

## **DIW Applied Micro Seminar**

### **How distance to a non-residential parent relates to child outcomes**

Astrid Würtz Rasmussen (joint work with Leslie S. Stratton)

#### *Abstract:*

Family courts now encourage both parents to maintain contact with their children following separation/divorce, believing such contact benefits children. We test this assumption with a population sample of children from nonnuclear families in Denmark, using distance between non-residential parents and their children to proxy for contact. The results indicate educational outcomes are somewhat better for all and behavioral outcomes are better for girls who live at a greater distance. Failing to control for endogeneity biases the results for behavioral outcomes in favor of more proximate parents. Thus, policy efforts to keep separated parents geographically closer for their children's sake may not be advantageous.