

Submission for

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Labor Market Outcomes of Spatially Mobile Couples: Who Gains, who Loses? Evidence on Germany (SOEP 1992-2006)

Research on regional mobility has been mainly concerned with determinants of mobility decisions and selectivity of mobility. Due to the rising importance of mobility and changing mobility patterns in Germany, our paper focuses on the consequences of household moves with special regard to labour market outcomes of mobile couples. While earlier studies agree on the positive economic outcomes of mobility for men, they also find negative effects for coupled women regarding work participation, hours worked and income. Accounting for these effects authors mostly refer to economic household theory or gender role approaches arguing that the weaker labor market position of women reduces the chance that a move is made in favour of the woman's career. Yet, more recent studies for GB and USA (also using different methodology) yield less consistent findings. This paper adds empirical evidence on Germany to this topic based on longitudinal data (SOEP) from 1992-2006. Using panel fixed effects models, we estimate the economic outcomes of mobility for both men and women, who live as a couple in a common household. Our results indicate that the general assumption of women as "tied mover" and men as "winner" of the mobility process does not hold for Germany (anymore). Theoretically we draw from bargaining approaches and social exchange theory and can show that our empirical results are consistent with this framework. Moreover we discuss our findings in the light of earlier empirical evidence.

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