

Gender Gap in Reported Childcare Preferences Among Parents

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Abstract

The child penalty explains the majority of gender employment and wage gaps. However, less is known about the factors driving the child penalty itself. In this paper, we explore the gender gap in childcare preferences, a potential contributor to the child penalty. We surveyed parents of young children and elicited the minimal compensation they would require to stay home to care for a child. Mothers require less compensation for childcare than fathers; the estimated gender gap in childcare preferences is CZK 2,500 monthly (EUR 100), 7.6% of the median female wage, and cannot be explained by gender differences in labor market opportunities or prosocial motives to care for a family member. We further document a widespread misperception of fathers' preferences, as respondents incorrectly expect fathers to require less compensation to care for a child than to care for an elderly parent.

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1 Introduction

The gender wage and employment gaps following the birth of a first child, usually referred to as the child penalty, have been extensively documented worldwide (Ejrnaes and Kunze, 2013; Angelov et al., 2016; Wilner, 2016; Blau and Kahn, 2017; Adda et al., 2017; Chung et al., 2017; Goldin and Mitchell, 2017; Lundborg et al., 2017; Kleven et al., 2019a,b, 2022). To explain the gap, scholars have proposed several potential mechanisms, most of which relate to mothers' comparative advantage in home production, established gender norms and cultural expectations (Antecol, 2000; Fernandez, 2007; Bursztyn et al., 2020; Grewenig et al., 2020; Lichard et al., 2021), underestimation of the child penalty by mothers (Kuziemko et al., 2018), and gender differences in childcare preferences (for a more detailed discussion of possible mechanisms of the child penalty see, for example, Andresen and Nix, 2022).¹

This paper focuses on the gender gap in childcare preferences and presents a novel measure of the gender gap in parents' childcare preferences using survey questions. To measure childcare preferences, we elicit respondents' minimal required compensation to stay home to care for a child and what they would require to stay home to care for an elderly parent. The latter question allows us to isolate childcare preferences from other factors that influence minimal required compensation, such as labor market opportunities, household wealth, productivity in home production, and prosocial preferences.

Our measure of childcare preferences rests on the assumption that people are willing to accept lower compensation for work or activities they find more pleasant, and they need to be compensated more for what they may perceive as less pleasant work or activities. Therefore, respondents who find providing childcare enjoyable (have strong childcare preferences) require less compensation to stay home to care for a child.

We implemented our survey with Czech parents of young children. We asked respondents to state the minimal monthly compensation they would require in two hypothetical scenarios: i) to stay home to care for a 3-year-old child and ii) to stay home to care for their elderly parent who requires daily assistance. In both scenarios, the time horizon is limited to 6 months. The scenario was designed to reflect specific family policies in the Czech Republic, ensuring the research question was comprehensible and relevant to participants.

We first define the compensating differential as the difference in compensation required to care for an elderly parent and to care for a child. Mothers, on average, asked for CZK 2,090 (EUR 85) per month less to stay home to care for a child than to stay home to care for an elderly parent. The mothers' compensating differential is statistically and

¹Kleven et al. (2021), Andresen and Nix (2022), and Rosenbaum (2021) show that biological differences are not the primary drivers of the child penalty.

economically significant, corresponding to 6.5% of the median female wage.² In contrast, fathers, on average, do not differentiate between staying home to care for a child and an elderly parent. The compensation fathers required in both scenarios is statistically indistinguishable.³

To estimate the gender gap in childcare preferences, we run a series of regressions with the compensation required to stay home to care for a child as the outcome variable, controlling for the compensation needed to care for an elderly parent. The variable of interest is a dummy variable, which equals 1 for fathers. Our estimates of the conditional gender gap in childcare preference range around CZK 2,500 (EUR 100) per month, suggesting that—conditional on the required compensation to care for an elderly parent—fathers would need to be compensated more to care for their children than mothers. The effect accounts for 7.6% of the median female wage and remains stable across various specifications. Importantly, because we control for the required compensation to care for an elderly parent, the gender gap is unlikely to be explained by gender differences in other factors, such as labor market opportunities, comparative advantage in home production, or prosocial motives to care for a family member.

We extended the survey by eliciting respondents’ perceptions about the required compensation of others. We organized a second wave of data collection and asked respondents what compensation they think mothers and fathers in the first wave required to stay home to care for a child, or for an elderly parent. All respondents—mothers and fathers—hold relatively accurate perceptions of mothers’ compensating differential, correctly expecting an amount between CZK 2,000 and CZK 3,000 more to care for an elderly parent. In contrast, respondents overestimate fathers’ compensating differential, with mothers misperceiving fathers’ preferences by a more considerable margin. While fathers’ compensating differential is around CZK 500 and statistically indistinguishable from zero, mothers expect CZK 2,300.

Our results show a substantial gender gap in childcare preferences in the Czech Republic, a country with a strong gender norm in childcare provision. In 98% of cases, it is a mother who takes parental leave, which often lasts for up to three years (Grossmann et al., 2024). Family policies further strengthen the gender gap in childcare. The prevailing gender norms and family policies are likely relevant to our results in at least two aspects. First, policies such as parental leave and parental allowance have norm-setting power, as monthly installments of parental allowance and the maximum length of parental leave signal how much society values childcare and what the expected duration of care for a child is. Second, given the different levels of childcare experienced by mothers

²Median female wage in 2021 Q1 when the data collection was conducted was CZK 32,100.

³We further provide descriptive evidence that mothers who are breadwinners (earn more than their spouses) require the same compensation to care for a child and an elderly parent.

and fathers, especially those of young children, the reported required compensation may reflect other mother-father differences, such as fathers’ lack of experience with childcare.

Our results contribute to the discussion on mechanisms driving the child penalty by documenting the gender gap in childcare preferences among parents. We also add to the recent literature on the effects of family policies (such as earmarked parental leave) that aim to increase fathers’ involvement in childcare and reduce gender inequalities in childcare and employment. Documented weaker childcare preferences of fathers are consistent with rather limited long-term effects of such policies (Ekberg et al., 2013; Müller et al., 2018), with families forgoing financial benefits to keep fathers at work (Jørgensen and Søgaaard, 2024), and with fathers using parental leave for purposes unrelated to childcare or when childcare demands are lower or shared (Andresen and Nix, 2024; González et al., 2024). Furthermore, the gender gap in childcare is an important input for welfare analysis of policies promoting fathers’ parental leave (Jørgensen and Søgaaard, 2024). While our findings are primarily relevant for countries with similar family policies (e.g., Hungary and Slovakia), they may also have implications for countries where parental leave is generally shorter (e.g., Germany) but where parents have the option to defer part of their leave until the child is older.

Finally, widespread misperception of fathers’ childcare preferences may lead to a demand for suboptimal family policies. We thus add to the growing literature studying the impact of beliefs and (mis)perception of facts on public demand for policies. For example, Settele (2022) shows how beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap shape the demand for policies aimed at mitigating it, Alesina et al. (2018) show how beliefs about intergenerational mobility affect support for redistribution policies, and Haaland and Roth (2023) show the effect of beliefs about racial discrimination on support for pro-Black policies.

2 Survey Design and Implementation

To measure childcare preferences, we propose and implement a survey that elicits a respondent’s minimal compensation required to stay home to care for their child. The reported amount is influenced by many factors, such as childcare preferences, general preferences to stay home, labor market opportunities, comparative advantage in home production, and pro-social motives to provide care to a family member. To isolate childcare preferences from other relevant factors, we ask respondents about a control hypothetical situation in which they need to stay home to care for their elderly parent who

requires daily assistance.⁴ This design allows us to control for the other factors that influence the required compensation to care for a child. In the main empirical exercise, we thus estimate the gender gap in the required compensation to care for a child conditional on (among others) the required compensation to care for an elderly parent.

To measure parents' childcare preferences in a survey, we asked respondents to indicate the minimum monthly compensation required in two hypothetical scenarios: i) to stay home to care for their 3-year-old child and ii) to stay home to provide care to their elderly parent who requires daily assistance. In both scenarios, the period in question is limited to 6 months. The design ensures that the question is comprehensible and relevant to participants in the Czech context, where (1) parental leave extends up to a child's third year, (2) parental allowance (benefits) can be claimed until the child reaches the age of four, and (3) children under the age of four are not guaranteed a place in public kindergartens.

To interpret the measurement, we argue that lower required compensation to stay home to care for a child controlling for the compensation needed to care for an elderly parent implies stronger childcare preferences. The argument rests on the assumption that the compensation required for more pleasant activities is lower than for unpleasant ones.

In the second wave of data collection, we extended the survey by eliciting respondents' perceptions about the required compensation of others. To do so, we first reminded participants of the two scenarios and then asked four questions on how much they think mothers and fathers, on average, would require to stay home to care for a child and to care for an elderly parent. This allows us to compare the perceptions of others regarding the required compensation and the required compensation actually reported.

We implemented the survey online through a Czech private company, Behavio, that maintains a panel of regular respondents. Data were collected in two waves in December 2021 and May 2022. We sampled only parents with at least one child younger than 8 in December 2021. The median respondent has two children, and the median age of children is 49 months. Our primary sample comprises 688 respondents who finished both waves and passed attention checks.⁵

Apart from standard demographic characteristics including age, gender, income, num-

⁴It is unlikely that our participants have much experience with providing care for an elderly parent, as the parents are between 55 and 70 and are therefore unlikely to require daily assistance. Additionally, based on an official survey on income and living conditions (EU-SILC) among Czech households, in only around 6% of Czech households, the head of the household lives with their parent(s) or parent(s)-in-law. Among households with small children, which are the focus of this study, this share is even smaller (3.1%). While providing care to an elderly parent may not need to be limited to a parent in the same household, we take it as an additional piece of evidence that people do not have much experience with care for an elderly parent.

⁵When possible, we replicated the main exercises with all respondents in the appendix. The results remained unchanged.

ber and age of children, and attitude towards child care,⁶ we further collected respondents' perceptions of the child penalty using a hypothetical comparison of the hourly wage for a male colleague, a female colleague, and a female colleague after she returned from parental leave. In the second wave, we elicited respondents' perceptions about the compensation other parents in the sample would require for both scenarios. The English translation of the key questions in the survey is in the appendix.

Fathers in our sample tend to be older, have more children, and earn a higher income than mothers. Many mothers were surveyed during parental leave and did not report income. In terms of observed characteristics such as age, income, education, and length of parental leave, our sample is representative of the population of parents with young children (see Tables 1 and 2). The only exception is that our sample includes more university-educated fathers.⁷

3 Results

We first show that our measure correlates with individual beliefs about childcare, which are often used in the literature. The compensation required to care for a child negatively correlates with beliefs that children suffer when their mothers work. Respondents who believe that children suffer when mothers work also require less compensation to stay home to care for their children. The effect is more substantial for younger children. The results are presented in the appendix in Table 3.

3.1 Gender Gap in Childcare Preferences

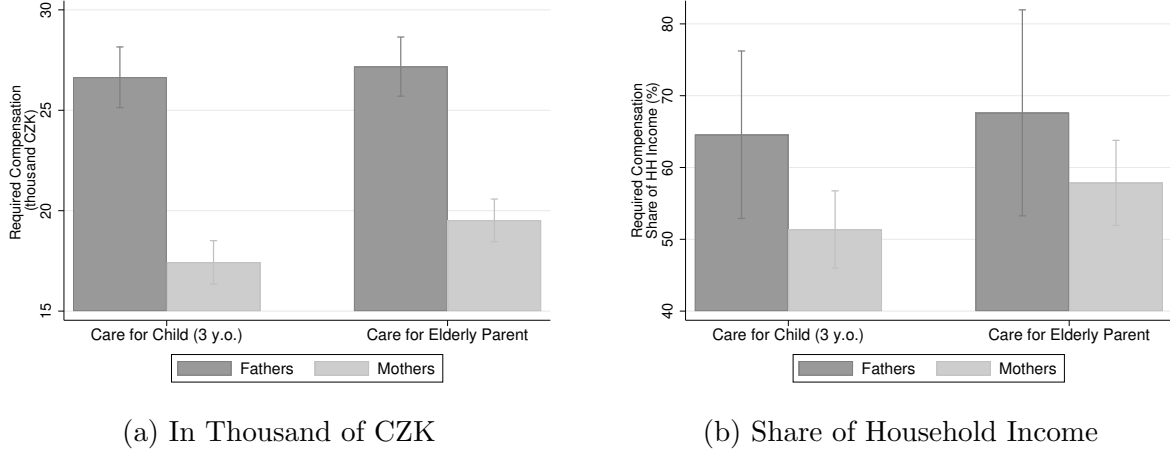
On average, mothers report that they would require at least CZK 17,428 (EUR 720) per month to stay home to care for their child. Interestingly, the required compensation corresponds to 175% of the average monthly installments of parental allowance in the Czech Republic (Grossmann et al., 2024). To care for their elderly parent, mothers asked for CZK 19,519 (EUR 810) monthly. The difference of CZK 2,091 is statistically significant ($p\text{-value} = 0.000$) and corresponds to 6.5% of the median female wage in 2021 Q4 when the first wave of the data was collected. We further show that mothers who are not the primary breadwinners report a larger difference in required compensation in the two scenarios than mothers who earn more than their spouses. The difference for the

⁶Whether and to what extent respondents agree with a battery of statements about notions such as that children suffer if a mother works or whether spending time with father, grandparents, and in childcare institutions are stimulating for children. For the complete list of statements, see the appendix.

⁷In the appendix, we provide evidence that the results remain robust to the overrepresentation of highly educated fathers (see Table 4 and Figure 5).

latter group is negligible and statistically insignificant.⁸ See Figure 4 in the appendix for more details.

Figure 1: **Required Compensation to Care for a Family Member**



Notes: The figure shows average fathers' and mothers' minimum required monthly compensation to stay home to care for their child and their elderly parent. The left panel shows the required compensation in thousands of Czech Koruna. The right panel represents the same amounts as a share of net household income.

In absolute values, fathers require higher compensation than mothers in both scenarios but they do not distinguish between the two scenarios. To stay home to care for their child, fathers require at least CZK 26,643 (EUR 1,090), while caring for a parent requires CZK 27,175 (EUR 1,115). The difference of just CZK 532 (EUR 20) is not statistically significant ($p\text{-value} = 0.193$). Figure 1a displays the average required compensation for both mothers and fathers in both scenarios in absolute values, and figure 1b shows the same amount as a share of net household income.⁹

To estimate the gender gap in childcare preferences, we run a series of regressions with the required compensation to stay home to care for a child as the outcome variable. In the regressions, we gradually add control variables. The parameter of our interest is a dummy variable that equals 1 for fathers and captures how much more (in CZK) fathers require in compensation than mothers to stay home to care for their child. We interpret this coefficient as the gender gap in childcare preferences.

The most saturated specification is as follows.

$$ReqCompCareForChild = \alpha + \beta Father + \gamma ReqCompCareForParent + \delta X + \varepsilon,$$

⁸Note that the group of mothers who are the primary breadwinners is small, and the relevant tests are underpowered.

⁹We do not report required compensation per individual income because many mothers were on parental leave and did not report income.

where the *ReqCompCareForChild* stands for the required compensation to care for a child in CZK, *Father* is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 for fathers (males), *ReqCompCareForParent* stands for the required compensation to care for an elderly parent in CZK, a key variable for interpretation of our results. Finally, X represents a list of various individual and household characteristics including income, educational attainment, the number of children in a household, respondents' age, availability of institutional child care, and perception of the child penalty.¹⁰ Furthermore, we control for *ChildcareIndex*, a principal component of often-used measures to capture respondents' beliefs as to whether children suffer when mothers work and whether time spent with fathers, grandparents, and in institutional care (e.g., state-run kindergartens) is stimulating for children. The gender gap in childcare preferences thus comes from different variations than from gender differences in beliefs about what is stimulating for children and whether mothers of young children should work or not. Table 5 in the appendix shows the full results.

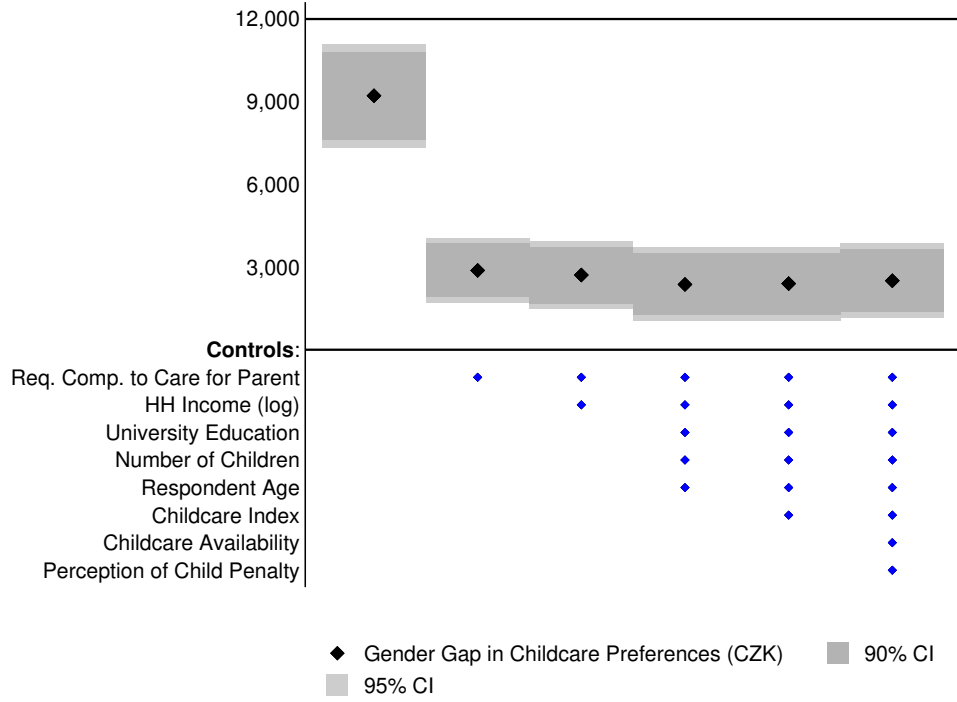
Figure 2 plots the coefficients of the gender gap in childcare preferences across different specifications and shows that mothers have stronger childcare preferences than fathers. The first column shows an unconditional gender gap in required compensation for staying home to care for a child, amounting to CZK 9,215 (EUR 370). After accounting for the required amount to stay home to care for a parent and other control variables, the gender gap falls to CZK 2,500 (EUR 100), amounting to 7.6% of the median female average wage.

The substantial unconditional gender gap of CZK 9,215, reported in the first column, cannot be interpreted solely as a gender gap in childcare preferences. This raw gap in the compensation required to care for a child also reflects other gender-specific factors that likely influence the reported amount. Adding the required compensation to care for an elderly parent in the second column reduced the gender gap from approximately CZK 9,000 to CZK 3,000, indicating that nearly two-thirds of the raw gap can be attributed to factors other than childcare preferences alone.

An interesting aspect of gender differences is whether both mothers and fathers envision the same situation concerning childcare when asked about the required compensation. For example, fathers could think of enjoyable time spent with the child, while mothers recall a period when the child was unwell and required intensive caregiving. Indirect evidence supports such asymmetric parental involvement in childcare, as fathers tend to take parental leave and participate in childcare during enjoyable activities (González et al., 2024; Andresen and Nix, 2022), while mothers seem to be excessively involved in the car-

¹⁰Participants' perception of the child penalty accounts for their potentially inaccurate beliefs regarding mothers' future wages, which could explain mothers' lower compensation for childcare.

Figure 2: **Gender Gap in Childcare Preferences**



Notes: This figure represents the estimated coefficients of the gender gap in childcare preferences, i.e., how much more fathers require to stay home to care for a child than mothers. The upper panel shows how much fathers require more than mothers to stay home with their child in various specifications. The lower panel describes control variables in the specifications. Variables *Req. Comp. to Care for Parent* represents the required compensation to stay home to care for an elderly parent. *Childcare Index* is a principal component of respondents' beliefs about whether children suffer when mothers work and whether time spent with fathers, grandparents and in institutional care (e.g., state-run kindergartens) is stimulating for children. *Childcare Availability* captures the availability of institutional childcare (state-run or private kindergartens) in the neighborhood. *Perception of Child Penalty* corresponds to the perceived child penalty, a measure elicited in the survey.

ing phase (Daly and Groes, 2017; Buzard et al., 2022). If that were the case, controlling for the imagined activities would likely even strengthen the gender gap in childcare preferences. Unfortunately, our design does not allow us to measure what activities parents envisioned.

3.2 Perceptions of the Compensation Required by Others

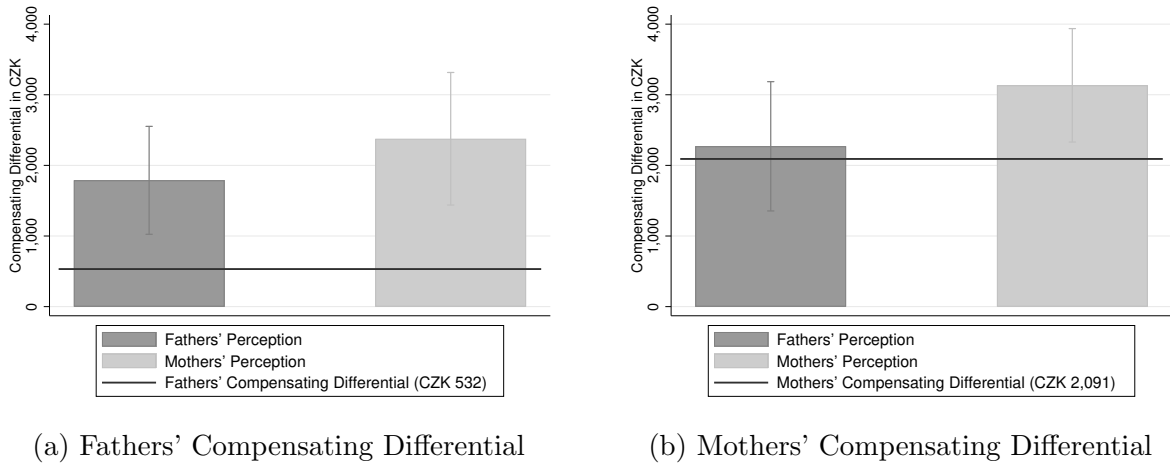
We next explore the differences in respondents' perceptions of the different compensations required by other mothers and fathers for each scenario. We then compare the average perceived differences in compensation with the actual differences reported by mothers and fathers in the survey.

Figure 3a shows that both mothers and fathers overestimate the compensating dif-

ferential of fathers. While the average father’s compensating differential is CZK 532, respondents expect significantly more. Specifically, fathers expected CZK 1,788 (p-value = 0.019), and mothers expected CZK 2,376 (p-value = 0.003). To interpret the results, participants expect fathers to need less compensation to care for a child than to care for an elderly parent, while they require the same compensation in both scenarios.

Figure 3b replicates the calculation for mothers, and shows that respondents generally hold more accurate perceptions of mothers’ compensating differential. In particular, fathers estimated the mothers’ compensating differential to be CZK 2,200, which is statistically indistinguishable from the actual CZK 2,091 (p-value = 0.777). Mothers expect the compensating differential of other mothers at CZK 3,133, which is marginally statistically different from the reported compensating differential (p-value 0.061). In short, respondents hold fairly accurate beliefs about mothers but systematically overestimate the compensating differential of fathers.

Figure 3: **Perceptions of the Compensating Differential**



Notes: This figure shows actual and reported compensating differential by parents and the perception of other respondents. The left panel shows that the fathers’ compensating differential is CZK 532, while others perceive it as larger, especially mothers. The right panel shows that mothers’ compensating differential is CZK 2,091, and others perceive it accurately.

4 Concluding Remarks

We show that, on average, Czech mothers in our study have stronger childcare preferences than fathers. The gender gap in childcare preferences reaches CZK 2,500, 7.6% of the median female wage. The difference is unlikely explained by other factors, such as different labor market opportunities, home production, or prosocial motives to care for a family member. The gender gap in childcare preferences can contribute to the child

penalty and has clear implications for family policies aimed at reducing gender inequality in childcare, such as earmarked parental leave policies. Since the research design captures childcare preferences for a 3-year-old child, our findings are directly relevant to countries with extended parental leave policies, such as the Czech Republic and Hungary. Validity for countries with generally shorter parental leave depends on the strength of the correlation between (the gender gap in) childcare preferences for younger and older children. Furthermore, our findings are relevant for countries, such as Germany, that allow postponing part of parental leave when the child is older.

Our findings align with previously documented patterns showing that fathers often use parental leave for purposes unrelated to childcare and take leave when childcare demands are lower or shared. For example, Andresen and Nix (2024) demonstrate that fathers in Norway are more likely to take additional leave during summer holidays or when their child is already enrolled in formal childcare. Similarly, González et al. (2024) observed a significant increase of fathers on parental leave during the 2022 Qatar World Cup in Spain. Fathers' relatively weaker preferences for direct childcare responsibilities are consistent with the strategic timing of parental leave.

Furthermore, our results indicate a widespread misperception of the gender differences in childcare preferences. If this misperception was a general pattern, the divergence between perceived and actual fathers' preferences may lead to a demand for suboptimal policies.

The gender gap in childcare preferences may reflect existing family policies and strong gender norms. Our findings describe the situation in the Czech Republic, which has strong gender norms related to childcare and generous family policies, including extended job protection up to the child's third birthday, and both maternal and paternal family allowances. To ensure the generalizability of the gender gap in childcare preferences, further research in settings with varying family policies and gender norms is necessary.

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Appendix

Survey and Data

Staying home to care for their child Imagine that either you or your partner have already exhausted the parental allowance, and now you are considering staying at home with your child for another six months. How much money would **you** need to receive monthly in order to do that? Please provide the lowest amount for which you would be willing to stay at home to care for your child, on a scale from CZK 0 to CZK 70,000 (ca EUR 3,000).

Staying home to care for their parent Imagine that you are considering taking care of your parent at home for six months, as they require care. How much money would **you** need to receive monthly in order to do that? Please provide the lowest amount for which you would be willing to stay at home to care for your parent, on a scale from CZK 0 to CZK 70,000 (ca EUR 3,000).

Perception staying home with child - mothers (fathers) What amount would you estimate that mothers (fathers) on average state that they would need to receive monthly in order to stay at home to care for their child under the age of 4 for six months? Please provide your estimate.

Perception staying home with parent - mothers (fathers) What amount would you estimate that mothers (fathers) on average state that they would need to receive monthly in order to stay at home to care for their elderly parent who require care? Please provide your estimate.

Childcare index - a battery of questions On a 4-level scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, rate the degree to which you dis/agree with the following statements:

- A working mother can create the same warm relationship and sense of security for her child as a mother who is not employed.
- Preschool children (3-6 years old) suffer if their mother is employed.
- Preschool children (1-3 years) suffer if their mother is employed.
- Fathers are able to take care of their preschool children (3-6 years) as well as mothers.
- Time spent with the father is stimulating for the child.
- Time spent with grandparents is stimulating for the child.
- Time spent in kindergarten (playgroup) is stimulating for the child.

Table 1: **Comparison of Our Sample and EU-SILC (Demographic Characteristics)**

	Mothers		Fathers	
	Our sample	EU-SILC	Our sample	EU-SILC
Age (average, years)	34.8	35.4	40.8	37.8
Education (%)				
Elementary school	3.4	5.5	1.7	4.8
Highschool w/o GE	14.2	18.1	13.2	29.9
Highschool w/ GE	41.5	39.0	45.1	37.3
University	40.8	37.2	39.9	27.8
Gross monthly income (CZK)	13,914	12,268	37,019	37,801

Notes: This table compares the demographic characteristics of mothers and fathers in our sample and those of mothers and fathers of young children in EU-SILC 2022 data.

Table 2: **Comparison of Our Sample and Administrative Data (Parental Leave and Allowance)**

Duration (months)	up to 18 (%)	18-24 (%)	24-36 (%)	above 36 (%)
MoLSA data (allowance)	6.6	8.1	36.6	48.6
Our sample (leave)	7	9.3	39.6	44.2
Our sample (leave, mothers only)	8	11.8	34.8	46.0

Notes: This table compares statistics regarding the duration of parental leave (allowance) in our sample and administrative data provided by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA). Most receivers (mothers) take parental leave simultaneously with parental allowance. The second row corresponds to the average across all households, including households where fathers reported parental leave taken by mothers. The third row restricts the sample to mothers who reported their own parental leave length.

Additional Results

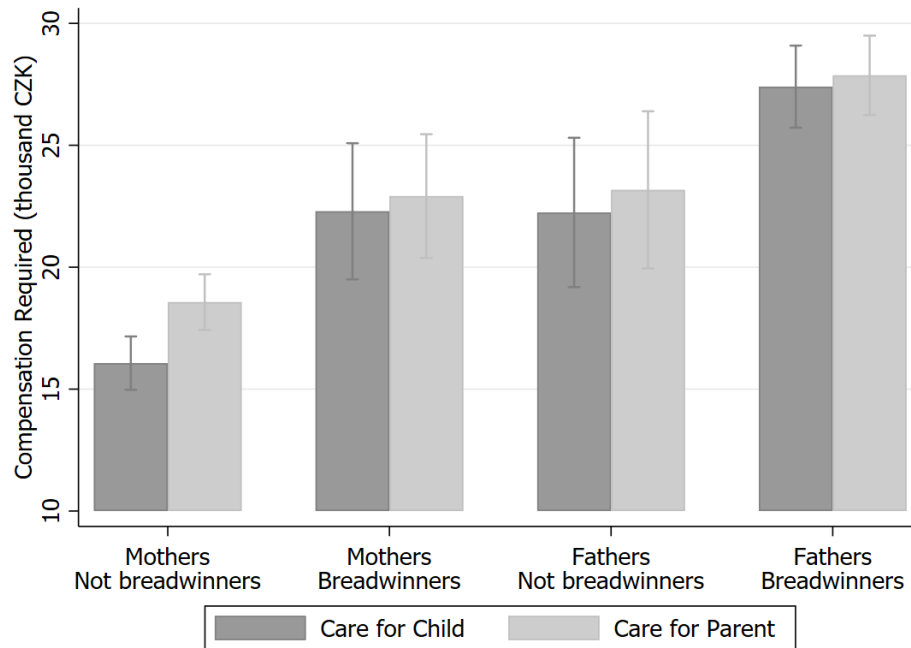
Table 3: Negative Correlation Between the Amount Required to Care for a Child and Beliefs That Children Suffer

	(1) Care for Child	(2) Care for Child
Male	9636.9*** (968.0)	9413.3*** (970.4)
[= 1] Child (1-3 y.o.) suffers if mother works	-2197.9** (1095.2)	
[= 1] Child (3-6 y.o.) suffers if mother works		-1186.4 (1066.8)
Constant	18776.8*** (1030.1)	17520.7*** (764.0)
N	675	670

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Figure 4: **Heterogeneity in Required Compensation to Care for a Family Member**



Notes: This figure shows that the difference in required compensation to care for a child and to care for an elderly parent is largest among mothers who are not breadwinners. The difference of roughly CZK 2,500 is statistically significant at any conventional significance level with a p-value of 0.0000. For the remaining three groups of participants, the difference is negligible and statistically indistinguishable from 0.

Table 4: **Regressions with Weighted Samples**

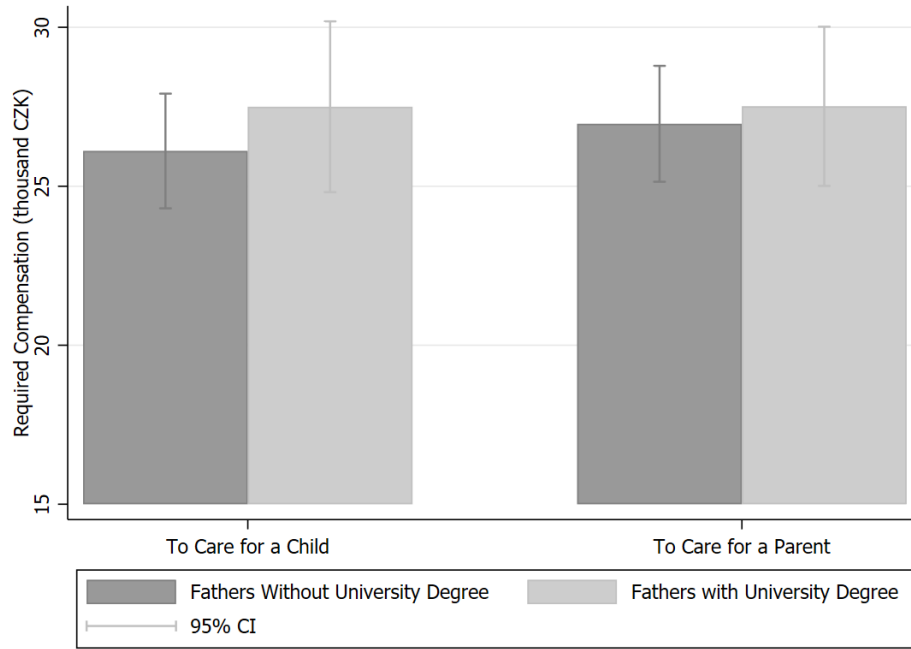
	(1) Care for Child	(2) Care for Child	(3) Care for Child
Male	2878.3*** (591.491)	2850.2*** (583.326)	2904.2*** (588.924)
Required Compens. to Care for Parent	0.828*** (0.023)	0.809*** (0.023)	0.817*** (0.023)
Constant	1272.3** (606.754)	1645.8*** (605.080)	1447.6** (610.954)
N	688	688	688
Sample	Observation	Fathers weighted	Everyone weighted

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

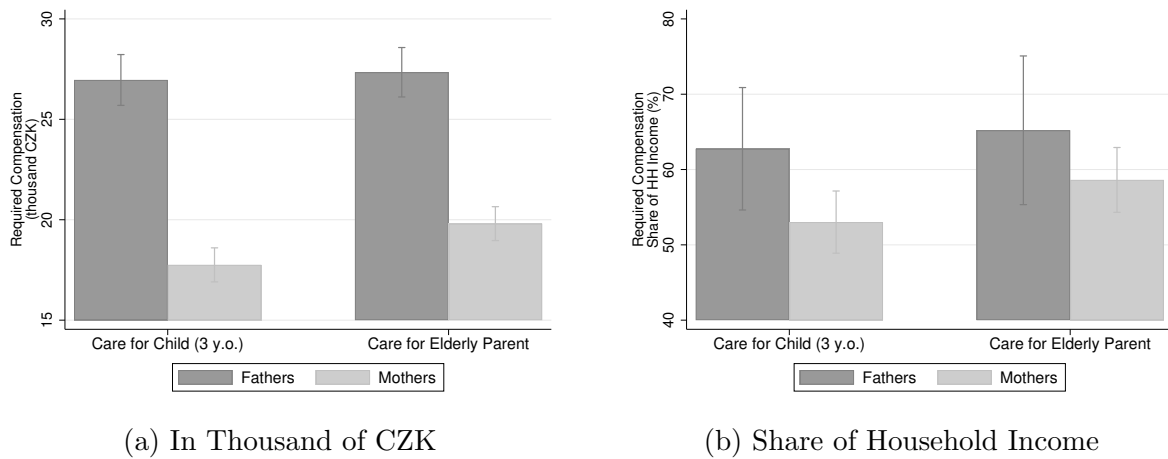
Notes: This table shows results from three specifications that vary in applied weights to match participants' (fathers') structure of educational levels. The first column does not apply any weights and exactly replicates column (2) in Table 5. The second column uses weights for fathers, and the third applies weights for all participants (both fathers and mothers). The gender gap in childcare preferences remains stable between CZK 2,800 and CZK 3,000.

Figure 5: **Required Compensation: Fathers by Education**



Notes: This figure shows that, on average, fathers with and without university education do not require different compensation to care for a child and an elderly parent. The p-value of the corresponding t-test is 0.378 for caring for a child and 0.721 for caring for an elderly parent.

Figure 6: **Required Compensation to Care for a Family Member (All Respondents)**



Notes: This figure replicates Figure 1 on a sample of all respondents (N=1,098), including those who participated only in the first wave and those who failed either of the attention tests. The left panel shows mothers' and fathers' required compensation to stay home to care for their child and their parent in thousands of Czech Koruna. The right panel represents the same amount as a share of household net income.

Table 5: **Gender Gap in Childcare Preferences**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Care for Child	Care for Child	Care for Child	Care for Child	Care for Child	Care for Child
Male	9214.9*** (958.9)	2878.3*** (591.5)	2712.2*** (621.4)	2370.4*** (679.3)	2400.0*** (680.7)	2504.5*** (690.7)
Required Compensation to Care for Parent		0.828*** (0.023)	0.823*** (0.024)	0.824*** (0.024)	0.825*** (0.024)	0.824*** (0.024)
HH Income (log)			1389.9** (569.6)	1297.7** (582.2)	1237.2** (588.0)	1224.6** (588.9)
University Education				238.1 (611.8)	200.0 (614.1)	185.8 (621.2)
Number of Children				247.6 (417.4)	264.8 (418.2)	240.5 (421.6)
Respondent Age				51.26 (46.59)	52.93 (46.59)	55.96 (46.67)
Childcare Index					-172.4 (231.0)	-180.7 (232.2)
Childcare Available (Strong. agree)						1651.5 (1208.5)
Childcare Available (Rather agree)						2033.9* (1182.3)
Childcare Available (Rather disagree)						1361.2 (1230.3)
Childcare Available (Strong. disagree)						2141.9* (1235.0)
Perception of Child Penalty						-4.64 (10.8)
Constant	17428.6*** (692.7)	1272.3** (606.8)	-13358.0** (5976.1)	-14733.8** (6164.2)	-14201.5** (6207.5)	-15737.6** (6297.1)
N	688	688	643	643	643	643

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Notes: This table shows detailed results of regressions graphically represented in Figure 2. The outcome variable is the financial compensation respondents required to care for a child. We gradually control for males, required compensation to care for an elderly parent who needs daily assistance, the household's level of income, whether the respondent obtained a university education, the number of children in the household, the respondent's age, childcare index, and a set of dummies on the formal childcare availability, and perception of the child penalty. The last variable estimates how much parental leave will reduce hourly wage compared to female colleagues who have not gone on parental leave.