Universität Konstanz

Local Solidarity in Times of Crises. The Covid-19 Pandemic and the Emergence of Informal Helping Arrangements in Germany

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Analytical Sociology: Theory and Empirical Applications

Zukunftskolleg

Cluster of Excellence
The Politics of Inequality

Motivation

Informal Helping Arrangements during the First Corona Wave in Germany

Multi-faceted crisis: Health, economic threats, service shutdown, but also psychological strain

New need for help among individuals who are not traditionally receivers

Crisis as a chance to promote “new” helping relations → But will everybody pick up help?

Giving and receiving of help structured along social categories → Also during the crisis?

Two Perspectives

Givers vs. Receivers

Research Questions

1) Does a “new” local solidarity emerge?
2) Who gives help during the pandemic? How can we explain different helper types?
3) Who receives what type of help during the pandemic? Who has unmet need?

Giving Help

Emergence of „New“ Local Solidarity? (Koos & Bertogg 2020; Toubol et al. 2020)

Social distancing hinders „classic“ help, promotes neighbourhood / „online“-initiated help

Who Provides Help and Why? (Wilson & Musick 1997; Choi et al. 2017; Wiepking & Bekkers 2012)

- Social gradient in helping/volunteering: **Education, income** as a resource

→ H1: Higher educated / Higher income individuals more likely to give

- Opportunity: Formal and informal networks „channel“ requests / information
- Preference: Prosocial attitudes, multiple engagement (→ „super helpers“)

→ H2: Social gradient should disappear when controlling for attitudes and networks

Contribution / Analytical Distinction

Distinguish since when helping arrangement exists: **Helped before** (“continuous helpers”), **additionally** took up new help (“super helpers”), **newly started helping** (“new helpers”)

Receiving Help

Is it Plausible to Assume „New“ Need for Help?

Vulnerable groups more likely to be negatively affected (Beland et al. 2020)

Various groups to deal with loneliness/psychological distress (Kapteyn et al. 2020)

Who Receives What Type of Help and Why? (Taylor-Gooby 1994; Settersten et al. 2020; Künemund & Rein 1999)

- „Classic“ **life course** risks and new **pandemic-specific** risks → Define specific needs

H3: Older age / Bad health / Risk group more likely to receive practical help

H4: Parents / Young more likely to receive childcare; Young more likely to receive financial help

H5: Emotional support equally likely across all groups

- Need can only be met when availability of helpers is given → Networks

Contribution / Analytical Distinction

Distinguish **different types of help** (practical, childcare, financial, emotional)

Look at **unmet need**, too

Data and Method

Survey: „Living under Exceptional Circumstances“

Online panel (RESPONDI), sample for Germany
Field phase: end April – early May
N=4,520 respondents aged 18 to 98 years

Dependent Variables

1) Giving (1=yes) **PLUS** Type of helper (continuous/super/new)
2) Type of help (practical/childcare/financial/emotional) **PLUS** unmet need (1=yes)

Independent Variables

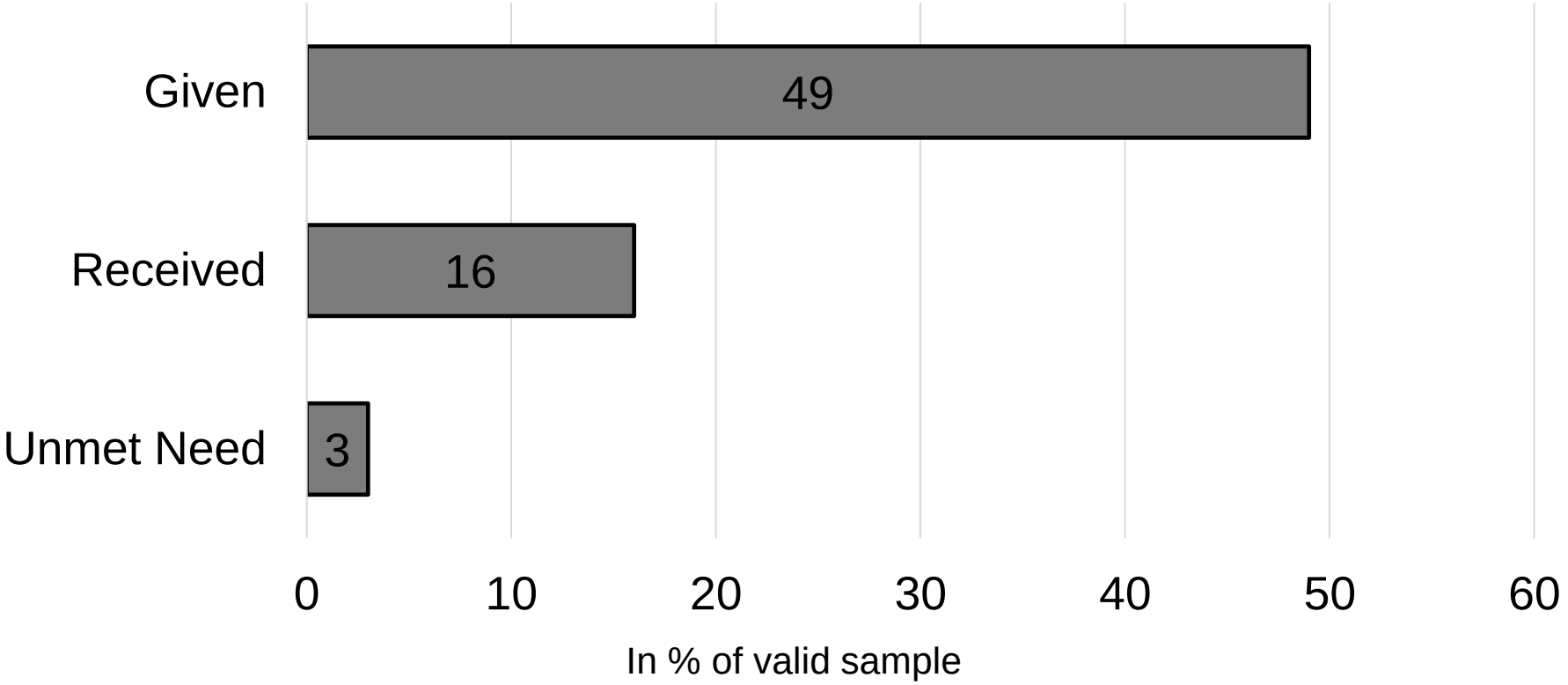
1) Education, Income; Networks (Frequency of going to church, Frequency of meeting friends/family before the pandemic, member in associations), Attitudes (Generalized trust, obligation to help)
2) Age, Health, Risk Group, Employment, Partner, Children, Networks

Controls: Migration background, urban/rural, East/West
Main variables in (1) are controls in (2) and vice versa (except: attitudes)

Modelling Strategy

Logistic & Multinomial Logistic Regression Models (Type of Helper; Type of Help)
Mediation Analysis (Giving)

Descriptive Findings: Giving, Receiving, and Unmet Need



N=4,520, weighted

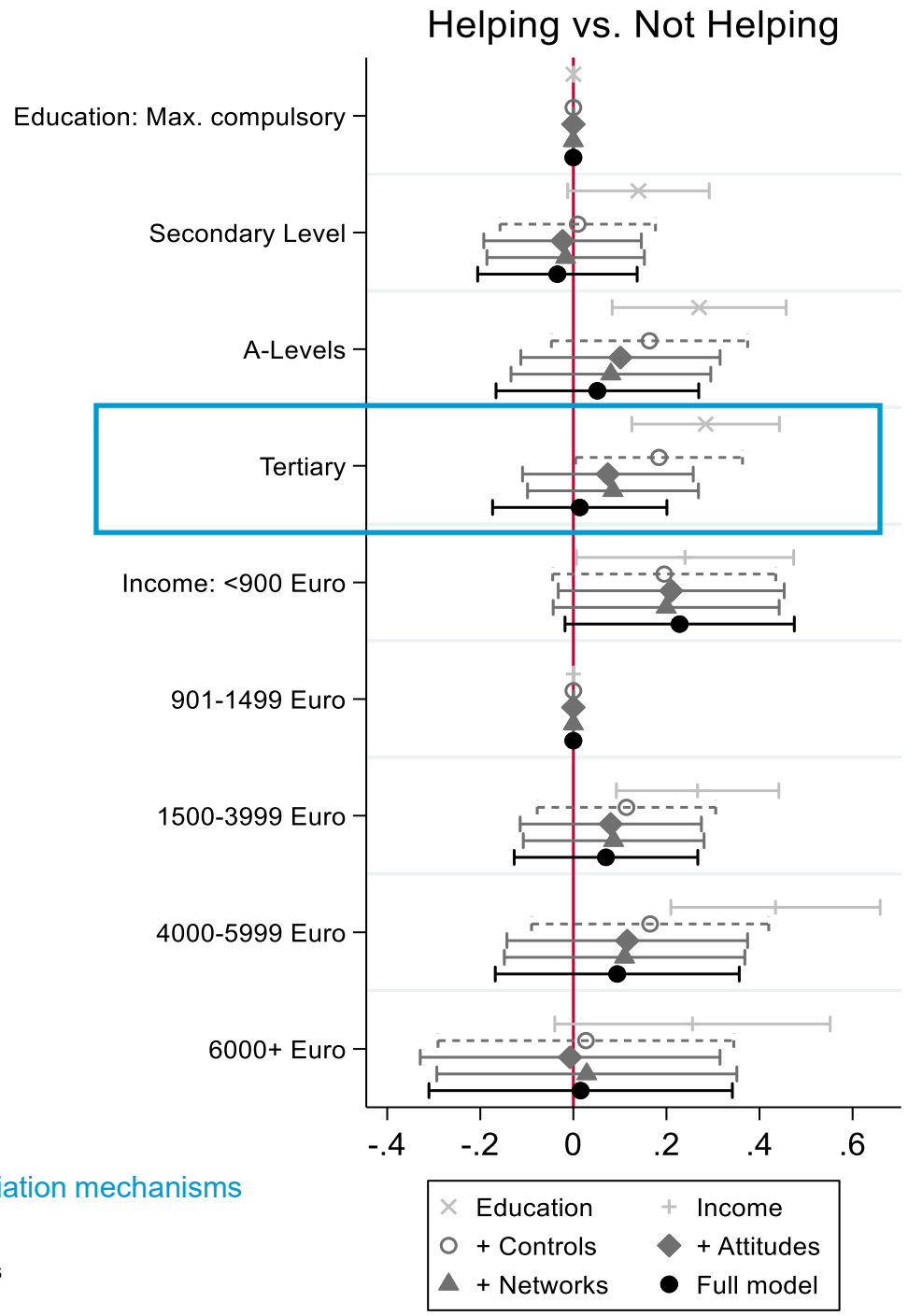
Multivariate Findings: Who Gives?

Higher Educated **more** likely to help

Explained through networks & attitudes

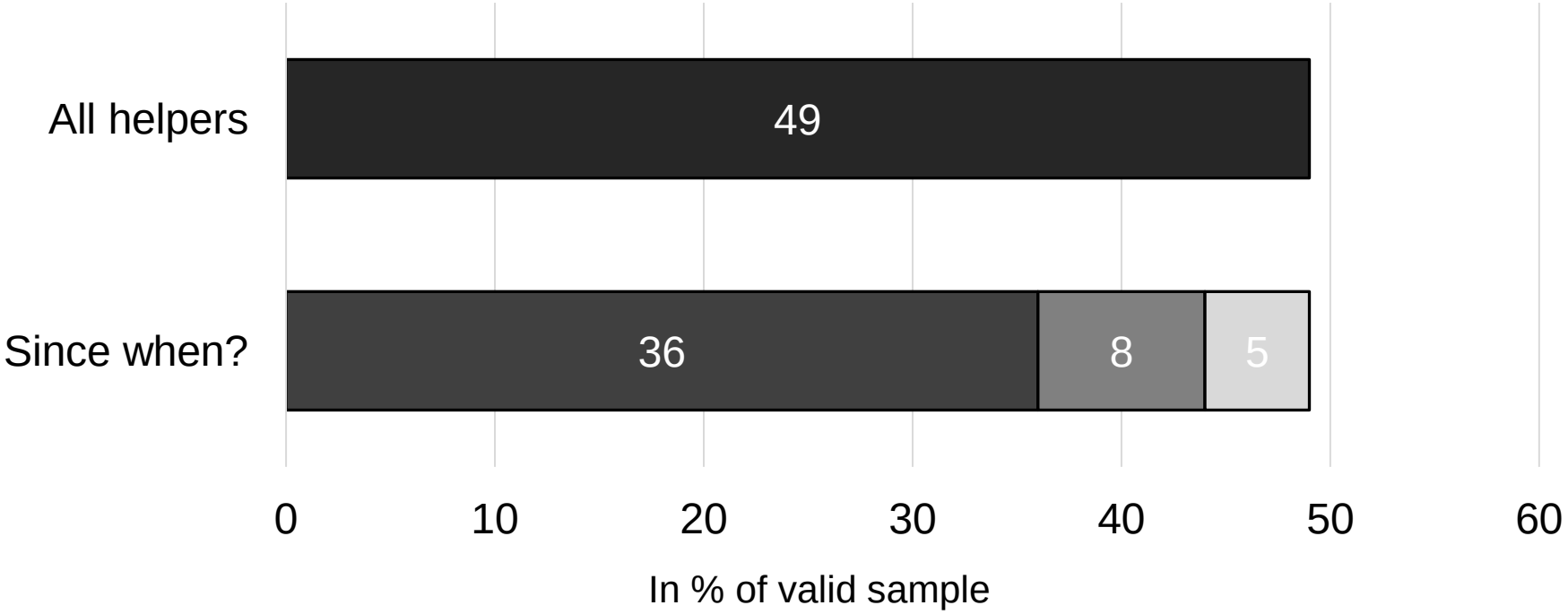
H1: ✓

H2: ✓ (only for higher education)



Method: Logistic regression models
Education / Income effects: Bivariate
Dependent variable: Helping (1=yes)
Separate and simultaneous („Full model“) inclusion of mediation mechanisms
n=4,510

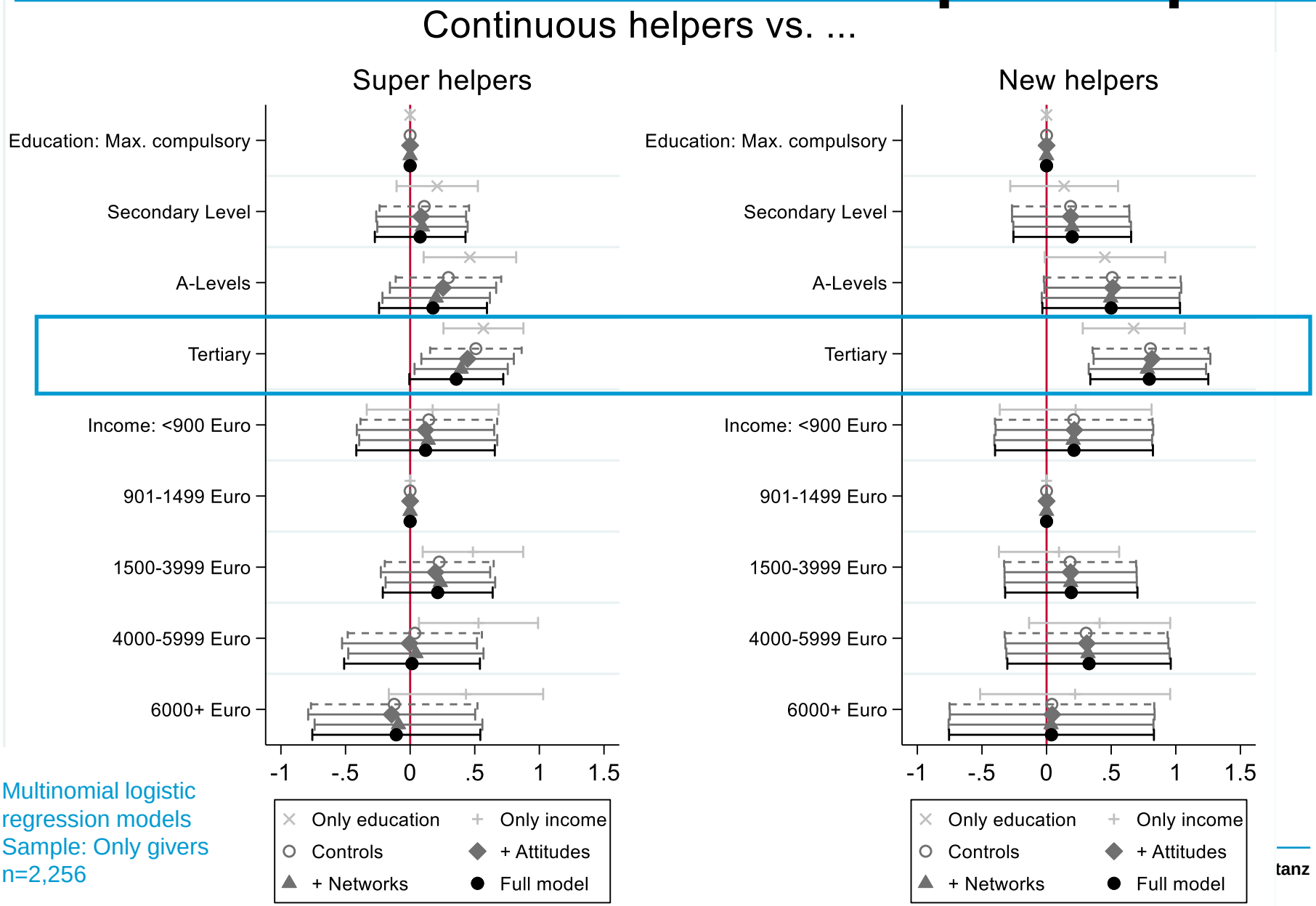
Descriptive: Type of Helper?



→ Three in four helpers are continuous helpers

→ One in six helpers are super helpers

Who Are the New and the Super Helpers?



Multinomial logistic regression models
Sample: Only givers
n=2,256

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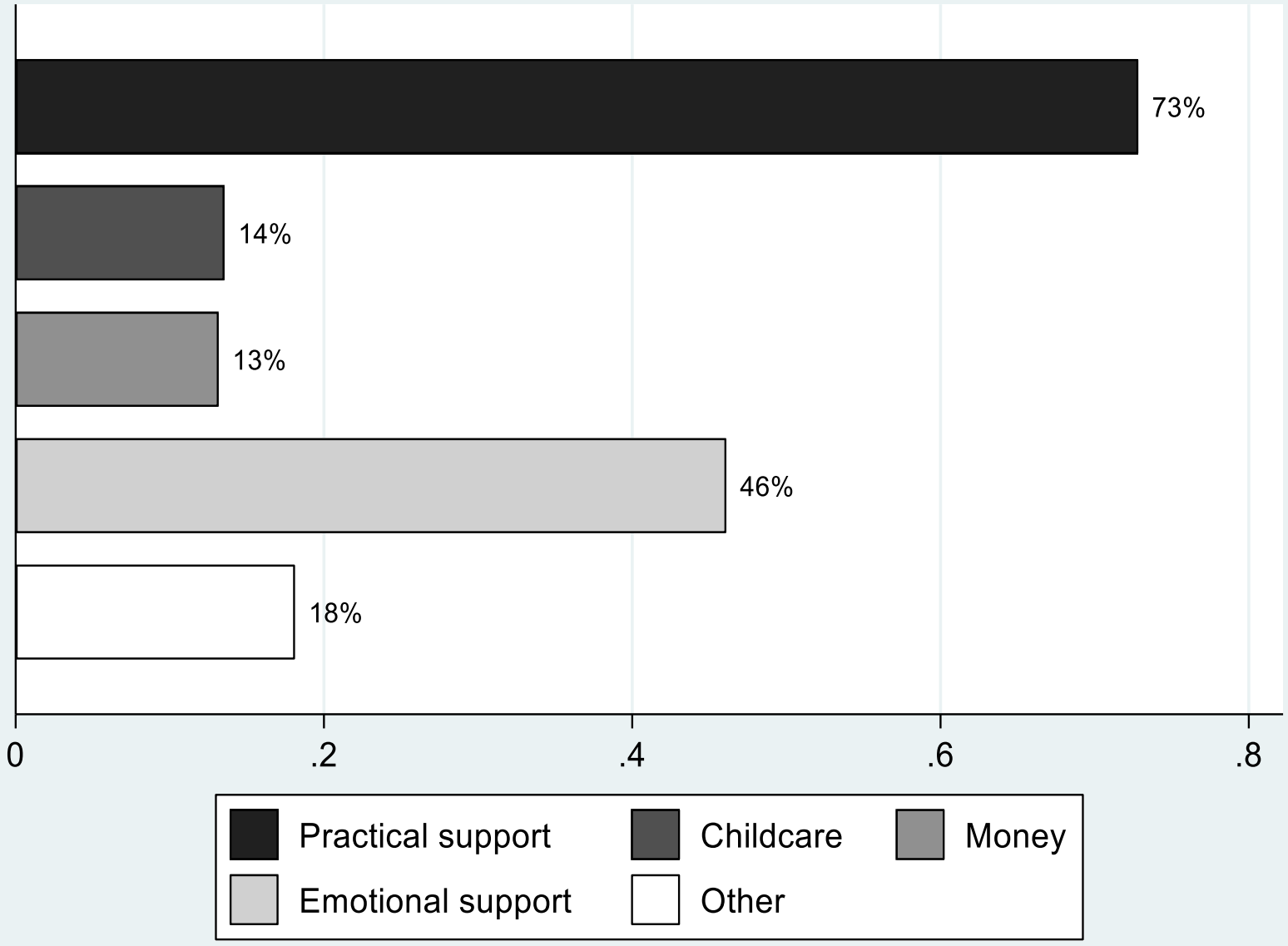
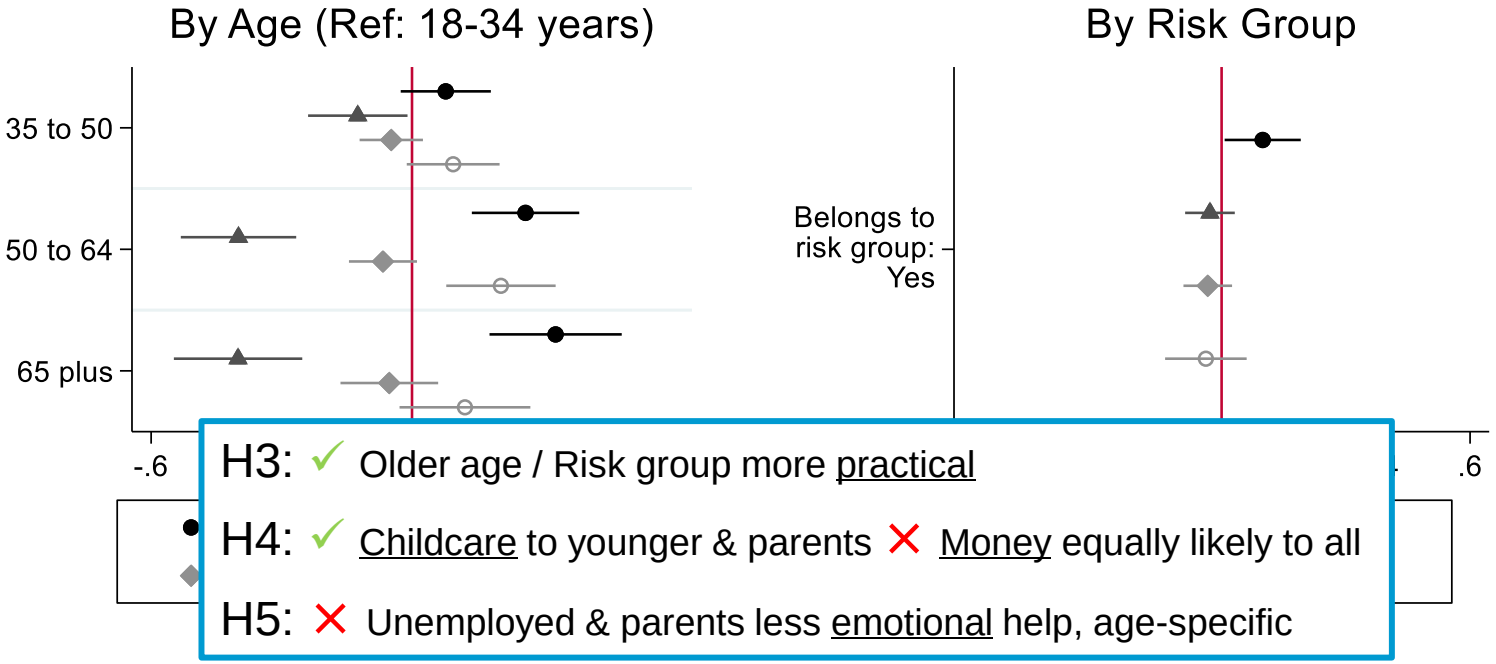
What Type of Help is Received?



Only receivers. n=666, weighted. Multiple answers possible

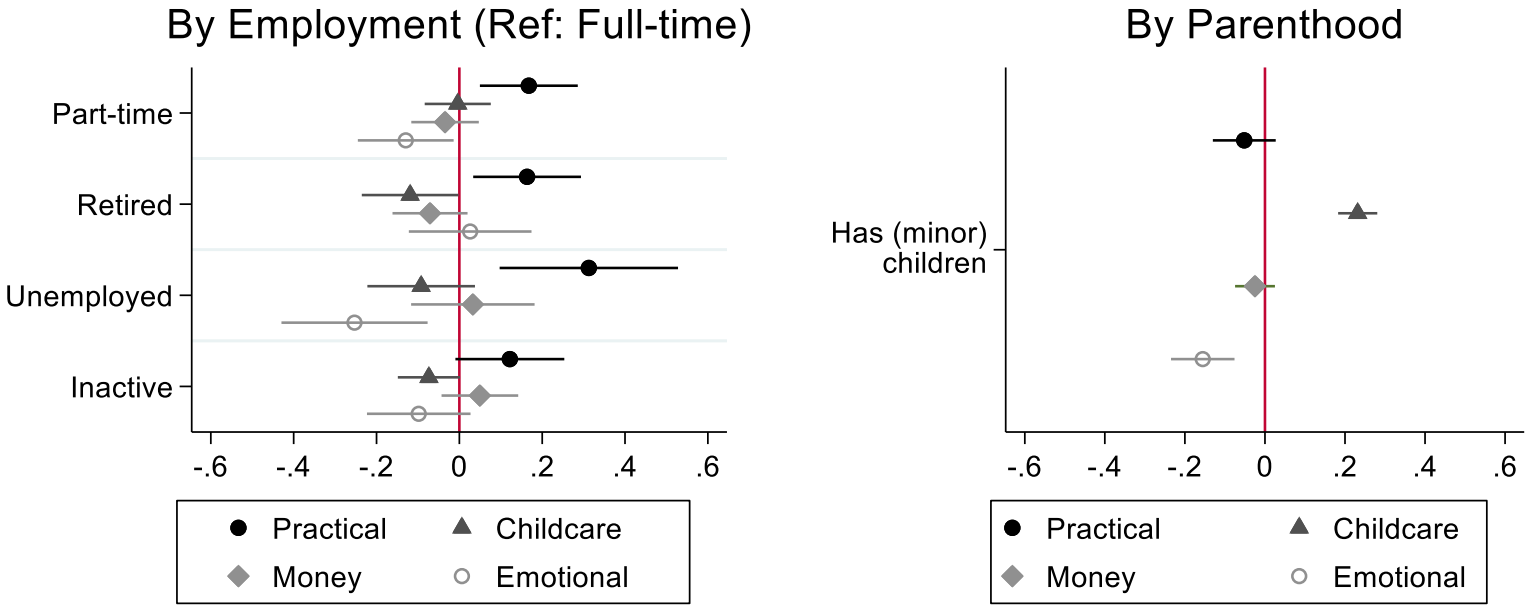
Who Receives What Type of Help?



H3: ✓ Older age / Risk group more practical

H4: ✓ Childcare to younger & parents ✗ Money equally likely to all

H5: ✗ Unemployed & parents less emotional help, age-specific



Multinomial logistic regression model

Sample: Only those who receive

DV: Type of Help received. Full model

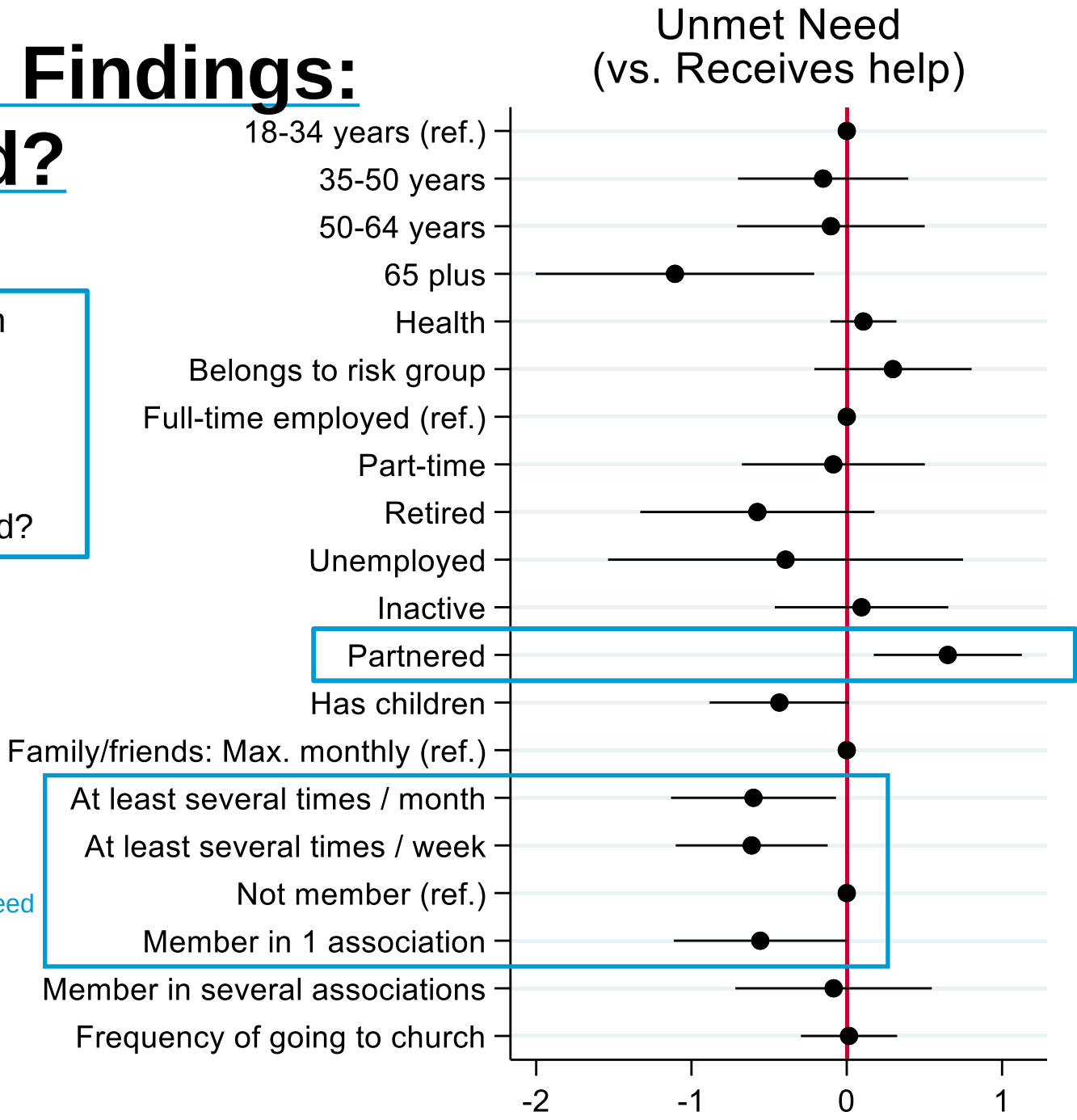
n=666

Multivariate Findings: Unmet Need?

Risks play minor role when focusing on the needy

Networks protective

Partnered (dis-)advantaged?



Logistic regression model
Only those who need **and/or** receive
Unmet need = Not receiving despite need
No unmet need = Receiving
Full model
n=828

Summary and Limitations

New Local Solidarity?

Yes and No…

Who Gives Help During the Pandemic?

Mainly continuous helpers and „super helpers“
Higher educated more likely to take up new arrangements

Who Receives What Type of Help? Who has unmet need?

Most often practical and emotional, type depends on risk factors
Little unmet need (3%), networks are protective against unmet need

Conclusion and Further Questions

Networks are relevant for both perspectives: Bringing together (potential) helpers and receivers
Role of digital initiatives for **recruiting new helpers** among the higher educated?
Unemployed get less emotional support → **critical?**

Limitations

Ad-hoc surveys based on online panels: Representative? Generalizable?

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Thank you for your attention!

(and thanks to the organizers for the tasty coffee and cookies!)

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Appendix

Giving

Giving vs. Not giving	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Only Education	Only Income	Both + Controls	+ Attitudes	+ Networks	Full Model
Highest Educational level attained: Max. compulsory (ref.)						
Max. Secondary Level	0.144		0.005	-0.028	-0.019	-0.043
Max. A-Levels	0.278**		0.157	0.103	0.085	0.050
Tertiary	0.294***		0.189*	0.083	0.096	0.023
Household income: <900 EUR		0.242*	0.224	0.235	0.219	0.231
900-1499 EUR (ref.)						
1500-3999 EUR		0.273**	0.117	0.078	0.090	0.063
4000-6000 EUR		0.438***	0.170	0.114	0.115	0.077
>6000 EUR		0.266	0.030	-0.012	0.030	0.002
Full-time employed (ref.)						
Part-time employed			0.134	0.100	0.120	0.090
Retired			-0.001	-0.045	0.028	-0.015
Unemployed			-0.527**	-0.503**	-0.435*	-0.423*
Economically inactive			-0.126	-0.175	-0.137	-0.181
Partnered			0.110	0.137	0.142*	0.166*
Has children			0.145*	0.129	0.079	0.071
Health			0.051	0.043	0.037	0.034
Age in groups: 18-34 years (ref.)						
35-50 years			-0.017	-0.036	0.051	0.032
51-64 years			-0.036	-0.111	0.037	-0.035
65 years or older			-0.476***	-0.597***	-0.457**	-0.560***
Female			0.008	-0.013	0.031	0.003
Urban area			-0.078	-0.084	-0.073	-0.078
Former GDR			0.032	0.016	0.094	0.070
Migration background			-0.131	-0.157	-0.112	-0.140
Moral obligation to help				0.201***		0.190***
Generalized trust				0.010		-0.004
Frequency of meeting friends					0.280***	0.277***
Membership in association(s)					0.153**	0.117*
Frequency of going to church					0.244***	0.210***
Constant	-0.159**	-0.250**	-0.353*	-1.205***	-1.485***	-2.156***
n (respondents)	4521	4521	4521	4521	4521	4521

Giving

(AME)

Full models	Giving vs. Not giving	Only old help (ref.)	Old and new help	Only new help
Highest Education: Max. compulsory (ref.)				
Max. Secondary Level	-0.010		0.010	0.016
Max. A-Levels	0.012		0.024	0.045
Tertiary	0.005		0.052	0.080***
Monthly net household income: <900 EUR	0.054		0.016	0.019
900-1499 EUR (ref.)				
1500-3999 EUR	0.015		0.030	0.017
4000-6000 EUR	0.018		0.002	0.031
>6000 EUR	0.000		-0.014	0.003
Full-time employed (ref.)				
Part-time employed	0.021		0.017	0.057*
Retired	-0.004		0.020	0.080*
Unemployed	-0.099*		-0.119**	0.028
Economically inactive	-0.043		-0.064**	0.018
Partnered	0.039*		0.024	-0.038*
Children	0.017		0.011	0.030
Health	0.008		0.022*	0.019*
Age in groups: 18-34 years (ref.)				
35-50 years	0.007		-0.088**	0.005
51-64 years	-0.008		-0.071*	0.000
65 years or older	-0.131***		-0.158***	-0.059*
Female	0.001		0.036	0.003
Urban area	-0.018		0.007	0.009
Former GDR	0.016		-0.043*	-0.033
Migration background	-0.033		0.018	-0.042
Moral obligation to help	0.045***		0.002	-0.003
Generalized trust	-0.001		0.007*	-0.001
Meeting friends	0.065***		-0.004	-0.002
Membership in association(s)	0.027*		0.041***	0.003
Frequency of going to church	0.049***		0.035**	0.020
N	4,521		2,242	

Receiving

Dependent variable	Receive
Age in groups: 18-34 years (ref.)	
35-50 years	-0.416**
51-64 years	-1.067***
65 years or older	-0.264
Health (severely ill – excellent)	-0.339***
Belongs to risk group	0.459***
Knows someone in risk group	0.091
Partnered	-0.385***
Has children	0.481***
Full-time employed (ref.)	
Part-time employed	0.073
Retired	0.323
Unemployed	-0.139
Economically inactive	-0.128
Frequency of meeting friends	0.174**
Membership in association(s)	0.089
Frequency of going to church	0.376***
Digital literacy: Cautious w/ information	-0.114
(continued)	
Female	0.448***
Highest Education: Max. compulsory (ref.)	
Max. Secondary Level	-0.150
Max. A-Levels	0.176
Tertiary	-0.041
Monthly household income: <900 EUR	0.178
900-1499 EUR (ref.)	
1500-3999 EUR	-0.021
4000-6000 EUR	0.039
>6000 EUR	0.233
Urban area	0.035
Migration background	0.331
Former GDR	0.090
Interview time (in seconds)	0.000***
Constant	-1.810***
N	4,510
Pseudo-R-Squared	0.10

Receive: Type

	Practical Help (base category) vs.		
	Childcare	Money	Emotional
Age in groups: 18-34 years (ref.)			
35-50 years	-0.993*	-0.895	-0.038
51-64 years	-4.580***	-1.801**	-0.318
65 years or older	-4.779***	-1.769*	-0.704
Female	-0.076	-0.322	0.532*
Partnered	0.374	-0.246	-0.058
Has children	2.984***	0.233	-0.207
Full-time employed (ref.)			
Part-time employed	-0.682	-0.962	-1.010**
Retired	-2.051*	-1.579*	-0.550
Unemployed	-2.042*	-0.771	-2.039**
Economically inactive	-1.231*	-0.124	-0.771
Health: Severe illness – very good	0.127	-0.084	0.067
Belongs to risk group	-0.758	-0.787	-0.468
Knows someone in risk group	-0.590	0.368	0.867**
Highest Education: Max. compulsory (ref.)			
Max. Secondary Level	-1.276*	-0.470	-0.275
Max. A-Levels	-0.692	0.160	-0.209
Tertiary Education	-0.330	-0.094	-0.290
Monthly Household income: <900 EUR	0.277	0.244	0.434
900-1499 EUR (ref.)			
1500-3999 EUR	-0.601	-1.422**	0.041
4000-6000 EUR	-0.729	-1.370	0.262
>6000 EUR	-2.148*	-1.771	-0.237
Urban area	0.140	0.203	-0.010
Migration background	-0.230	0.684	-0.065
Former GDR	0.366	-0.010	0.309
Frequency of going to church	0.459	0.567*	0.285
Frequency of meeting friends	-0.129	0.038	0.302*
Membership in association(s)	-0.017	-0.184	0.094
Digital literacy: Cautious with information	-0.095	-0.295	0.128
Interview time (in seconds)	0.000	0.000	-0.000
Constant	0.779	1.779	-1.653
N	630		
Pseudo-R-Squared	0.28		

Unmet Need

	Life Course Risks	Pandemic-specific Risks	Both, plus Controls	Full Models
Age in groups: 18-34 years (ref.)				
35-50 years	-0.075		-0.109	-0.152
51-64 years	0.235		-0.003	-0.102
65 years or older	-0.847*		-0.970*	-1.106*
Partnered	0.528*		0.624**	0.650**
Has children	-0.498*		-0.484*	-0.434
Full-time employed (ref.)				
Part-time employed	0.055		-0.052	-0.086
Retired	-0.317		-0.495	-0.576
Unemployed	0.392		0.027	-0.394
Economically inactive	0.318		0.145	0.095
Health: Severe illness – very good		0.077	0.062	0.107
Belongs to risk group		-0.133	0.284	0.297
Knows someone in risk group			-0.532*	-0.428
Highest Education: Max. compulsory (ref.)				
Max. Secondary Level			-0.284	-0.303
Max. A-Levels			-0.451	-0.519
Tertiary Education			-0.280	-0.334
Monthly Household income: <900 EUR			0.144	0.173
900-1499 EUR (ref.)			0.000	0.000
1500-3999 EUR			-0.160	-0.142
4000-6000 EUR			-0.497	-0.578
>6000 EUR			-0.255	-0.303
Interview time (in seconds)			-0.000	-0.000
Digital literacy: Cautious with information				0.071
Frequency of going to church				0.015
Frequency of meeting friends: max. monthly				
Several times / month				-0.601*
Several times / week				-0.612*
Membership in association(s): None				0.000
One				-0.557
2 or more				-0.085
Urban area				0.457*
Migration background				-0.307
Former GDR				-0.110
Constant	-1.520***	-1.801***	-0.688	-0.615
N	865	862	837	828
pseudo R^2	0.057	0.003	0.071	0.096

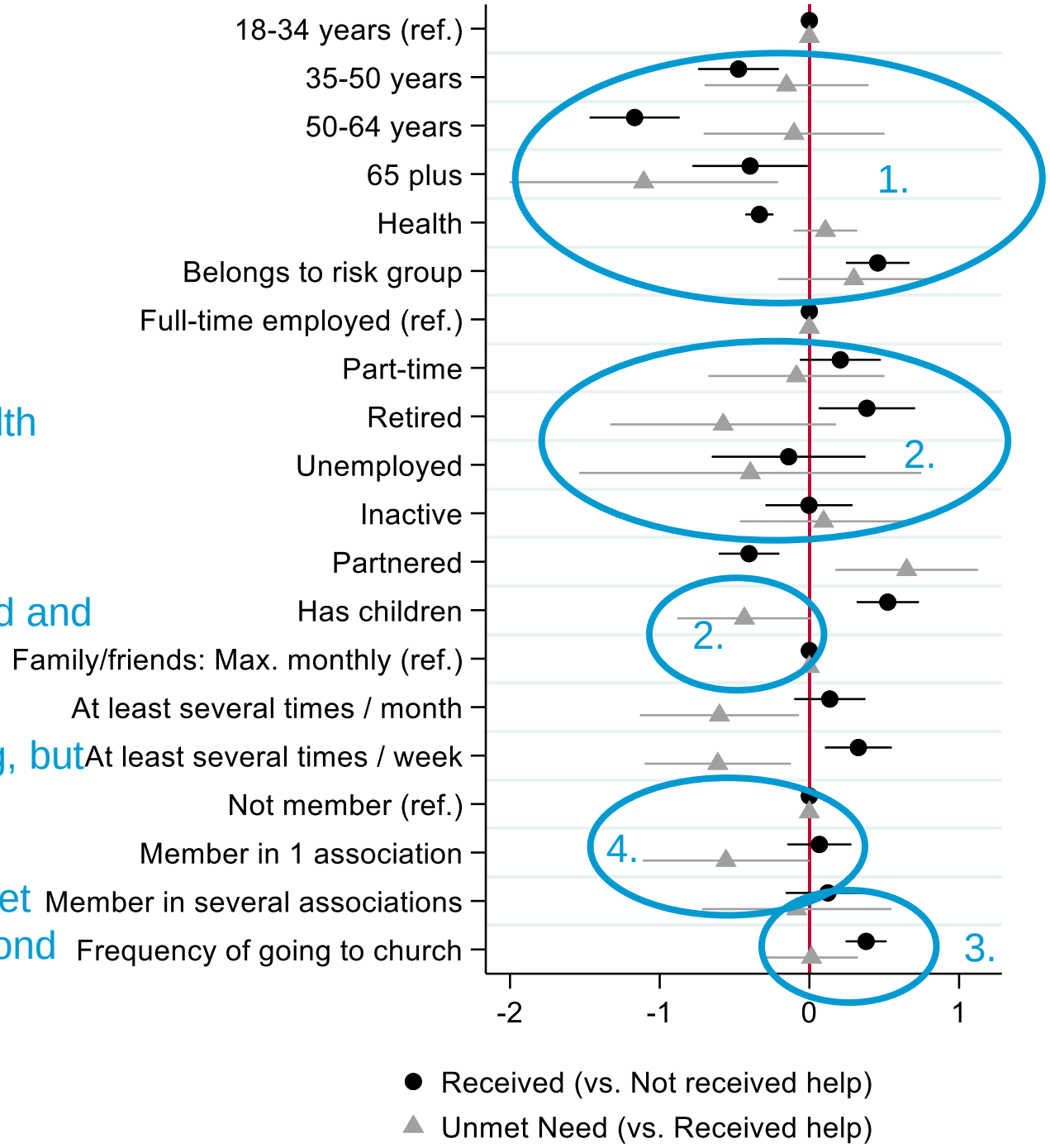
Unmet Need vs. Receiving

1. Focusing on needers vs. receivers offsets age & health effects

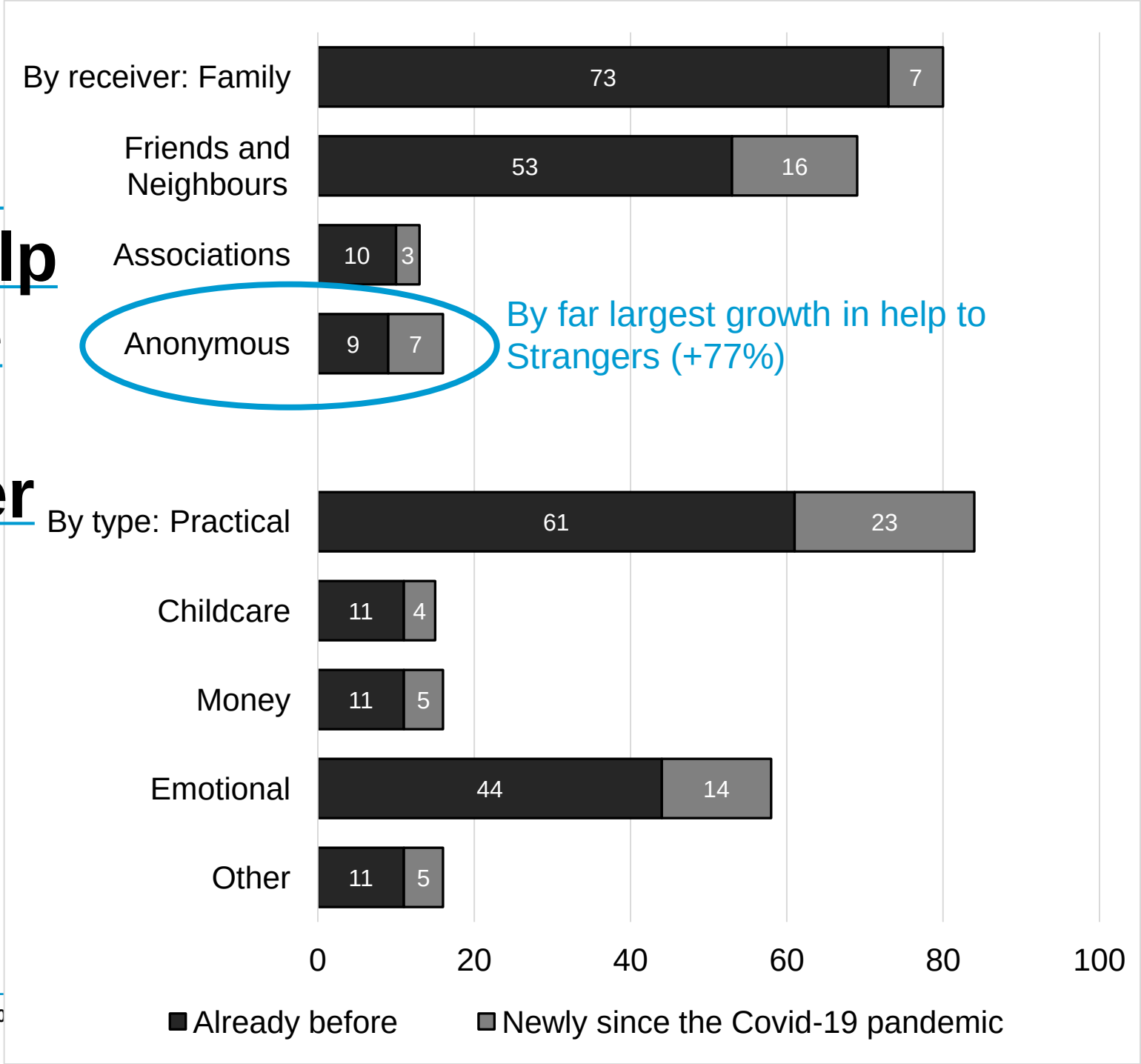
2. Focusing on needers vs. receivers offsets parenthood and employment effects

3. Church predicts receiving, but not unmet need

4. Associations predict unmet need, but not receiving beyond need



Giving: Old and New Help by Type and Receiver



Sample

	Total	Non-helper	Helper	Sig.
Highest educational level: Max. compulsory	29.14 %	31.45 %	26.88 %	
Secondary schooling	30.36 %	30.28 %	30.25 %	
A-Levels	14.77 %	14.01 %	15.61 %	
Higher Education	25.73%	24.26 %	27.26%	
Monthly net household income: <900 EUR	11.35 %	11.44 %	11.32 %	
900-1499 EUR	14.27 %	15.95 %	12.52 %	
1500-3999 EUR	55.81 %	55.17 %	56.43 %	
4000-6000 EUR	13.07 %	11.95 %	14.19 %	
>6000 EUR	5.49 %	5.49 %	5.53 %	
Full-time employed (ref.)	42.28 %	39.95 %	44.66 %	
Part-time employed	15.56 %	14.05 %	17.09 %	
Retired	23.52 %	26.37 %	20.65 %	
Unemployed	3.90 %	4.84 %	2.97 %	
Economically inactive	14.74 %	14.80 %	14.63 %	
Lives with partner	58.89 %	61.25 %	56.49 %	
Has children	55.51 %	54.43 %	56.60 %	
Health (Severely ill – excellent)	*3.36 (1.10)*	*3.30 (1.12)*	*3.42 (1.08)*	***
Meeting with friends: Max. 1x per month	26.27 %	31.67 %	20.84 %	
Several times per month – 1x per week	31.58 %	31.59 %	31.49 %	
Several times per week – Daily	42.15 %	36.74 %	47.68 %	
Female	51.36 %	51.12 %	51.60 %	**
Age: 18-34 years	24.44 %	23.79 %	25.06 %	
35-49 years	25.01 %	23.67 %	26.32 %	
50-64 years	32.05 %	30.95 %	33.25 %	
65+ years	18.50 %	21.59 %	15.37 %	
Migration background	6.29 %	6.45 %	6.13 %	**
Urban	43.15 %	44.26 %	42.05 %	*
East	32.40 %	31.95 %	30.77 %	**
Moral obligation to help (1-7)	*4.92 (1.57)*	*4.68 (1.64)*	*5.16 (1.46)*	***
Trust (0-10)	*5.43 (2.77)*	*4.26 (2.76)*	*4.69 (2.78)*	***
Going to church (never – at least weekly)	*4.38 (1.01)*	*4.70 (0.95)*	*4.28 (1.06)*	***
Member in associations (0, 1, 2plus)	*1.42 (0.67)*	*1.36 (0.63)*	*1.48 (0.70)*	***
N (total)	4,521	2,258	2,263	
Per cent of total sample		49.94 %	50.06 %	