

CHANGING ATTITUDES AND CHILDCARE POLICY REFORMS **in the federal states of Germany**

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(LIS)2ER workshop

“Policies to Fight Inequality: The Case of Work-life Reconciliation and Family Policies”

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Family Policy and ECEC in Germany

From Male-Breadwinner-Model ...

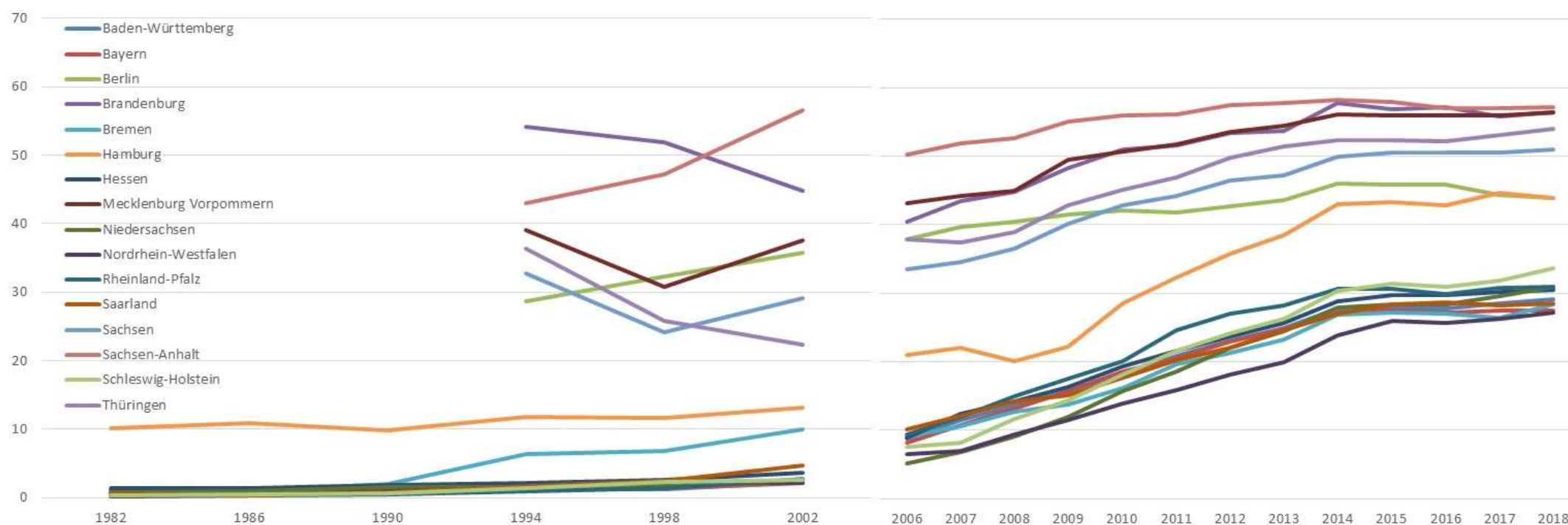
TAG 2005, BEEG 2007, KiFöG 2008

... to the Dual-Earner-Model



Childcare coverage rates in German *Länder* 1982-2018

(No. of places per 100 children >3)



Statistisches Bundesamt (2004) , Statistisches Bundesamt (2006-2018)

Childcare provision in the German *Länder*: findings

Institutional factors: path dependency in East and West influence provision

(e.g. Stoy 2015, Maetzke 2019, West et al. 2020)

Cultural factors: Political coalitions inspired by Catholic values impede expansion

(e.g. Andronescu and Carnes 2015)

Party differences: Social-Democratic led *Länder* governments facilitate expansion

(e.g. Busemeyer and Seitzl 2017, Neimanns 2021)

Childcare provision in the German *Länder*: open questions

West: BAY and BaWü with long-lasting CDU/CSU governments show remarkable increase in provision, while slow increase in NRW and BRE with long-lasting SPD governments?

East: continuing differences across Länder, similarly high increase in CDU dominated *Länder* Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt as in SPD dominated MV?

→ other unobserved factors?

Research question

Can the change of attitudes towards mothers' employment and childcare explain childcare policy changes?

More specifically, can we explain differences in the extent of childcare policy reforms between the *Länder* with differences in attitudes of the *Länder* populations?

Literature

Policy responsiveness: Positive relationship for a variety of dependent and independent variables, sequences in policy cycle and government levels

(Erikson et al. 2002, Soroka & Wlezien 2010, Klüver & Pickup 2018, Gilens 2005, Elsässer et al. 2017, ...)

Culture and norms decisive for differences between welfare states. Country-specific „care ideals“ shape family policies

(Pfau-Effinger 2004, van Oorschot et al. 2008, Brooks & Manza 2006, Kremer 2006, ...)

... and family policy institutions shape attitudes towards childcare

(Zoch & Schober 2018, Bünning & Hipp 2021, ...)

Some shortcomings: Short time periods, wide variety of policy issues, seldom focus on policy outputs

Contribution

Longitudinal research design, time period > 25 years: (causal) effect of attitudes on policies

Dynamic perspective: tempo of reaction of politics

Focus on coverage rates: more differentiated view on policy development

Intra-national variation: Effects of responsiveness in federal systems

In a nutshell



Public Opinion



Policy Output

1992

1993

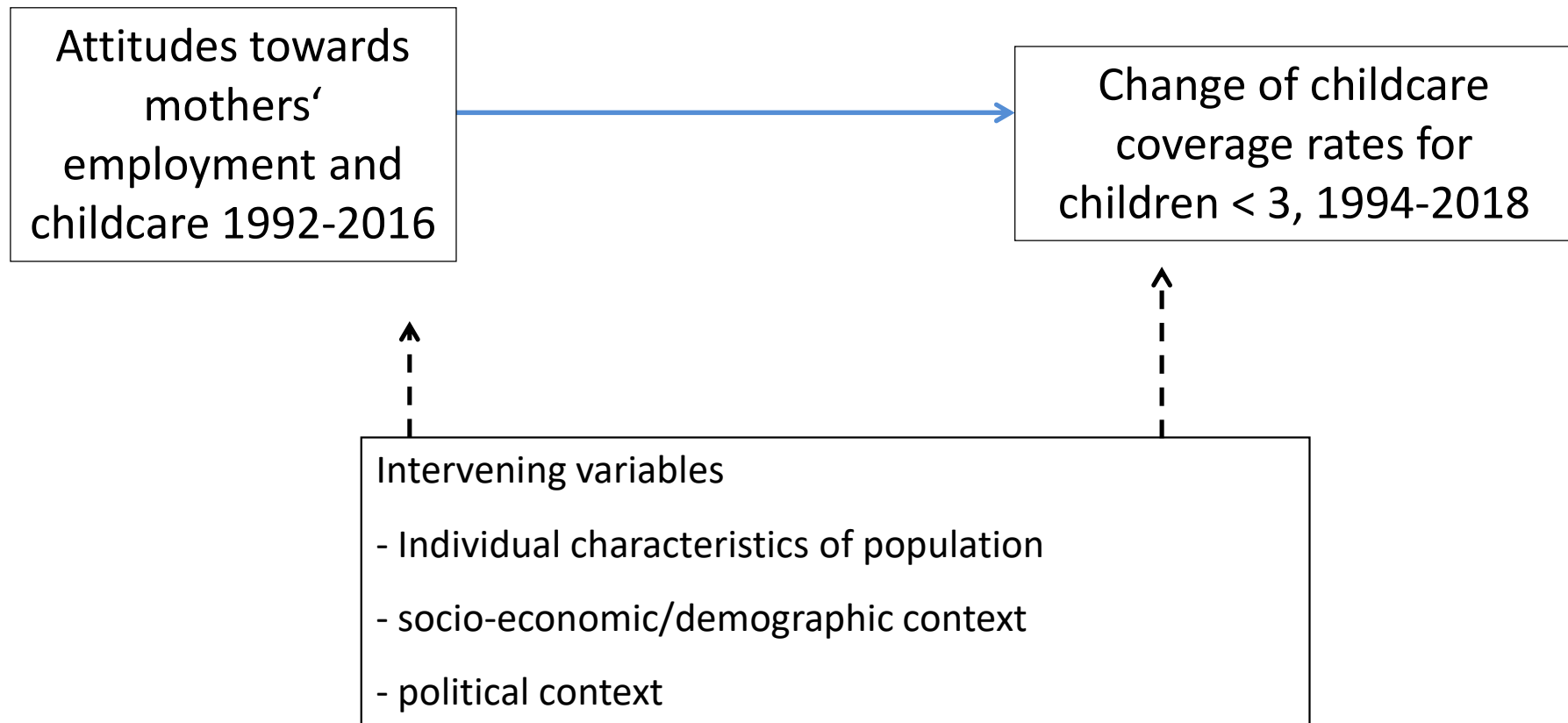
1994

2016

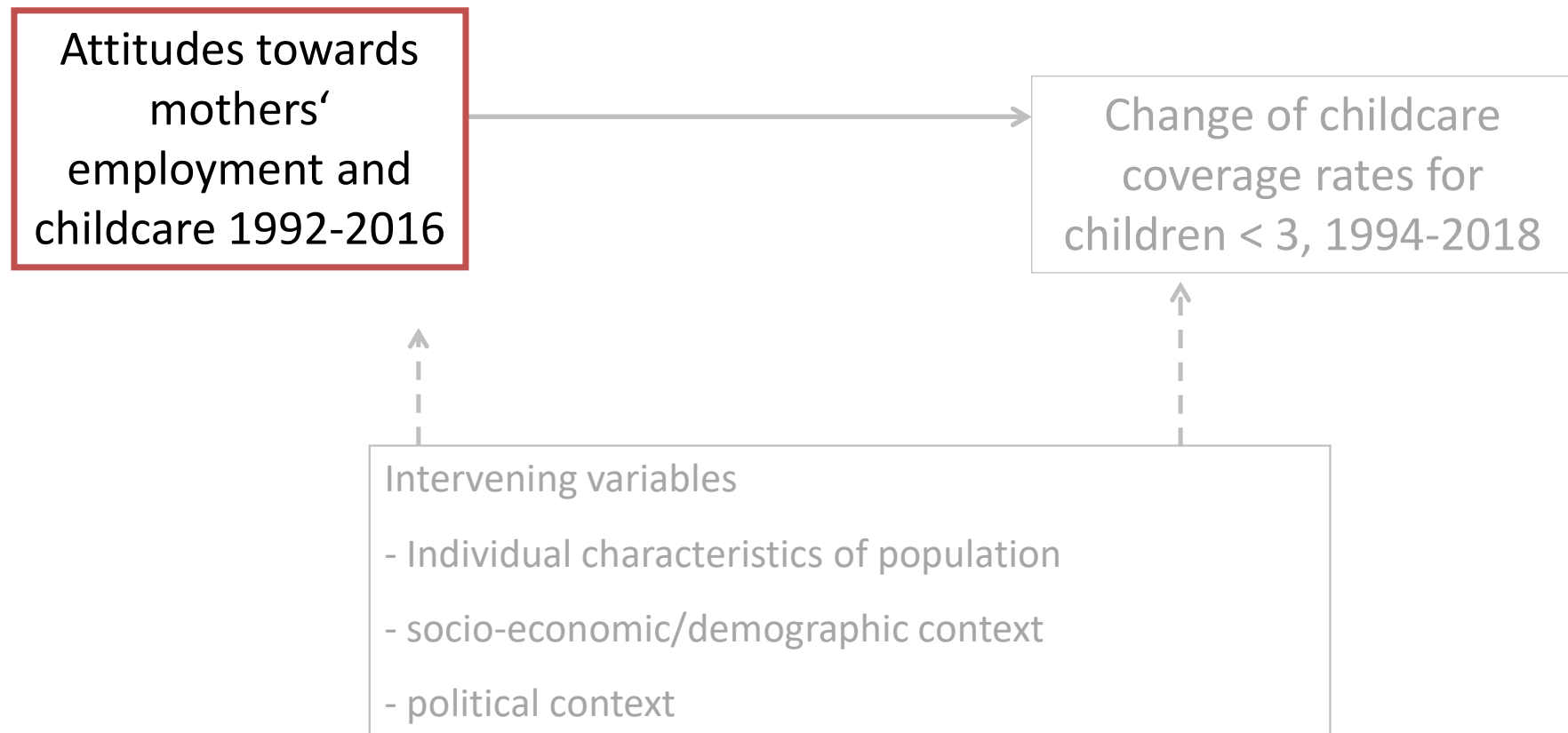
2017

2018

Empirical Approach (I)



Empirical Approach (II)

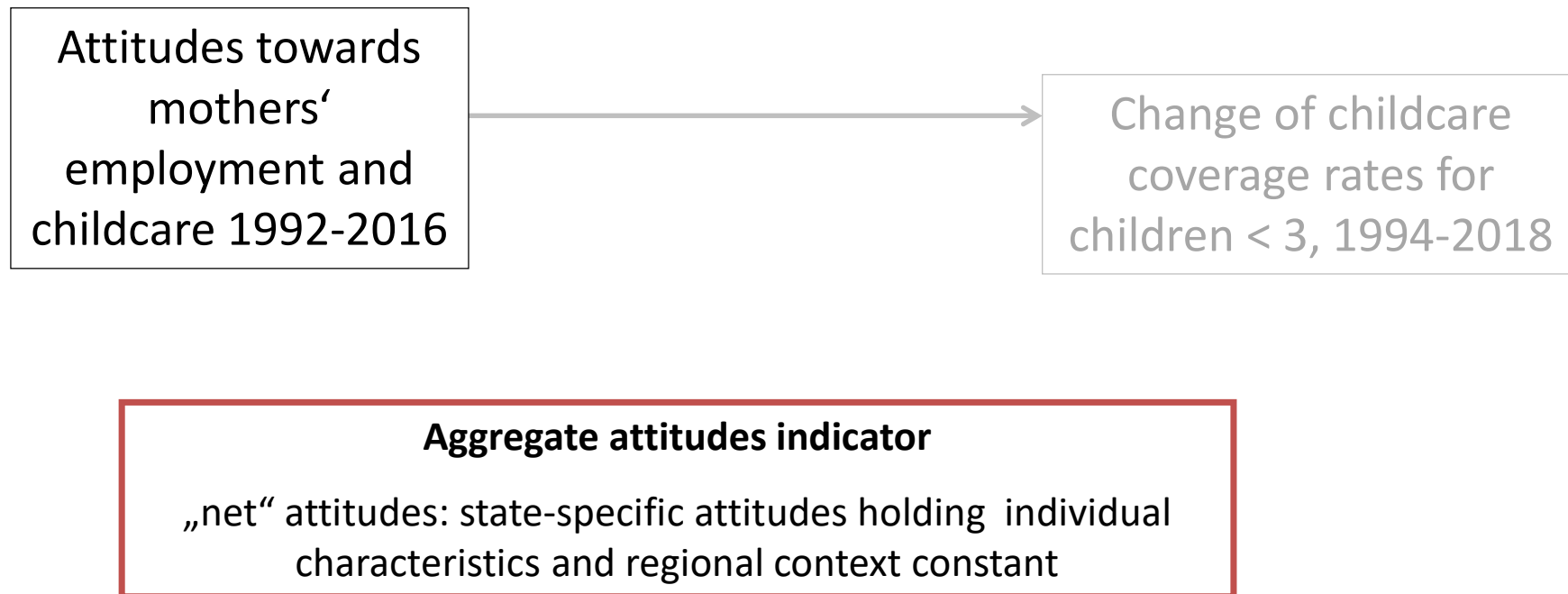


Data: ALLBUS 1992-2016

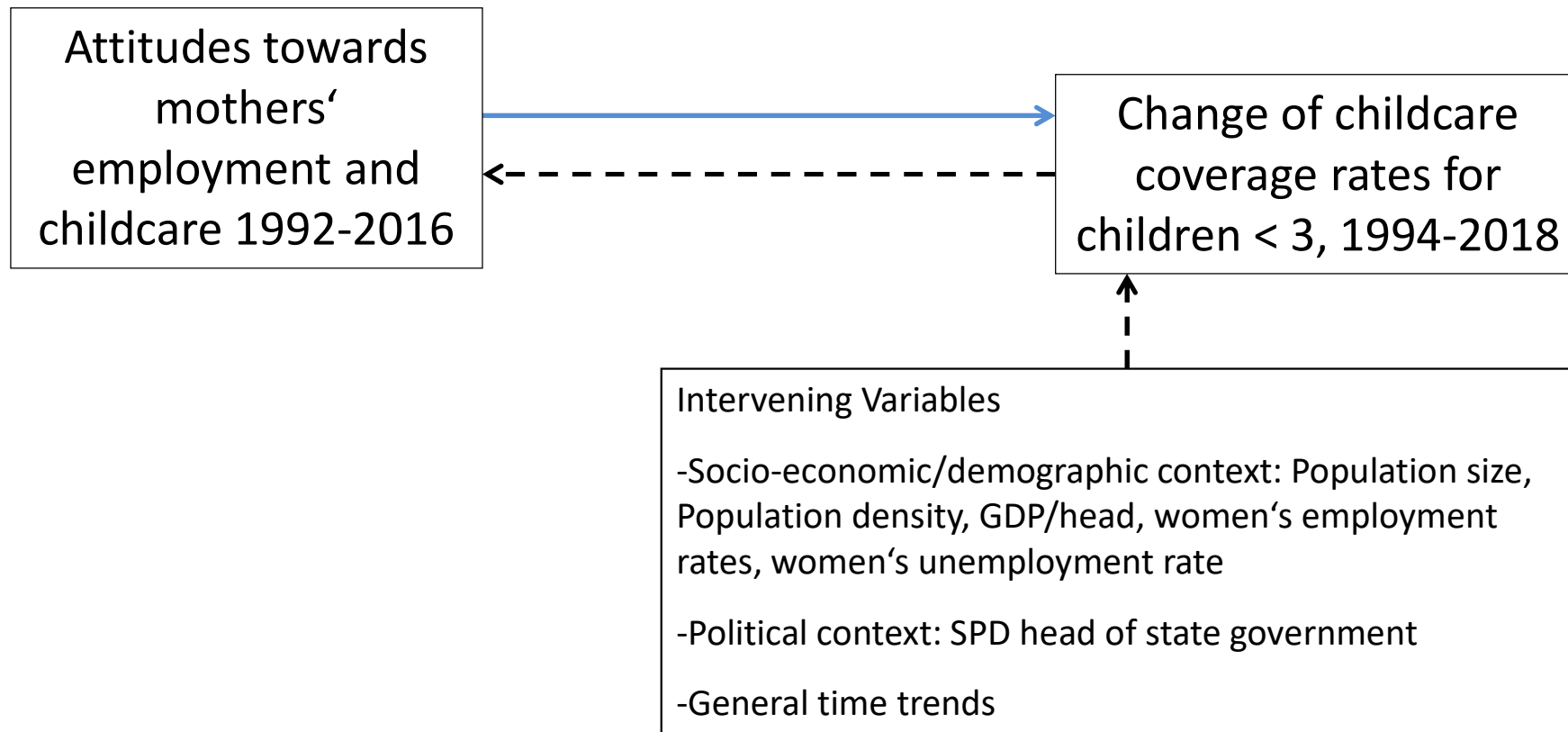
Questions on mothers' employment and childcare (ALLBUS)

- Agreement to statement: A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.
- Rejection of statement: A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.
- Agreement to statement: it is even better for a child if his or her mother works and not only concentrates on the household.
- Rejection of statement: For all involved it is much better if the man works full-time and the woman stays at home and takes care of the children.
- Rejection of statement: A married woman should give up employment if jobs are scarce and if her husband is able to earn the family income.

Empirical Approach (III): decomposition of individual attitudes



Empirical Approach (IV): Linking attitudes and policies



Data: ALLBUS 1992-2016, Statistisches Bundesamt 1994-2016

Hypotheses

(Hypothesis 1)

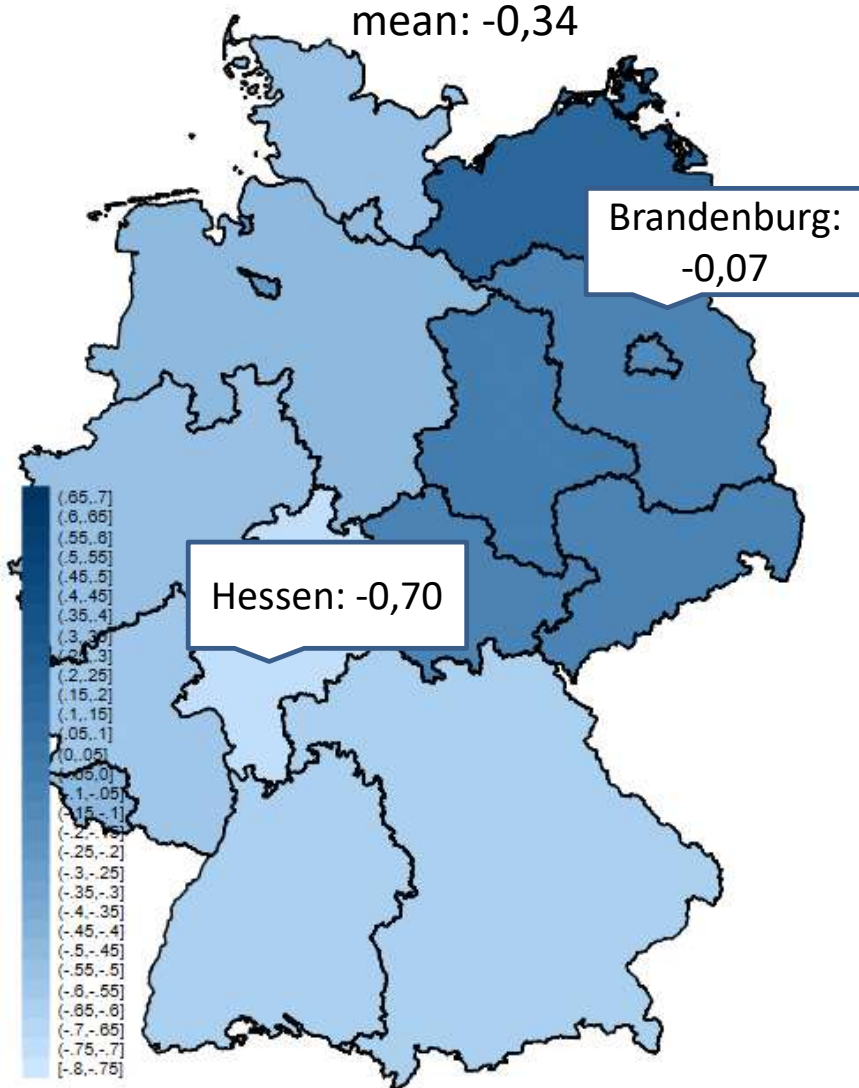
- (a)** The more progressive the attitudes towards mothers' employment and childcare provision are in a state, the higher are childcare coverage rates.
- (b)** The more progressive the attitudes towards mothers' employment and childcare become in a state, the stronger is the rise of childcare coverage rates.

(Hypothesis 2)

Attitudinal changes will manifest in policy outputs only after temporal delay.

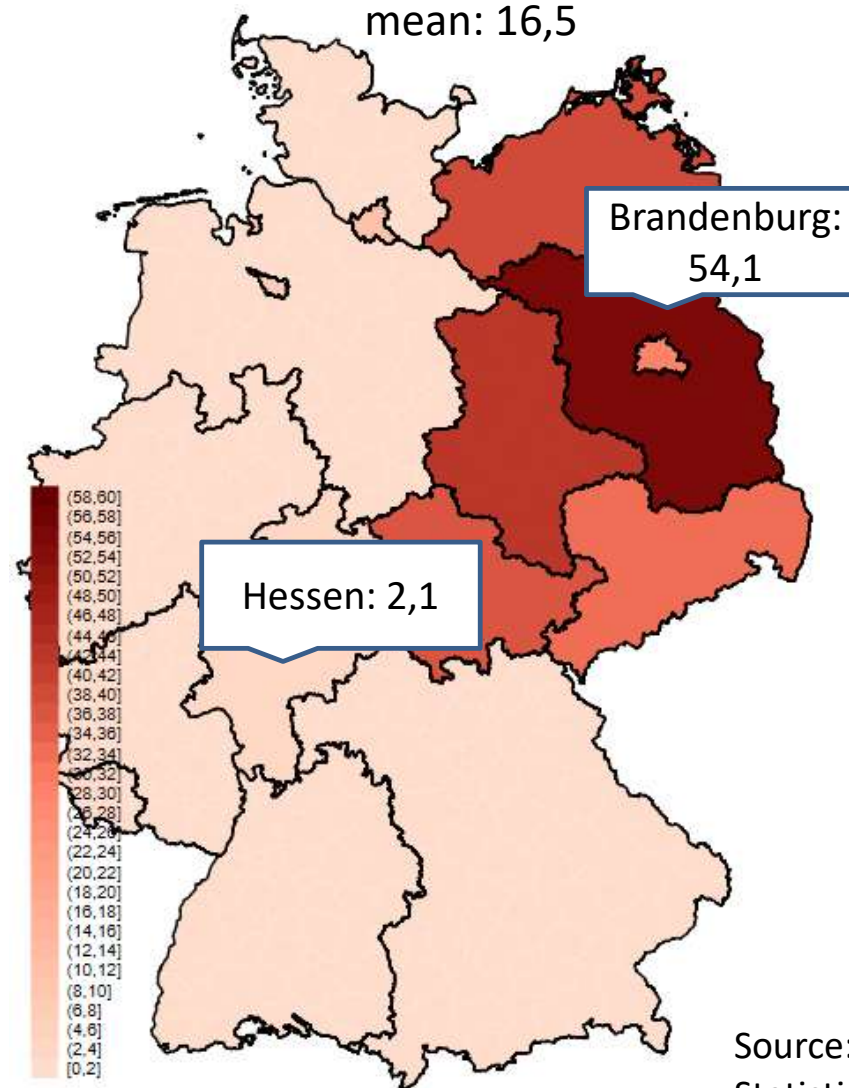
Attitudes 1992

mean: -0,34



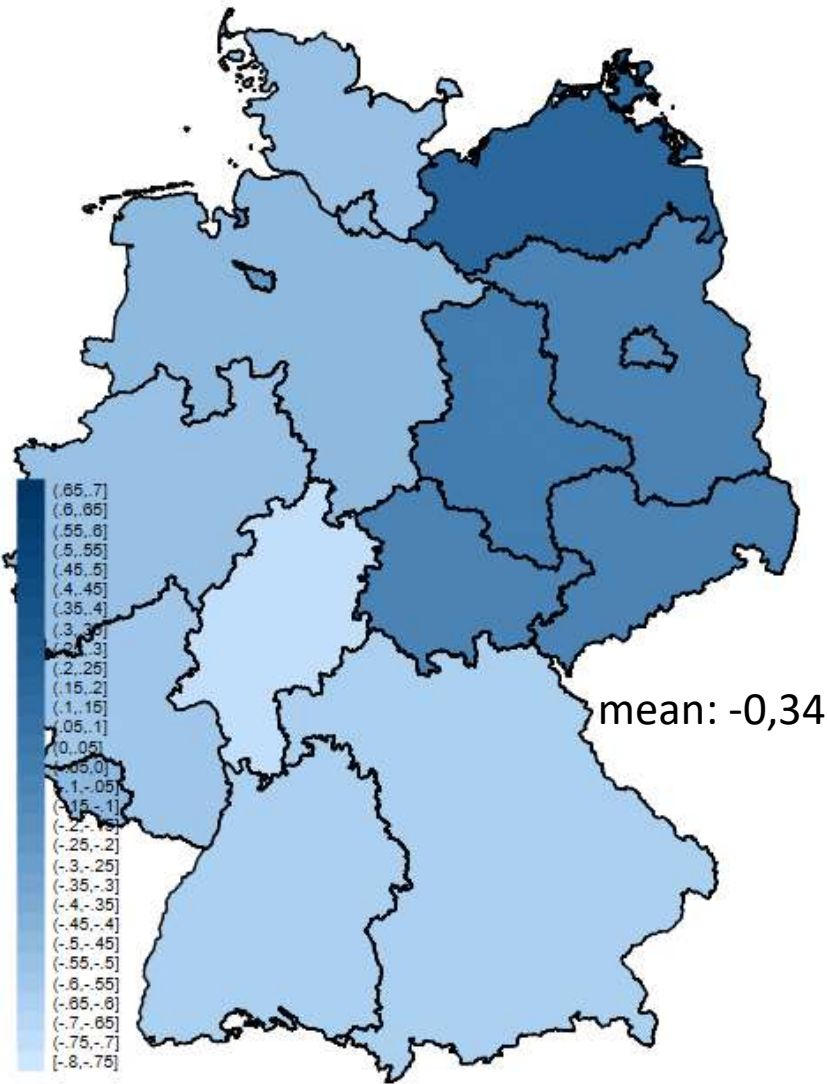
Childcare 1994

mean: 16,5

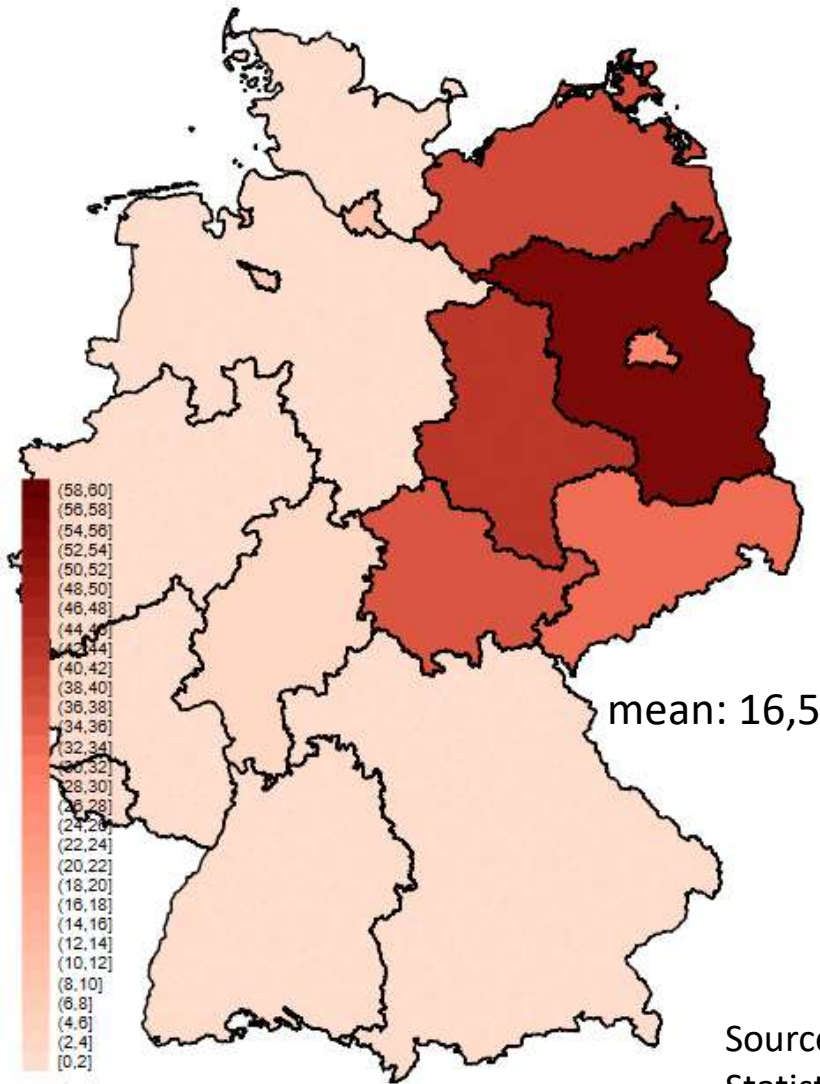


Source: ALLBUS 1992-2016;
 Statistisches Bundesamt, DJI.

Attitudes 1992

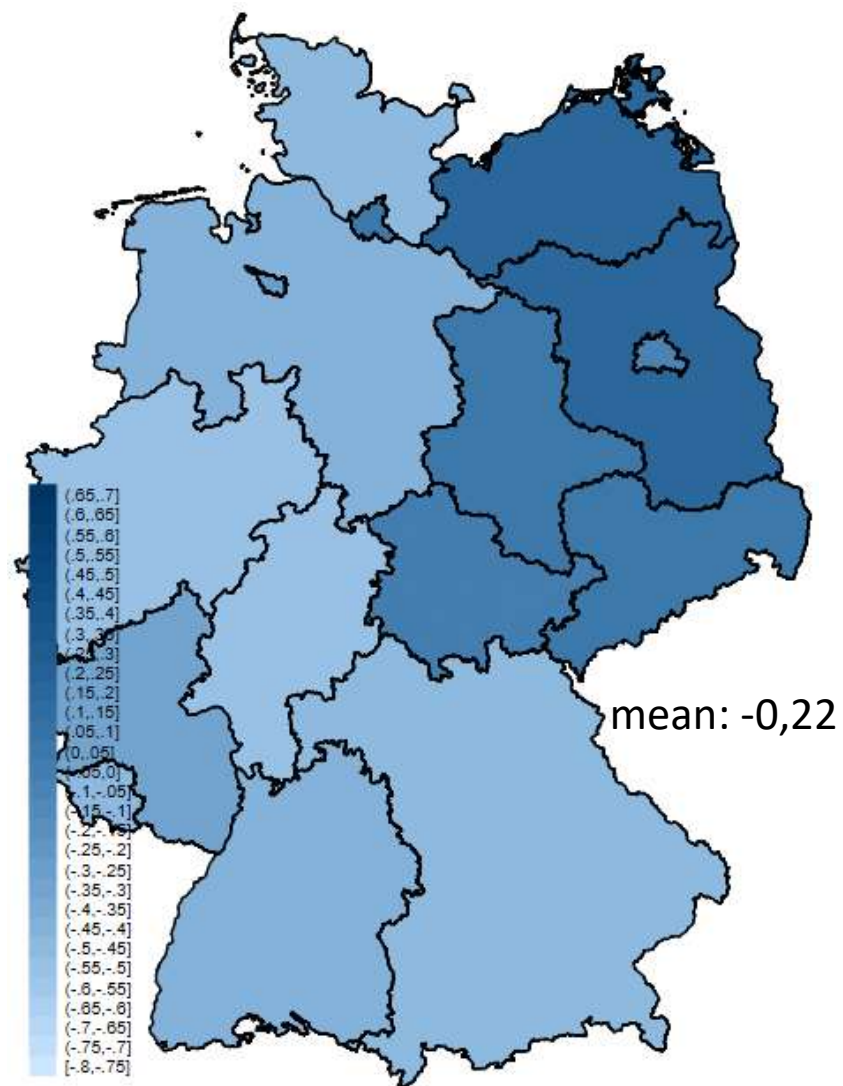


Childcare 1994

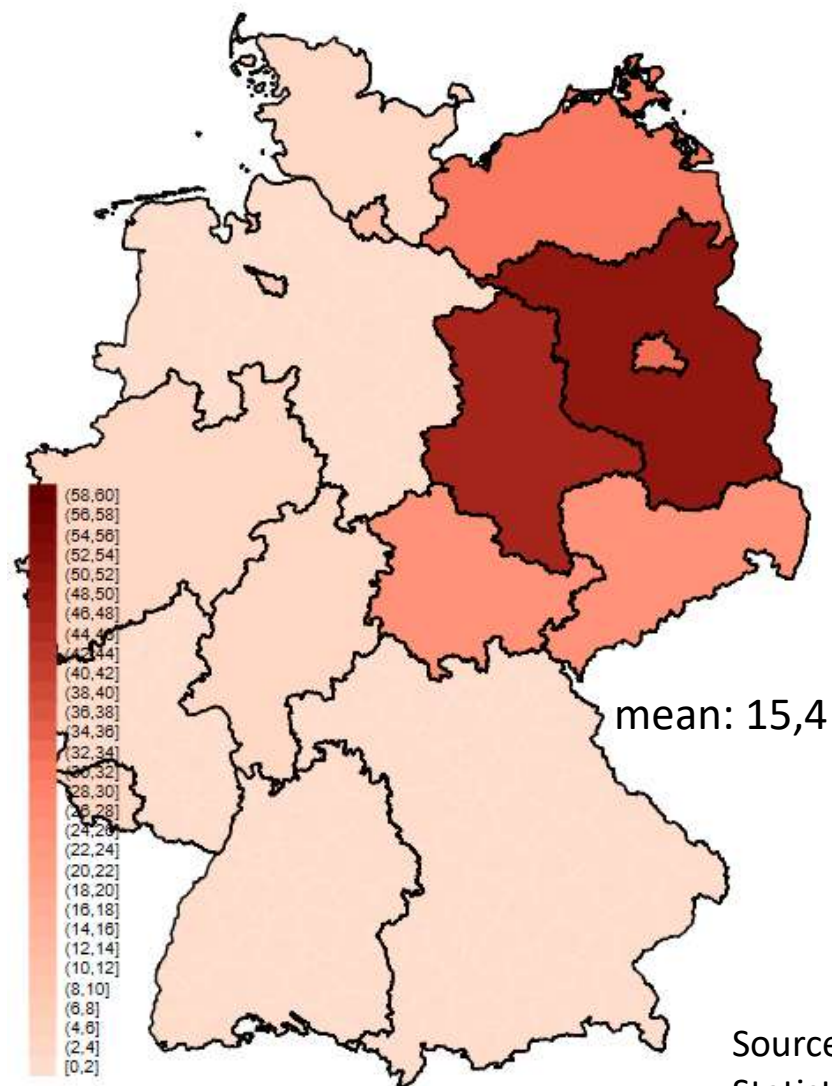


Source: ALLBUS 1992-2016;
Statistisches Bundesamt, DJI.

Attitudes 1996

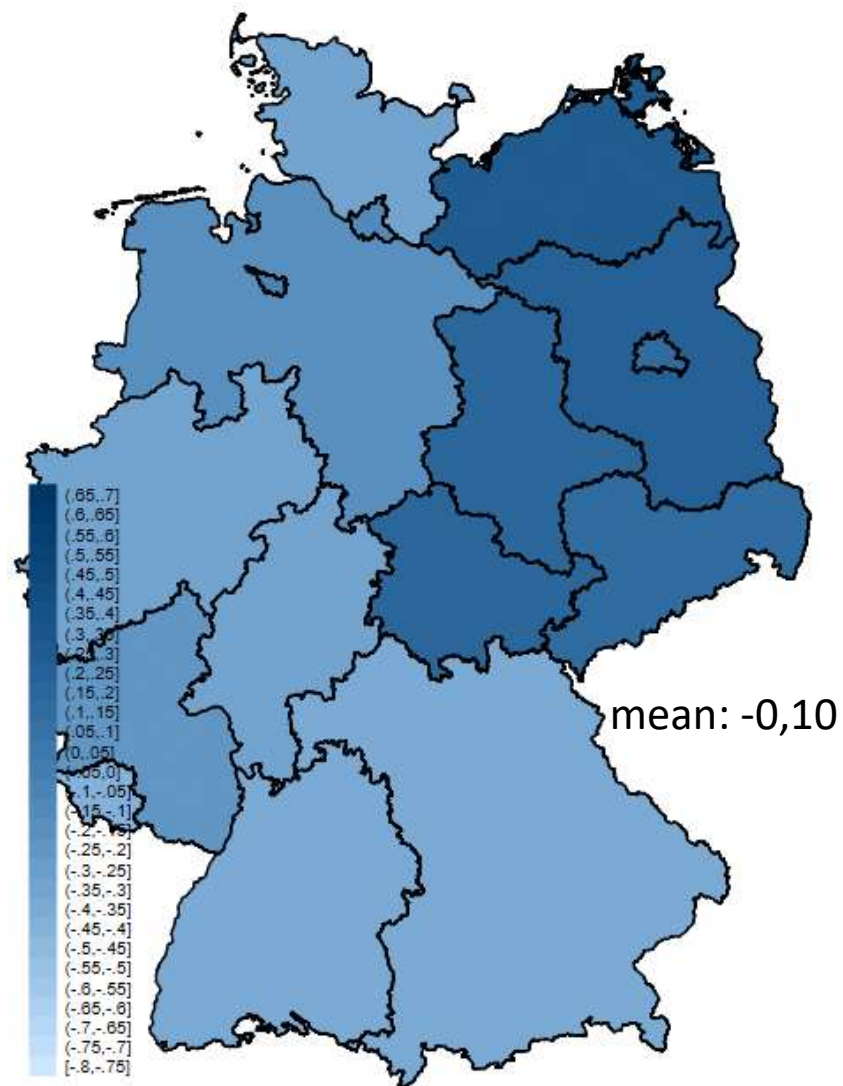


Childcare 1998

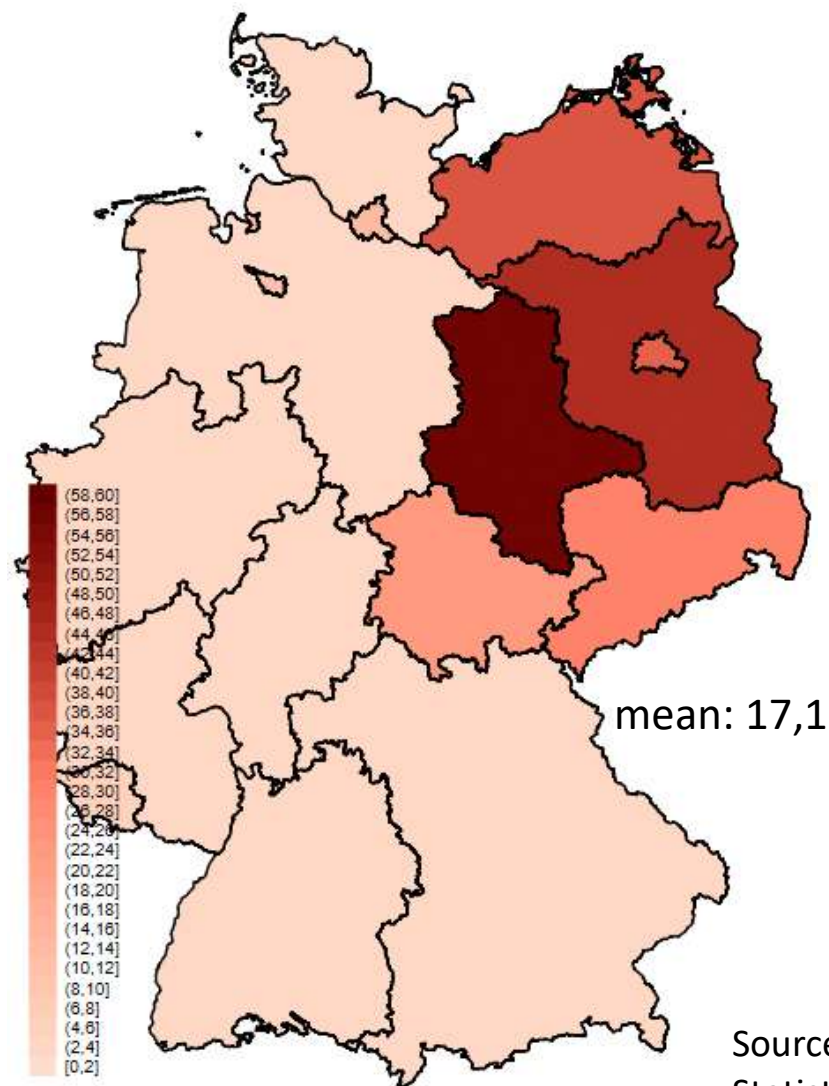


Sources: ALLBUS 1992-2016;
Statistisches Bundesamt, DJI.

Attitudes 2000

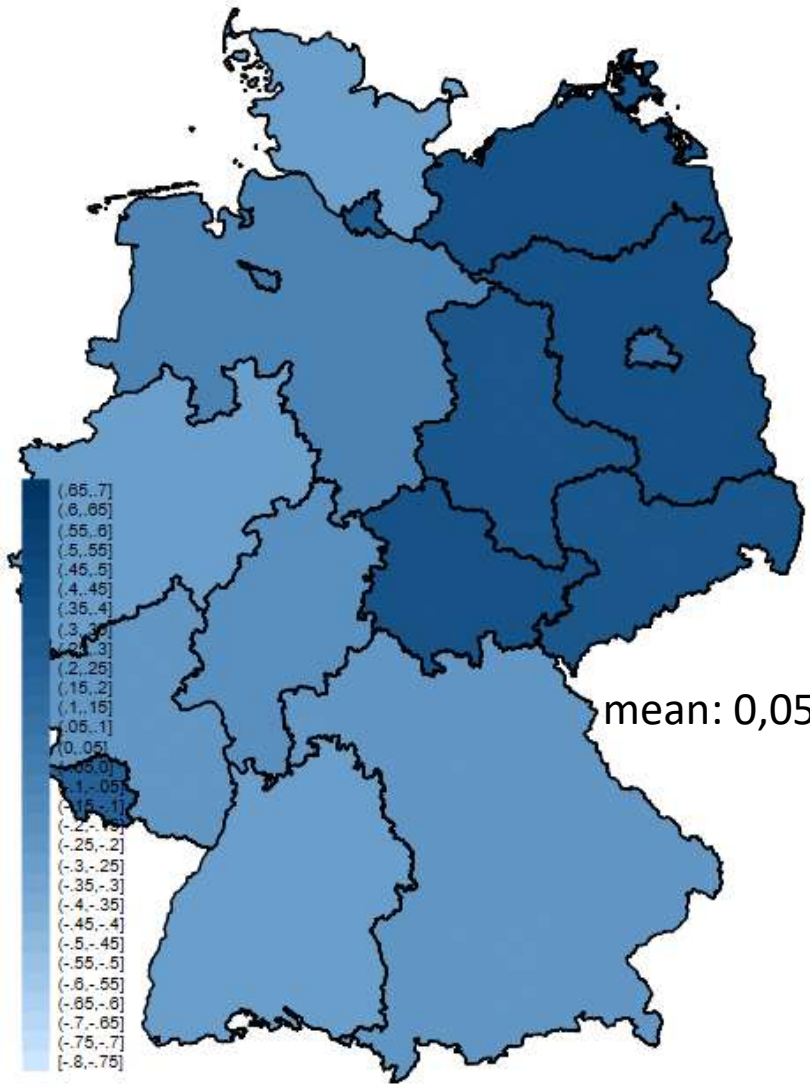


Childcare 2002

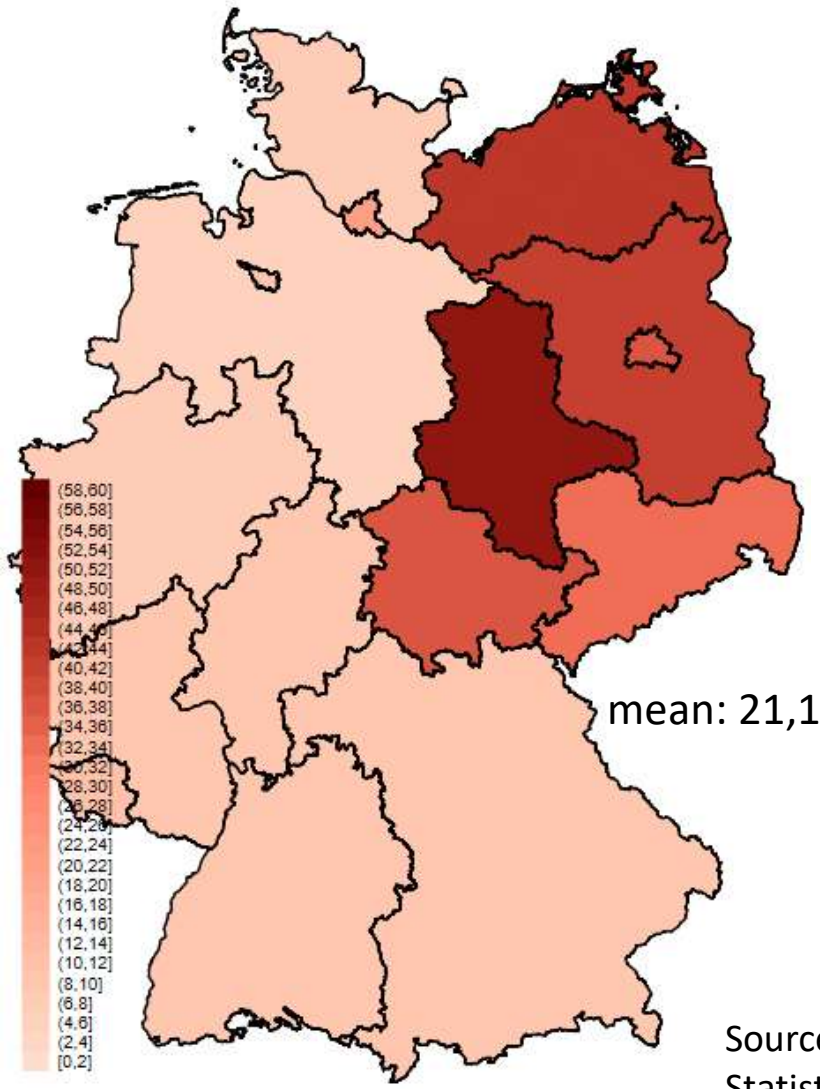


Sources: ALLBUS 1992-2016;
Statistisches Bundesamt, DJI.

Attitudes 2004

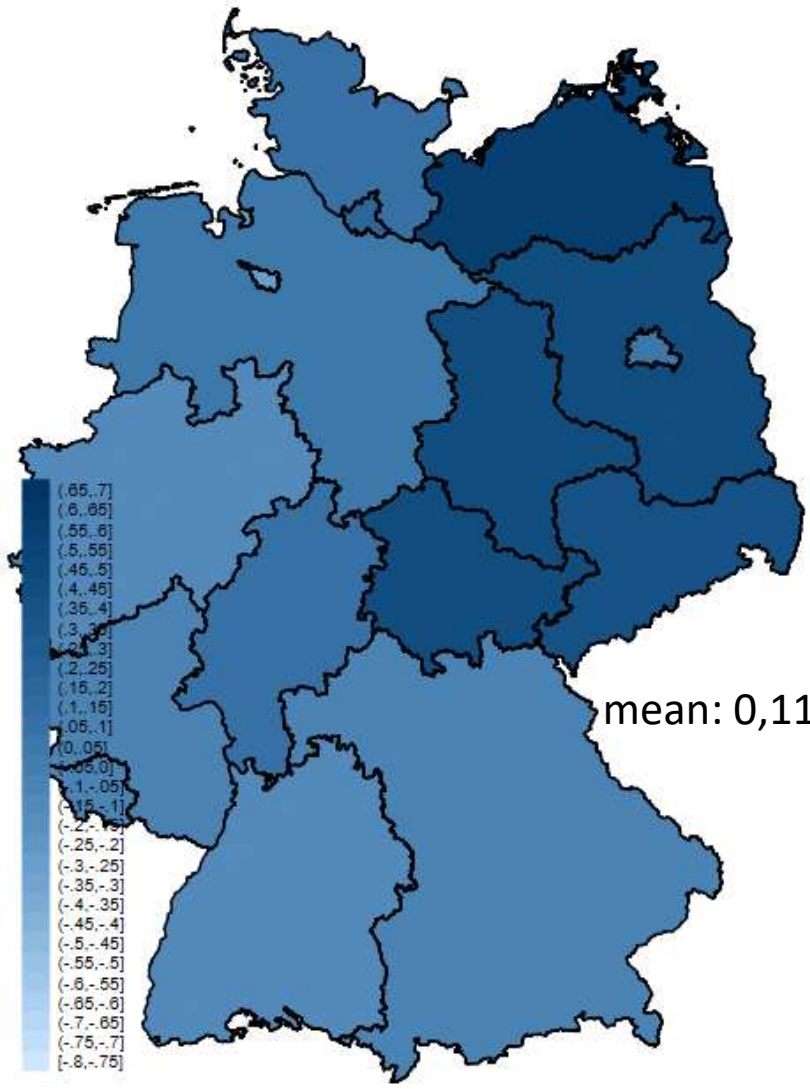


Childcare 2006

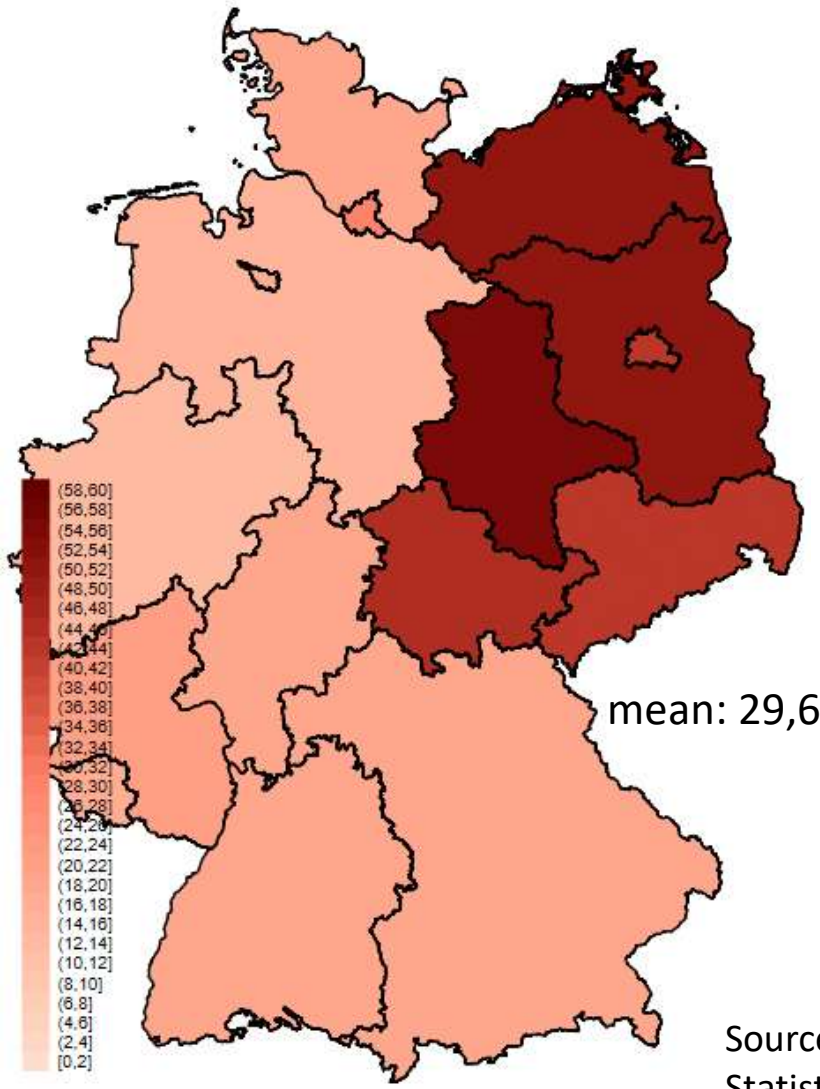


Sources: ALLBUS 1992-2016;
Statistisches Bundesamt, DJI.

Attitudes 2008

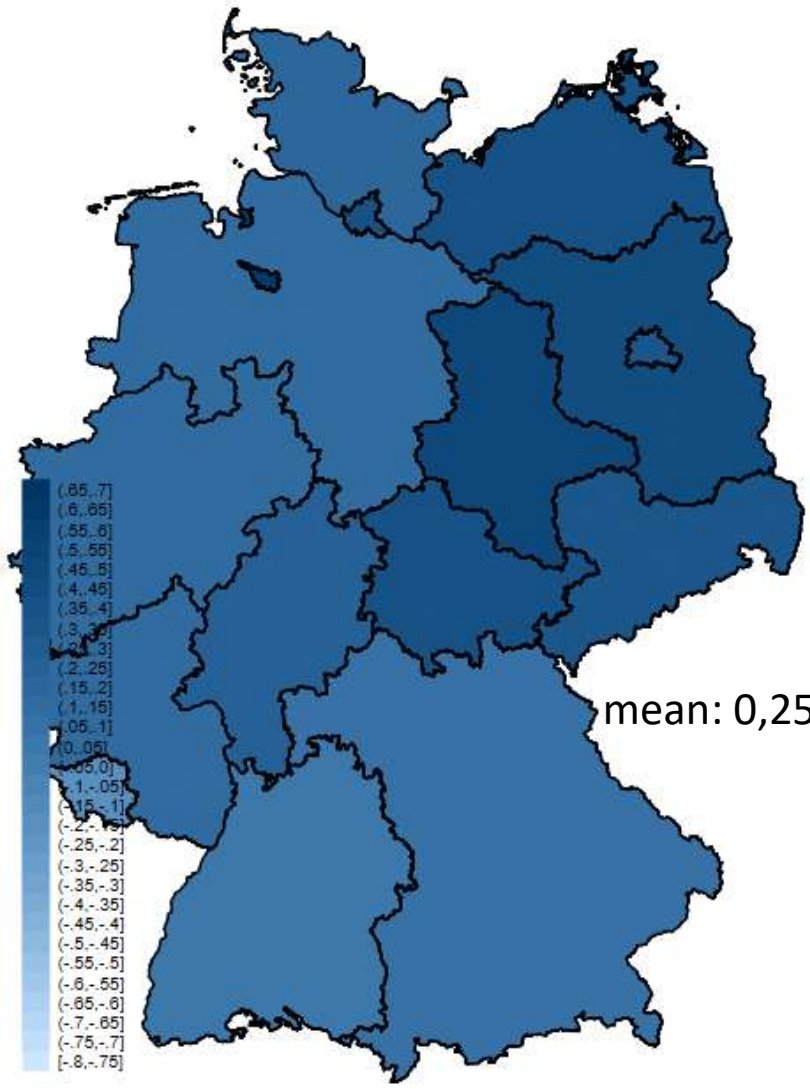


Childcare 2010

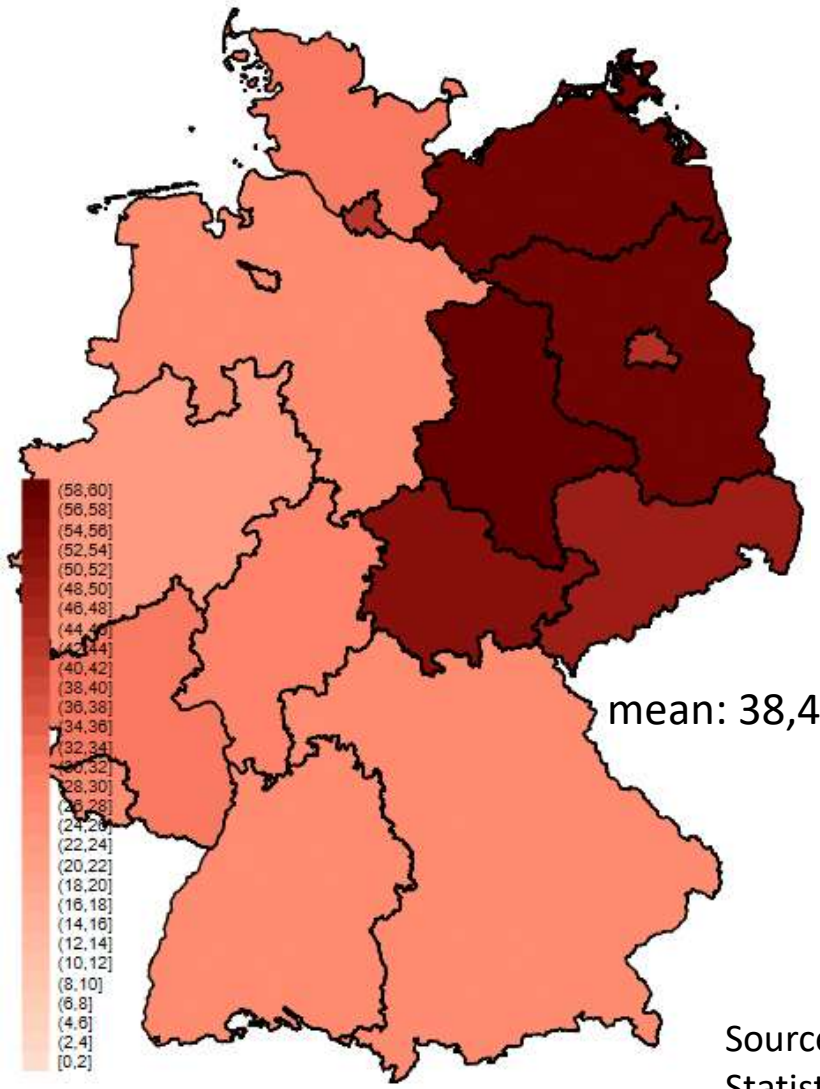


Sources: ALLBUS 1992-2016;
Statistisches Bundesamt, DJI.

Attitudes 2012

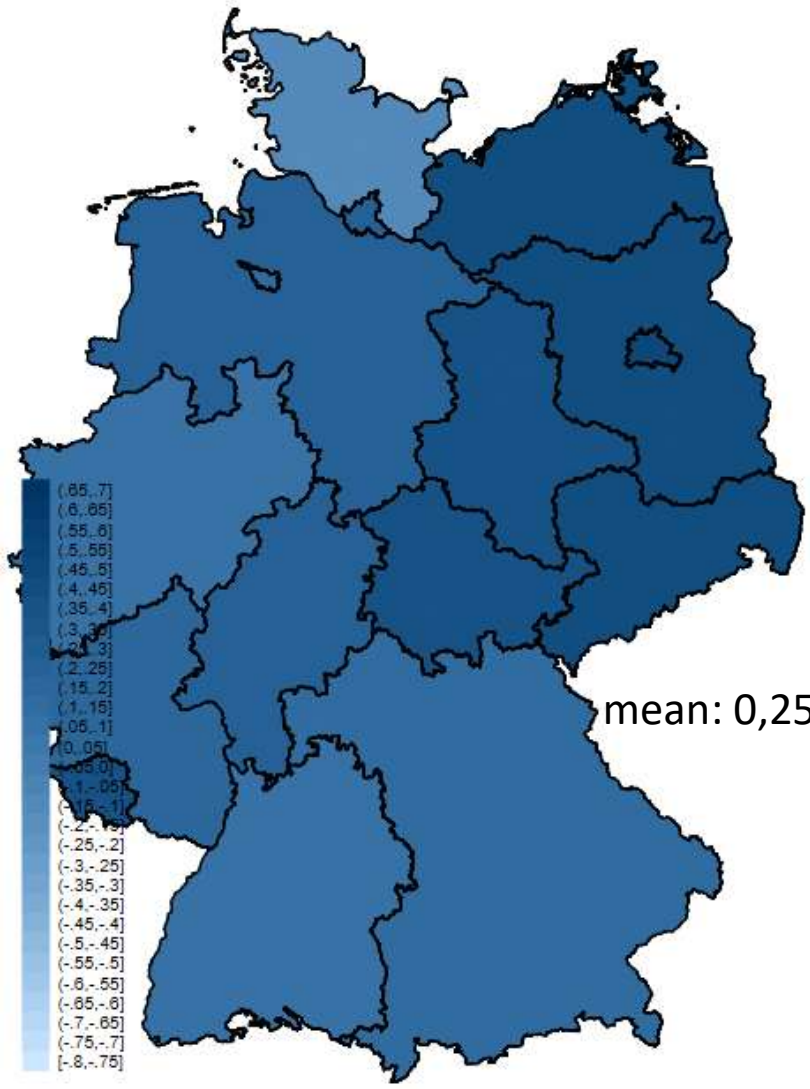


Childcare 2014

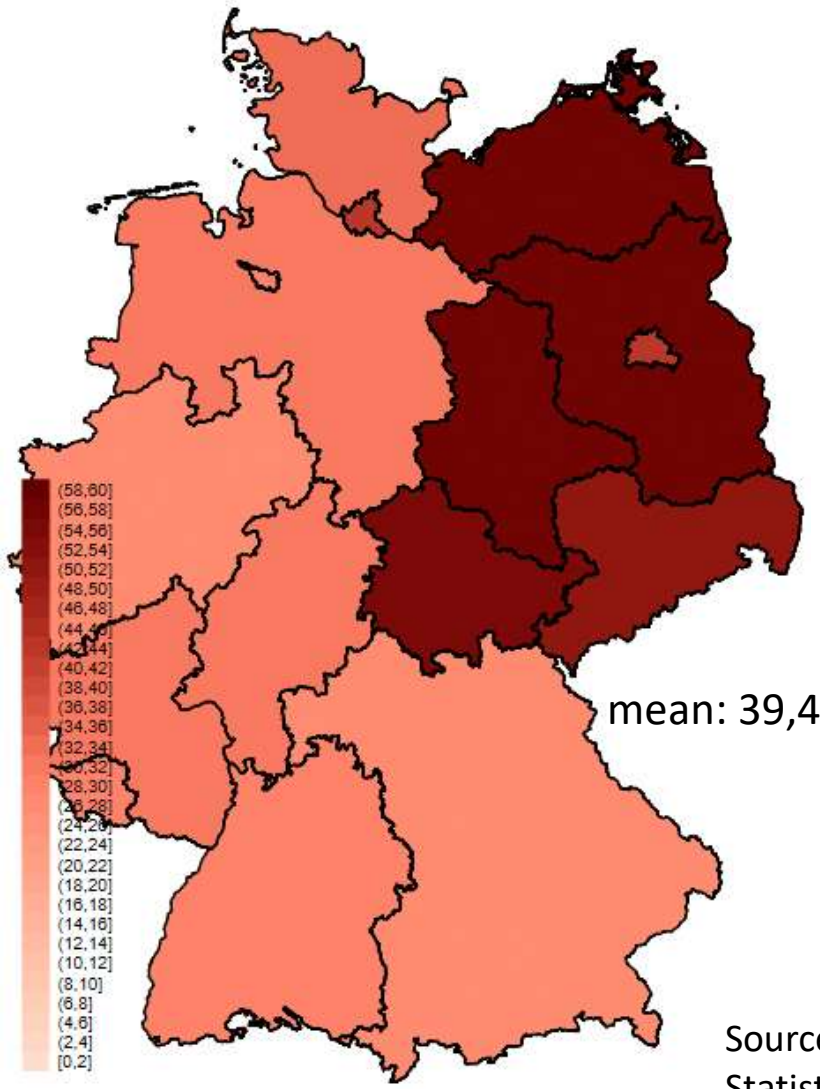


Sources: ALLBUS 1992-2016;
Statistisches Bundesamt, DJI.

Attitudes 2016

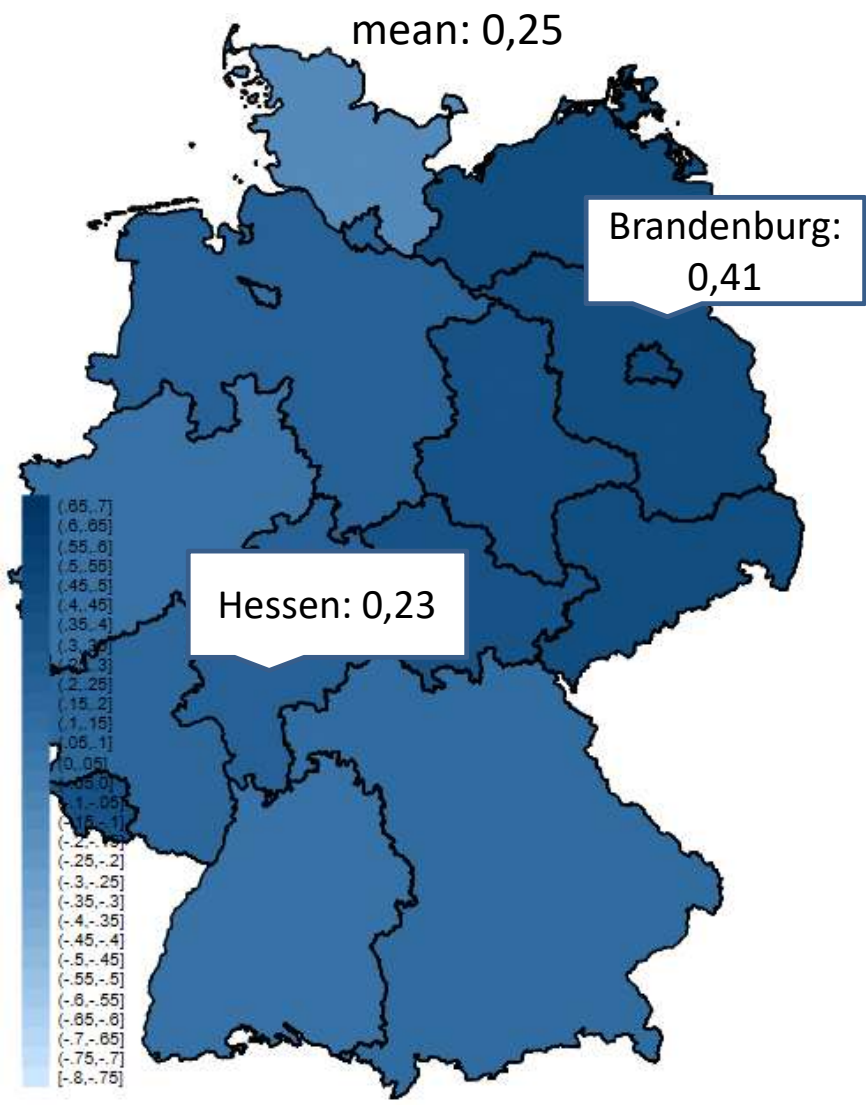


Childcare 2018

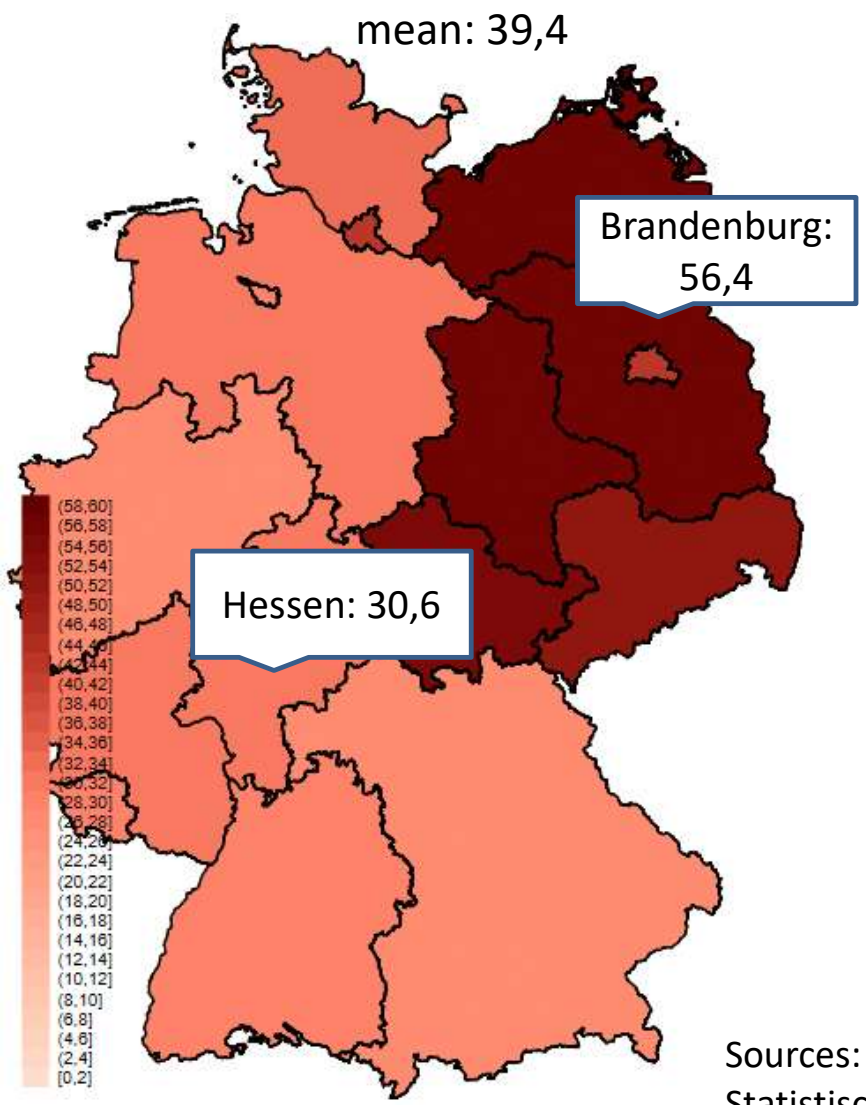


Sources: ALLBUS 1992-2016;
Statistisches Bundesamt, DJI.

Attitudes 2016

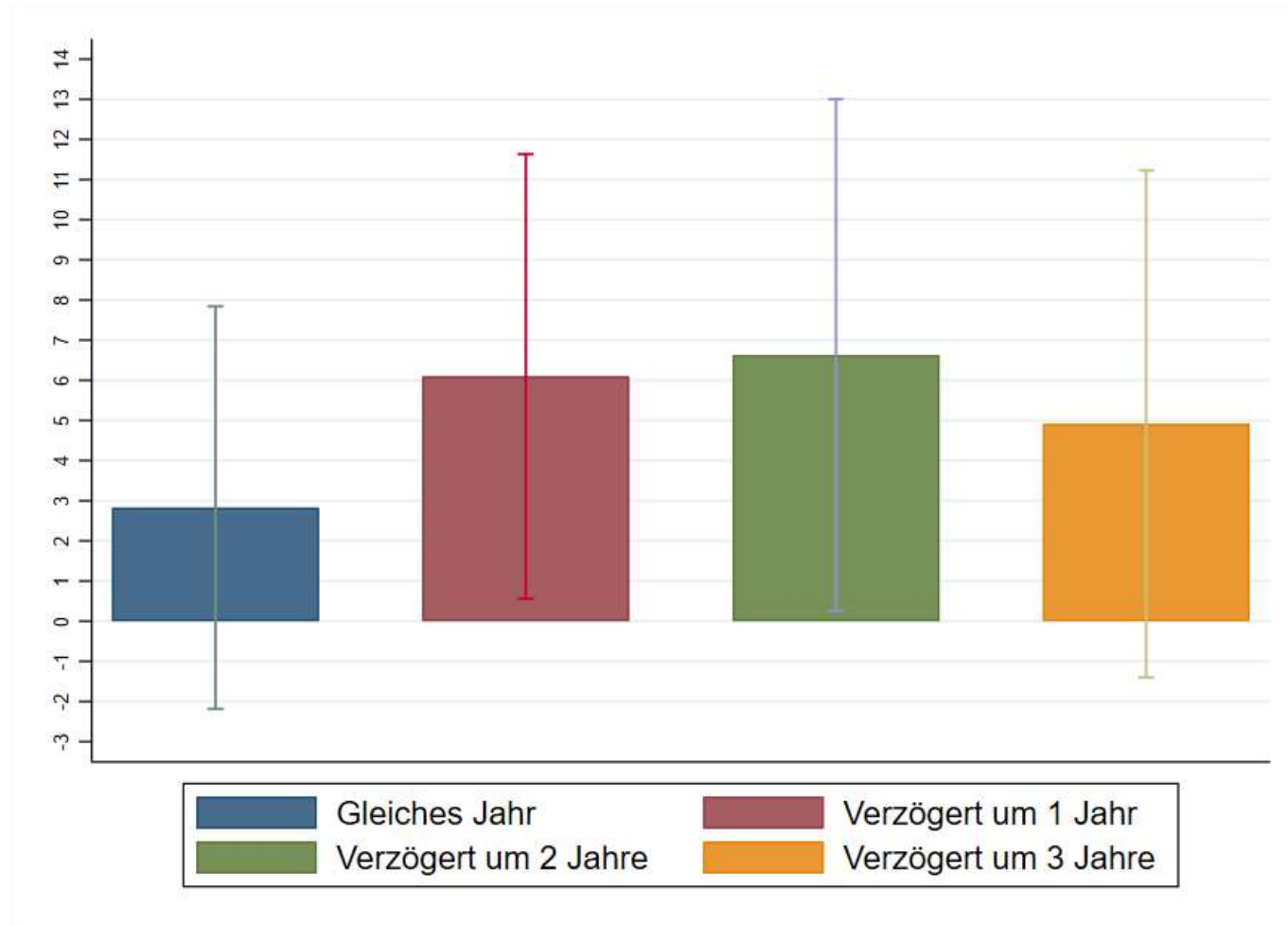


Childcare 2018



Sources: ALLBUS 1992-2016;
Statistisches Bundesamt, DJI.

Results: Regression with fixed effects



Results and conclusion

Länder whose populations have more progressive attitudes towards mothers' employment have higher childcare coverage rates.

The more progressive attitudes become over time in a state, the stronger is the increase of childcare coverage rates.

Lagged effect: Politics need a certain time to adapt policies (2 years).

Robust relationship between attitudinal change and policy change: family policy change is a result of a change of public opinion

Outlook

Update of analysis to cover most recent period

Inequalities/heterogeneity of attitudes: mean might not capture attitudinal variation – do certain social groups drive demand in *Länder*? Is responsiveness lower in *Länder* with large attitudinal heterogeneity?

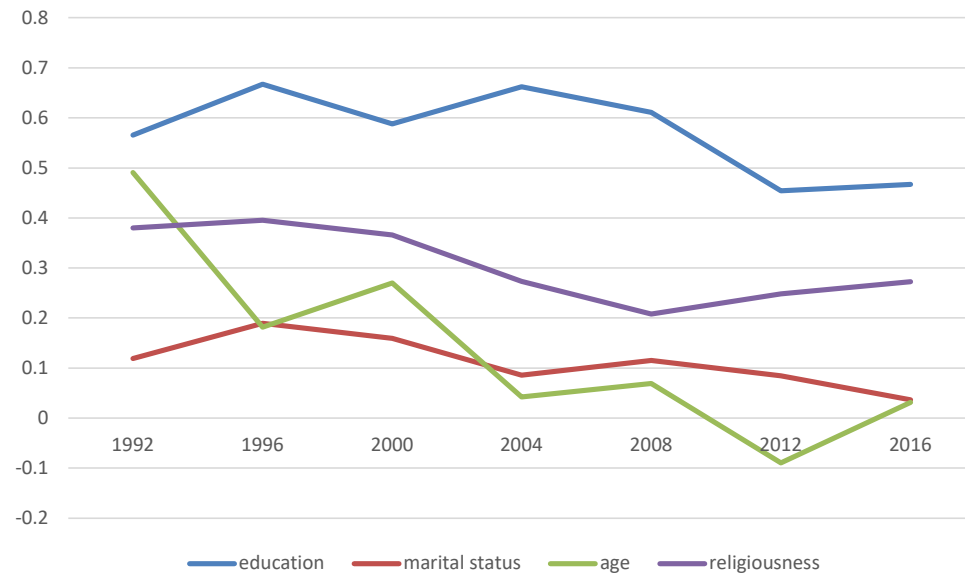


Figure: Difference between women with most progressive and most traditional group²⁷

Thank you for your attention!