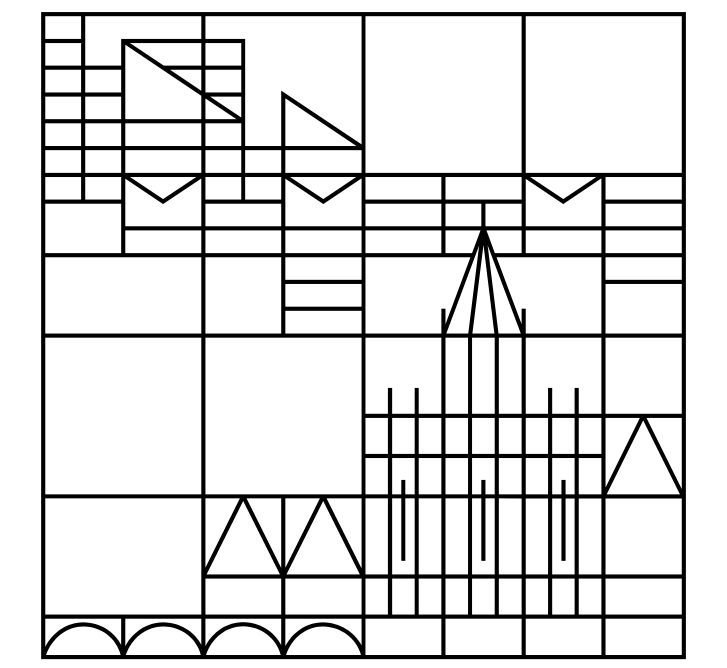


# Track mobility: loophole or second chance

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## Track-mobility in Germany

- At about age 10 children are assigned to one of three tracks: lower, middle, or higher general secondary (*Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, *Gymnasium*, respectively).
- After a child is assigned to a track, she can still change track: This is track mobility.
- For example, a child can go to the *Gymnasium* after having finished *Realschule*, or attain an *Abitur* during vocational education.
- There are two arguments of how track-mobility can influence educational inequality:
  - Privileged children use upwards track-mobility more often than non-privileged children. → increasing inequality
  - There are many more non-privileged children in lower tracks, so more non-privileged children benefit from track mobility even if they have smaller chances. → decreasing inequality

## Data

NEPS, starting cohort 6, 14,975 German adults who retrospectively report their educational careers

## Different types of privilege

**Parental education:** children from better educated parents who were assigned in a lower track are at risk of downward mobility. Preventing that provides a strong motivation for track mobility.

### Expectation:

- children from better educated parents are more likely to use track mobility if they are in a lower track.
- However, since there are less children from better educated parents in lower tracks, it is unclear if this increases or decreases the inequality in the final outcome.

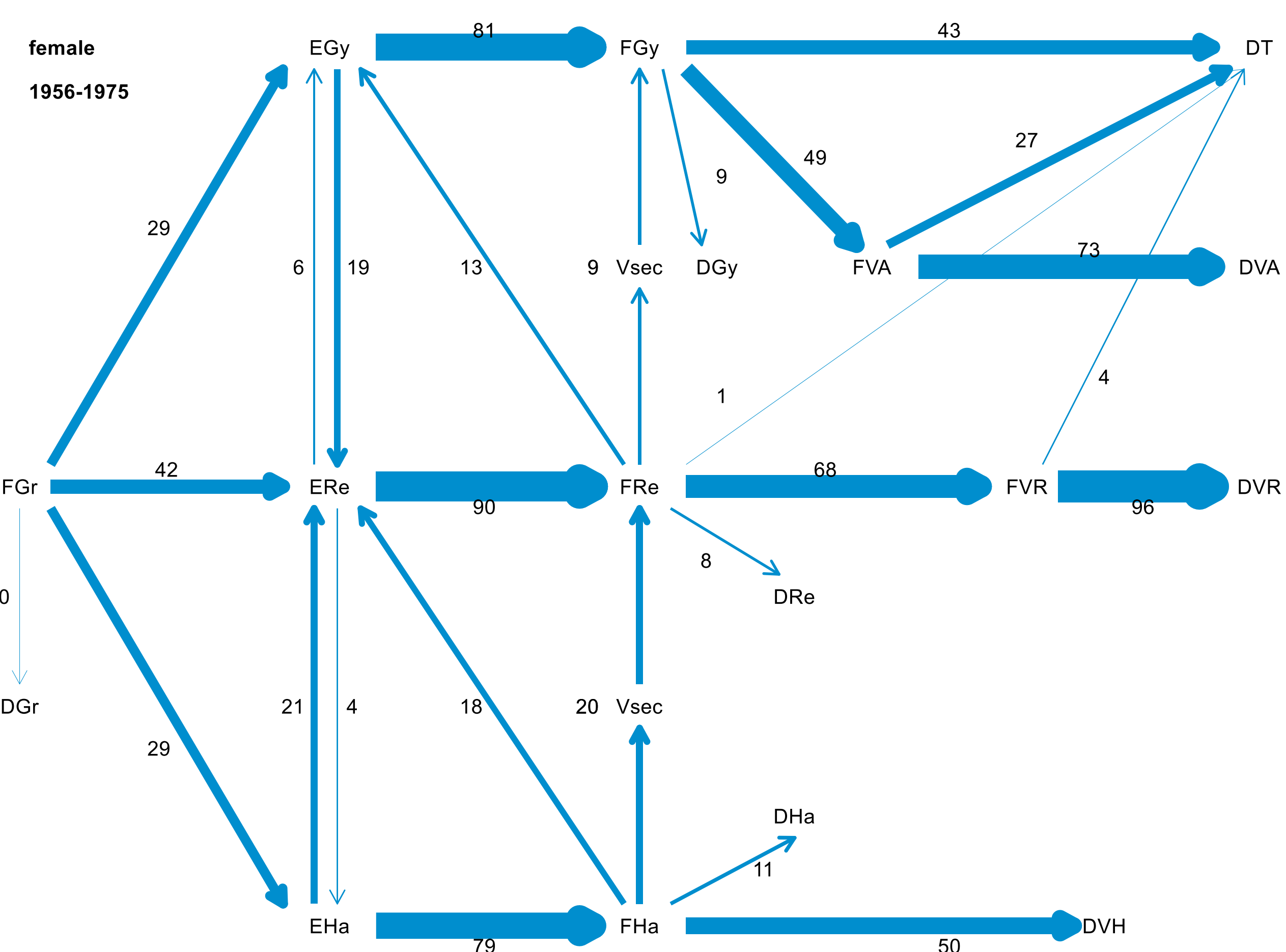
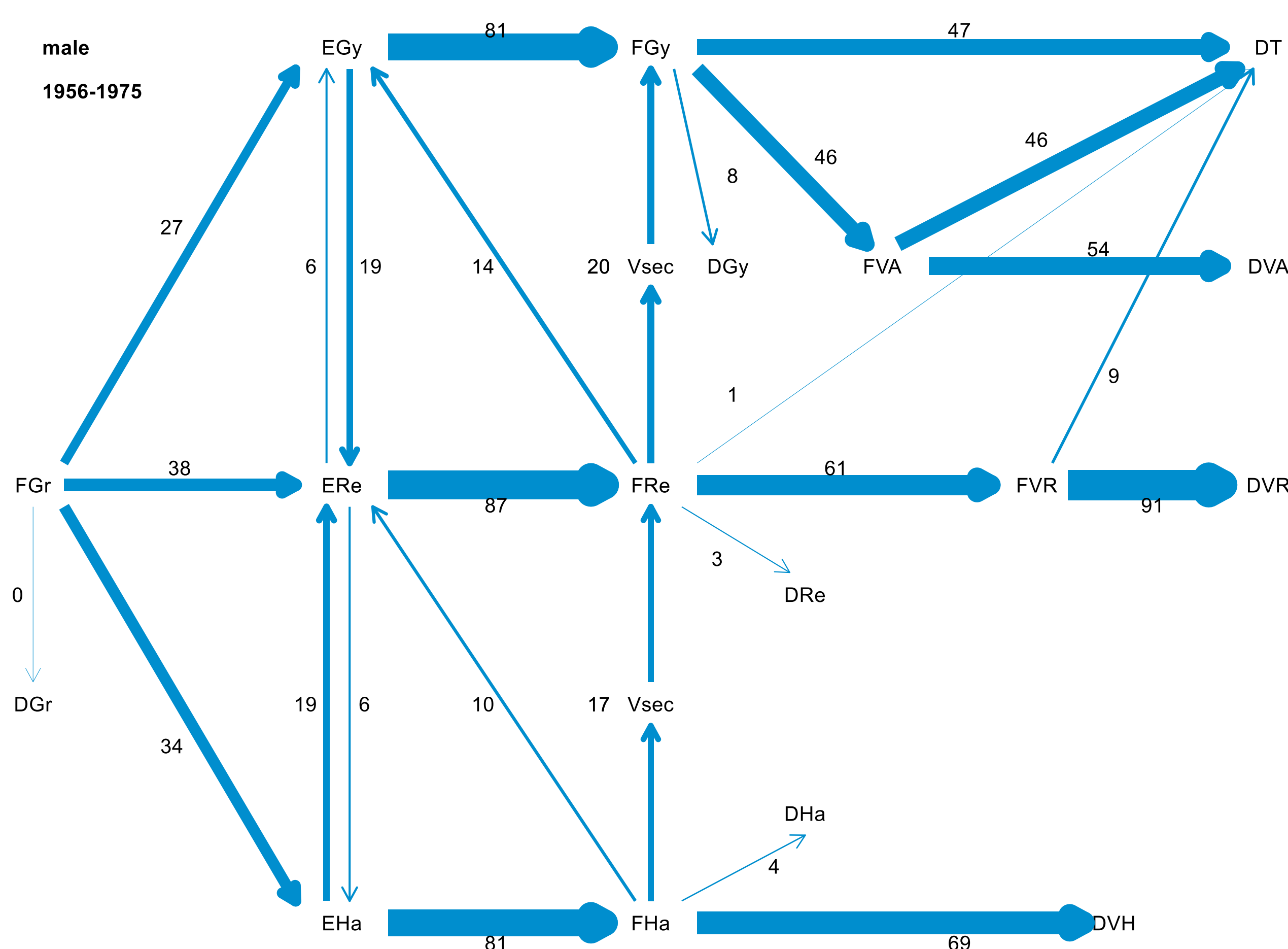
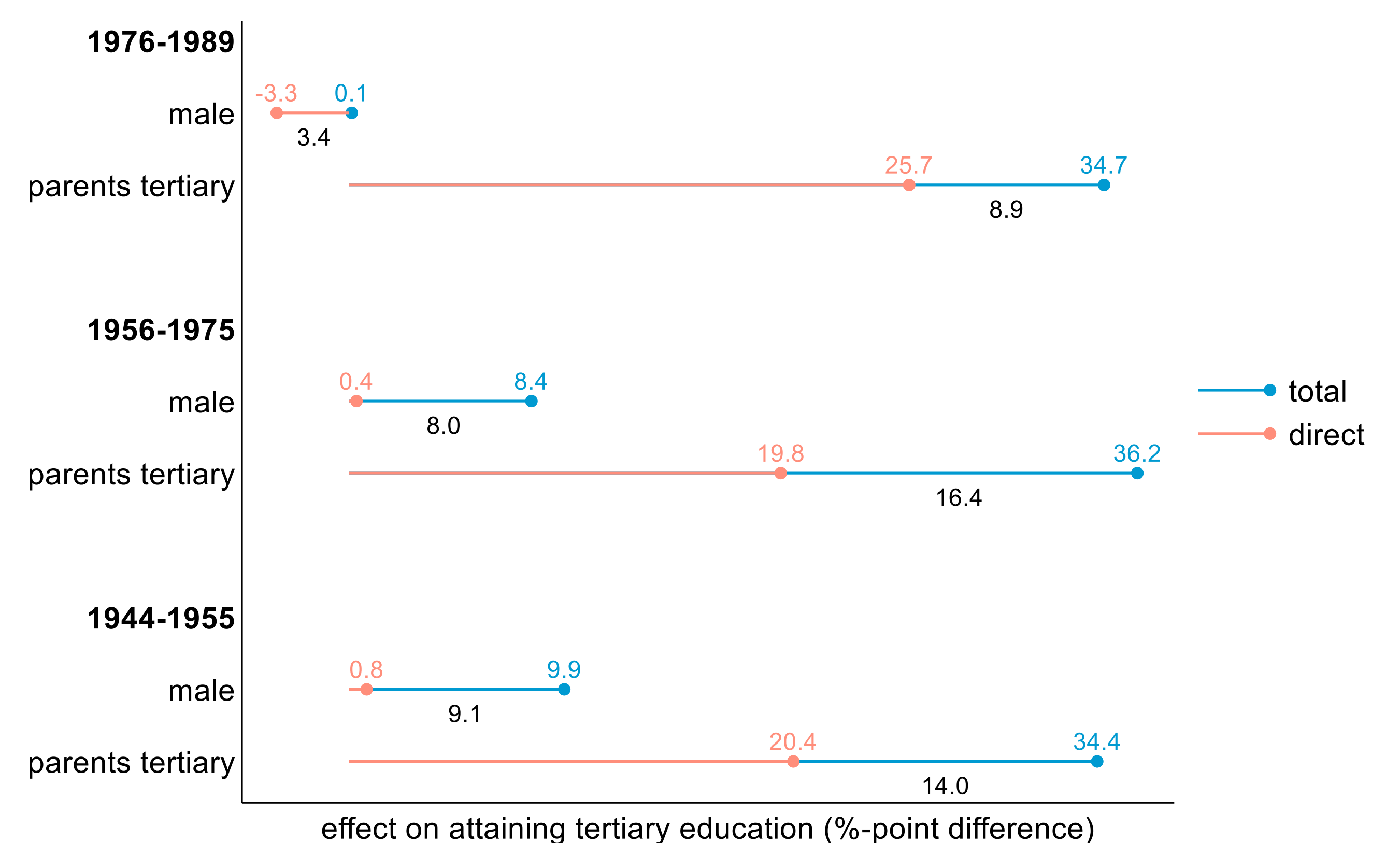
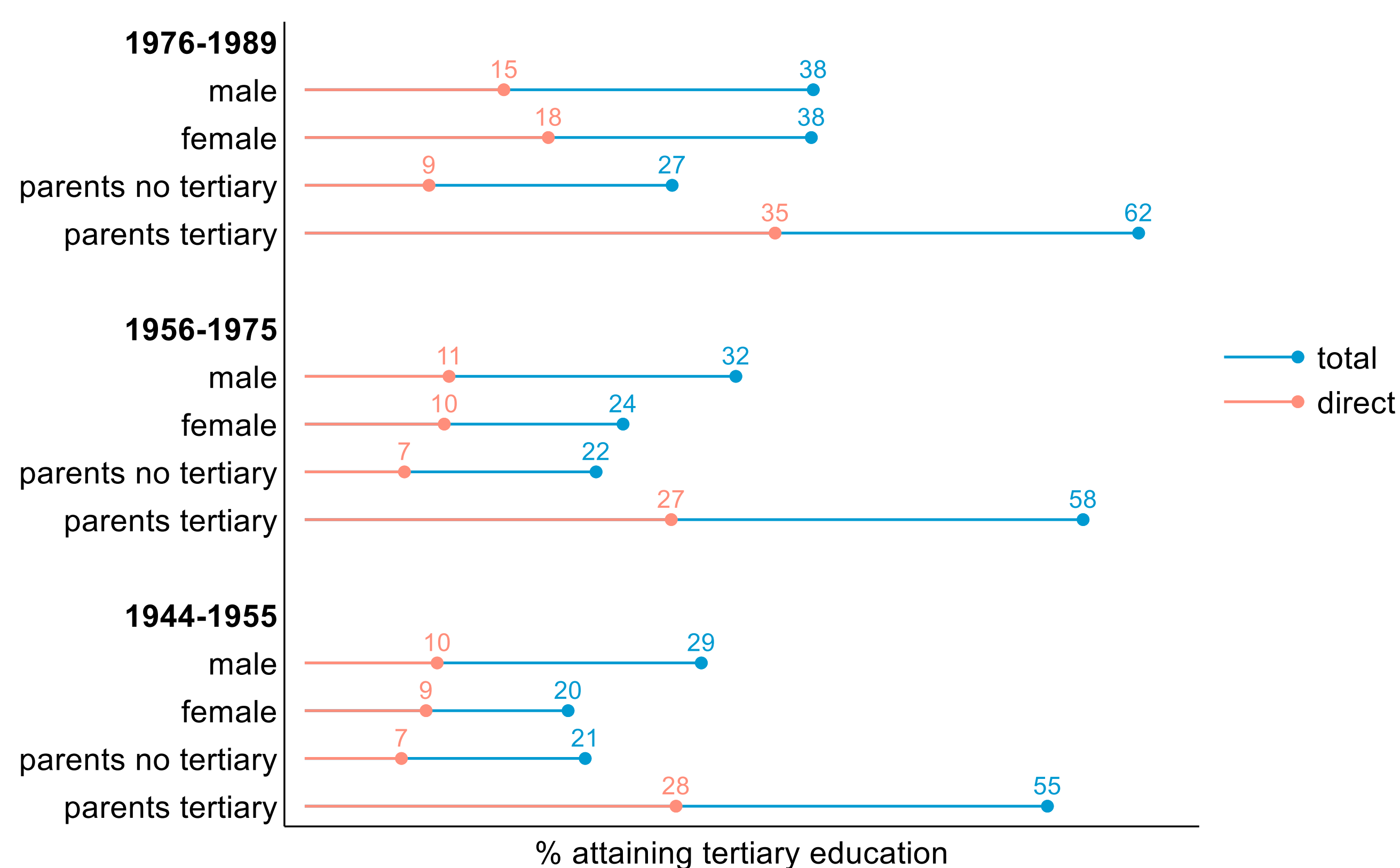
**Gender:** boys were supposed to become breadwinners, so their education tended to have more consequences than the education of girls. This has changed.

### Expectation:

- Boys were more likely to use track mobility.
- This advantage for boys has decreased over cohorts.

## Methods

Sequential logit model for estimating the transition probabilities.



## Results final outcome

**Parental education** track mobility increases inequality of attaining a tertiary education

**Gender** inequality was almost entirely due to track mobility

## Results transition probabilities

Boys particularly benefited from track mobility through vocational education

## Conclusion

Track mobility tends to favor privileged groups.

Replication materials:



<https://github.com/maartenteaches/cgm>