43)	(8.14)	(6.92)	(8.48)	(8.14)	(8.42)
26	-6.04*	-5.93*	-6.66*	-4.98+	-6.04*	-5.99*	7.96+	9.06	9.52**	9.96+	7.29	7.64
	(2.69)	(2.84)	(2.65)	(2.54)	(2.56)	(2.68)	(4.72)	(5.82)	(3.41)	(5.74)	(4.72)	(4.68)
28	-5.31	-4.96	-6.09+	-4.10	-5.21	-5.22	0.64	2.63	2.67	2.66	-0.11	0.43
	(3.52)	(3.60)	(3.50)	(3.54)	(3.44)	(3.52)	(7.81)	(7.62)	(6.22)	(10.66)	(7.33)	(7.84)
30	-5.38	-5.58	-6.27+	-4.09	-5.15	-5.32	7.18	9.42	9.40	9.63	6.56	6.29
	(3.77)	(3.93)	(3.77)	(3.71)	(3.70)	(3.76)	(10.08)	(11.06)	(8.77)	(11.34)	(9.73)	(10.30)
32	-6.12	-5.96	-7.17+	-4.97	-5.99	-6.07	0.87	4.10	3.18	5.16	0.34	0.80
	(3.88)	(4.12)	(3.88)	(3.82)	(3.82)	(3.87)	(11.48)	(12.12)	(10.16)	(12.29)	(11.06)	(11.54)
34	-5.36	-5.22	-6.30	-4.23	-5.40	-5.30	5.01	7.72	7.03	9.67	4.29	5.07
	(4.34)	(4.71)	(4.32)	(4.29)	(4.28)	(4.33)	(11.71)	(12.52)	(10.47)	(12.80)	(11.35)	(11.85)
36	-5.81	-5.81	-7.18	-4.62	-5.75	-5.73	3.70	5.96	5.79	7.85	2.91	3.89
	(4.73)	(5.27)	(4.67)	(4.71)	(4.69)	(4.73)	(13.56)	(15.13)	(12.44)	(14.31)	(13.31)	(13.77)
38	-6.00	-5.56	-7.48	-4.67	-5.88	-5.92	5.61	7.69	7.38	9.79	4.87	5.93
	(5.06)	(5.68)	(4.98)	(5.01)	(5.01)	(5.06)	(14.90)	(16.75)	(13.79)	(15.47)	(14.63)	(15.16)
40	-5.38	-4.81	-6.83	-3.93	-5.20	-5.31	0.24	0.22	2.85	4.80	-0.43	0.56
	(5.72)	(6.49)	(5.66)	(5.63)	(5.69)	(5.72)	(17.12)	(19.17)	(16.41)	(17.26)	(16.87)	(17.43)
42	-3.70	-3.06	-5.26	-2.55	-3.51	-3.60	-3.11	-2.47	-0.07	2.19	-4.04	-2.91
	(6.14)	(6.95)	(6.08)	(6.07)	(6.11)	(6.13)	(19.43)	(20.98)	(18.48)	(19.30)	(19.21)	(19.71)
44	-2.15	-1.40	-4.00	-0.97	-2.09	-2.05	-6.85	-8.50	-0.96	-3.35	-7.82	-6.68
	(6.62)	(7.32)	(6.55)	(6.57)	(6.57)	(6.67)	(22.60)	(24.47)	(21.43)	(22.09)	(22.30)	(22.89)
46	-2.38	-1.60	-4.53	-1.11	-2.31	-2.28	1.04	-2.60	6.77	6.42	0.09	1.25
	(7.24)	(8.03)	(7.19)	(7.18)	(7.18)	(7.26)	(24.87)	(27.17)	(23.56)	(24.06)	(24.58)	(25.17)
48	-0.61	0.49	-2.73	0.33	-0.52	-0.51	1.59	0.71	7.70	8.91	0.61	1.81
	(7.76)	(8.63)	(7.76)	(7.75)	(7.73)	(7.76)	(27.15)	(28.33)	(25.57)	(26.15)	(26.82)	(27.43)
50	-0.86	-0.12	-3.72	0.44	-0.80	-0.75	-5.05	-7.09	0.43	6.45	-6.06	-4.64
	(8.49)	(9.12)	(8.36)	(8.45)	(8.46)	(8.50)	(30.36)	(32.01)	(29.04)	(29.01)	(30.02)	(30.70)
52	-1.32	0.19	-4.47	-1.61	-1.50	-1.20	-4.60	-8.06	1.04	6.40	-5.64	-4.18
	(13.13)	(13.35)	(12.90)	(13.07)	(13.14)	(13.16)	(31.88)	(33.93)	(30.15)	(30.26)	(31.58)	(32.25)
54	-0.67	1.33	-3.63	-1.34	-1.60	-0.50	-1.66	-5.53	4.05	10.28	-2.82	-1.11
	(15.00)	(15.05)	(14.56)	(14.96)	(15.03)	(15.04)	(33.21)	(34.26)	(31.64)	(31.64)	(32.96)	(33.60)
Age of the youngest child (Ref.: 0)												
2	-0.25	-0.17	-0.07	-0.04	-0.22	-0.25	0.48	0.10	1.33	-0.46	0.58	0.45
	(1.34)	(1.34)	(1.36)	(1.36)	(1.33)	(1.34)	(3.07)	(3.05)	(2.79)	(2.98)	(3.09)	(3.09)
4	-1.19	-1.13	-1.20	-1.60	-1.12	-1.20	-0.56	-0.43	-0.62	-1.29	-0.40	-0.80
	(1.74)	(1.76)	(1.74)	(1.76)	(1.75)	(1.75)	(3.11)	(2.89)	(3.15)	(2.94)	(3.09)	(3.15)
6	-0.82	-0.51	-1.18	-1.27	-0.64	-0.85	-2.64	-2.59	-1.57	-3.25	-2.62	-2.61
	(1.90)	(1.91)	(1.90)	(1.94)	(1.92)	(1.89)	(6.31)	(6.27)	(5.73)	(6.16)	(6.45)	(6.36)
8	0.73	0.88	0.49	0.14	0.84	0.72	-0.51	-0.37	-0.75	1.10	-0.72	-0.51

	(2.05)	(2.06)	(2.04)	(2.00)	(2.06)	(2.05)	(9.78)	(9.91)	(8.61)	(9.53)	(9.93)	(9.85)
10	-3.21	-3.08	-3.36 <sup>+</sup>	-3.93 <sup>*</sup>	-3.07	-3.23 <sup>+</sup>	-2.47	-1.07	-1.71	-1.53	-2.56	-2.62
	(1.95)	(1.97)	(1.94)	(1.95)	(1.94)	(1.95)	(10.74)	(11.18)	(9.41)	(10.55)	(10.88)	(10.83)
12	-2.70	-2.59	-2.81	-3.18	-2.66	-2.70	-3.24	-0.41	-3.09	-2.71	-3.18	-3.33
	(2.19)	(2.23)	(2.22)	(2.20)	(2.18)	(2.19)	(13.19)	(13.67)	(11.62)	(13.00)	(13.38)	(13.32)
14	-1.99	-1.99	-2.03	-2.78	-1.85	-2.03	-4.30	-1.19	-3.29	-4.17	-4.15	-4.62
	(2.42)	(2.51)	(2.42)	(2.45)	(2.40)	(2.44)	(14.99)	(15.38)	(13.28)	(14.85)	(15.26)	(15.16)
16	-5.64	-6.14 <sup>+</sup>	-5.70	-6.28 <sup>+</sup>	-5.44	-5.67	-10.11	-5.25	-9.98	-10.39	-9.93	-10.50
	(3.48)	(3.58)	(3.46)	(3.45)	(3.44)	(3.49)	(17.17)	(17.20)	(15.34)	(16.97)	(17.48)	(17.37)
Calendar year – Ref.: 2002	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Calendar year – Ref.: 2010							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2004	0.83	0.82	1.22	0.89	0.76	0.84						
	(1.51)	(1.51)	(1.51)	(1.52)	(1.51)	(1.51)						
2006	0.95	0.94	1.05	0.85	0.91	0.97						
	(1.76)	(1.77)	(1.79)	(1.75)	(1.75)	(1.77)						
2008	1.28	1.31	1.55	1.34	1.25	1.29						
	(1.89)	(1.93)	(1.88)	(1.88)	(1.89)	(1.89)						
2010	-0.21	-0.64	-0.10	-0.20	-0.09	-0.19						
	(1.90)	(1.97)	(1.89)	(1.89)	(1.91)	(1.90)						
2012	0.22	0.05	0.34	0.12	0.31	0.23	-8.51 <sup>**</sup>	-7.48 <sup>*</sup>	-7.38 <sup>*</sup>	-8.28 <sup>**</sup>	-8.50 <sup>**</sup>	-8.30 <sup>*</sup>
	(2.02)	(2.09)	(2.01)	(2.00)	(2.03)	(2.03)	(3.19)	(3.12)	(3.23)	(2.87)	(3.18)	(3.28)
2014	-1.24	-1.40	-1.08	-1.24	-1.17	-1.21	-3.90	-3.61	-3.03	-5.21 <sup>+</sup>	-3.79	-3.64
	(1.55)	(1.67)	(1.53)	(1.55)	(1.55)	(1.56)	(2.80)	(2.59)	(2.78)	(2.64)	(2.88)	(2.99)
2016	-1.77	-1.95	-1.61	-1.74	-1.80	-1.73	-2.20	-2.11	-1.89	-2.76	-2.15	-2.13
	(1.60)	(1.66)	(1.57)	(1.61)	(1.59)	(1.60)	(2.39)	(2.34)	(2.36)	(2.26)	(2.43)	(2.41)
2018	-1.41	-1.28	-1.27	-1.36	-1.39	-1.35						
	(1.44)	(1.44)	(1.40)	(1.45)	(1.43)	(1.53)						
N (observations)	654	654	654	654	654	654	155	155	155	155	155	155
N (individuals)	294	294	294	294	294	294	58	58	58	58	58	58