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## Questions

1. Does job-related spatial mobility increase the risk of separation and union dissolution of married and unmarried couples?
2. Are both short-distance and long-distance commutes influential?
3. As migration is an alternative to commuting, does migration decision-making also increase the risk of separation?
4. Are couples especially at risk of separation if the female partner commutes?
5. Which characteristics of the partnership and the partners diminish the expected negative influence of job-related spatial mobility?

## Theoretical Background

### Social Exchange Theory:

Commuting is expected to increase the risk of separation because the partners have less time to spend for social activities and with each other. Instead, commuters spend more time in environments in that their partners do not take part, especially if they are staying over night. This might broaden their partner market and enhance perceived alternatives to the current partnership.

### Micro-economic Theory:

Commuting increases the risk of separation especially in couples with a female commuter because it inhibits the traditional labour division between the partners, which is assumed to maximize the benefit of the partnership.

## Data

- 890 respondents of the panel study „Migration Decisions in the Life Course“, aged 18 to 50 years and living in Magdeburg or Freiburg in the first wave
- Observation period: January 2006 to December 2008 (36 months)
- Prospectively asked migration intentions: recently considered leaving the city to live somewhere else or planning to do so within 12 months; follow up of migrants
- Retrospectively gathered event history information on a monthly basis in the third and last wave: partnership(s), living together with the partner, migration and inner-city moves, occupational career of respondent and partner

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## Method

- Discrete time event-history models using logistic regression, not weighted
- Dependent variable is the self-reported end of the first partnership
- The independent variable job-related mobility has four outcomes: job in town (reference), short-distance commuter (less 1 hour each way), long-distance commuter (1 hour and more each way), not working
- To avoid left-censoring of the data the beginning of the first partnership, first living together, first occupation etc. was recorded. In the models the duration of the first partnership (in years) and whether the respondents had no partner at the beginning of the survey (dummy variable) are controlled for.
- To capture unobserved heterogeneity among the respondents their age is carried forward each month.

## Results

### Other influences on the risk of separation analyzed:

- Couple-specific capital / barriers to end the partnership: Living together, being married, having at least one child
- Homogamy: Level of schooling and differences between the partners
- Occupational characteristics: part-time job, Magnitude prestige, second residence
- Socio-demographic characteristics and control variables: gender, age, age at the beginning of the partnership, city of residence, duration of the partnership, late entry

Figure 1: Differences in relative risks of separation according to gender of long-distance commuter (selected effects)

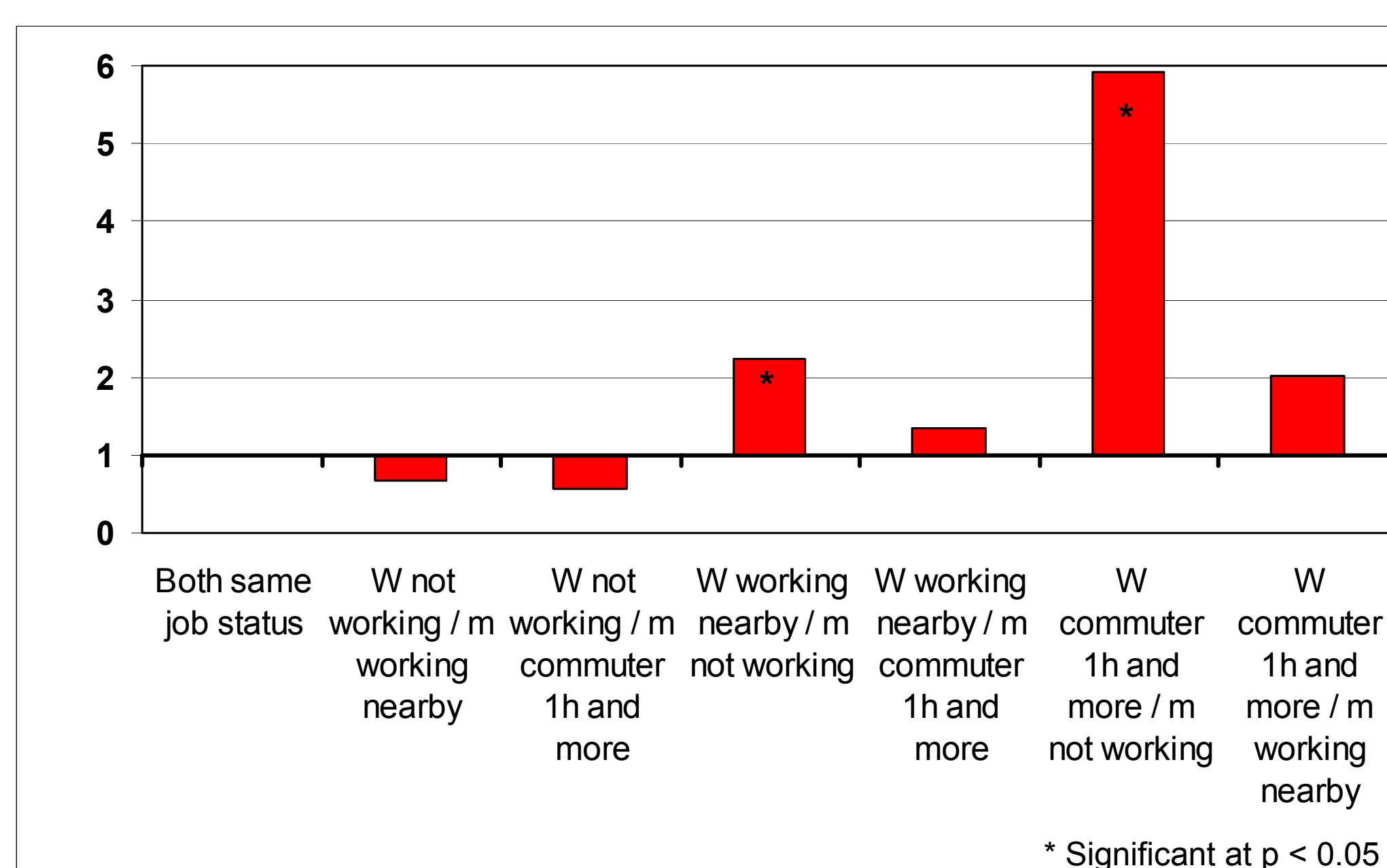


Figure 2: Estimated probability of separation by job-related mobility for (a) married cohabiters with at least one child (b) not-married couple without children, living in separate homes



Table 1: Distribution of selected variables (weighted; 26,014 person-months)

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Separation	.005	.072	0	1
Job-related mobility (respondent)				
Job in town	.575	.494	0	1
Commuter, <1h	.140	.374	0	1
Commuter, 1h and more	.052	.222	0	1
Not working	.232	.422	0	1
Part-time job	.279	.449	0	1
Magnitude prestige (10 points)	7.39	5.26	0	18.68
Second residence	.084	.277	0	1
Considering migration	.166	.372	0	1
Planning migration	.079	.270	0	1
Move	.062	.241	0	1
Duration of partnership (years)	9.47	8.84	0	34
Age at begin of partnership	25.6	7.00	15	50
Living together	.751	.432	0	1
Married	.465	.500	0	1
At least one child	.485	.500	0	1

→ Long-distance commutes increase the risk of separation but not short-distance commutes; these categories are combined to “working nearby”

→ Having a second residence has no significant influence

→ Forming migration intentions and moving significantly increase the risk of separation in a bivariate analysis but they lose influence in the multivariate analysis.

Table 2: Predicted time-spans (years) until separation occurs

	(a) married cohabiters with at least one child	(b) not-married couple without children, living in separate homes
w no job/ m commuter	208	15
w job nearby/ m commuter	83	5,8
w commuter/ m no job	20	1,5
w commuter/ m job nearby	52	3,8

w=woman, m=man