

---

CEPS ECONPOL LUNCH DEBATE – SEPTEMBER 9, 2020

# Covid-19 and Educational Inequality Evidence from Germany

Ludger Wößmann, Vera Freundl, Elisabeth Grewenig, Philipp Lergetporer, Katharina Werner, and Larissa Zierow

## Covid-19 school closures in Germany

### SETTING

- 3 months of nation-wide school closures in Germany due to COVID-19 pandemic
- (Almost) no digital learning infrastructure, no master plan of school ministries

### DATA & METHOD

- Survey in June 2020 with 1,099 parents of school children
- Information on educational inputs during and before school closures
- Focus on gaps between children with academic vs. non-academic family background (also: student achievement, gender)

### RESULTS

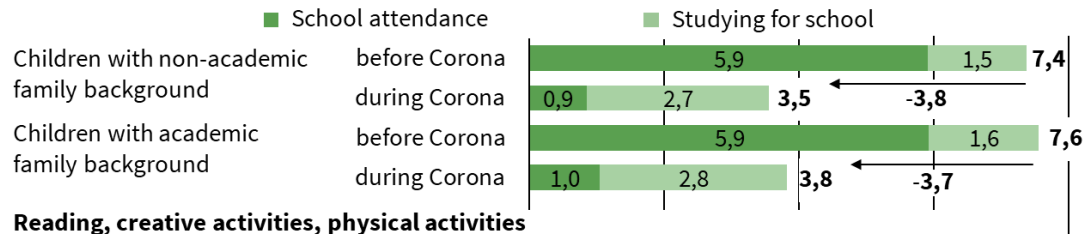
- School & learning activities decreased by  $\frac{1}{2}$
- Learning activities substituted by rather passive activities
- Non-academic family background students received less support by their schools

# Time use of students before and during Covid-19 school closures

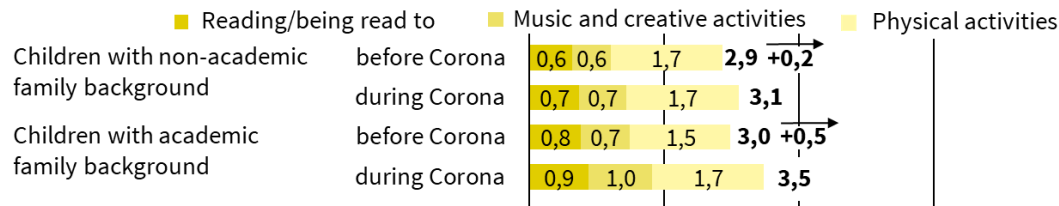
## How did students from different family backgrounds spend their time?

Similar loss of learning among children with academic and non-academic family background, more passive activities especially among children with non-academic family background

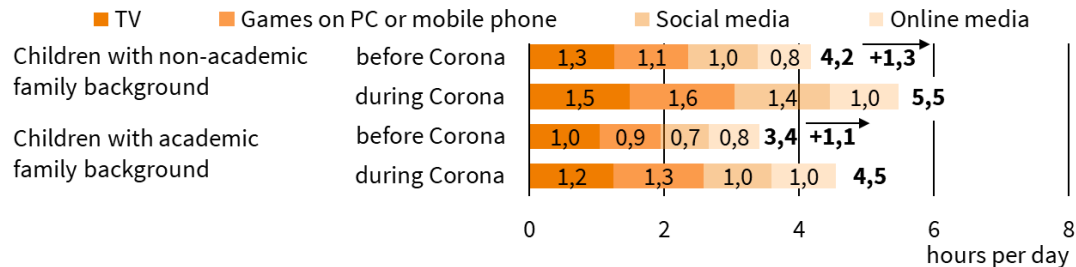
### School-related activities



### Reading, creative activities, physical activities



### TV, PC, mobile phone



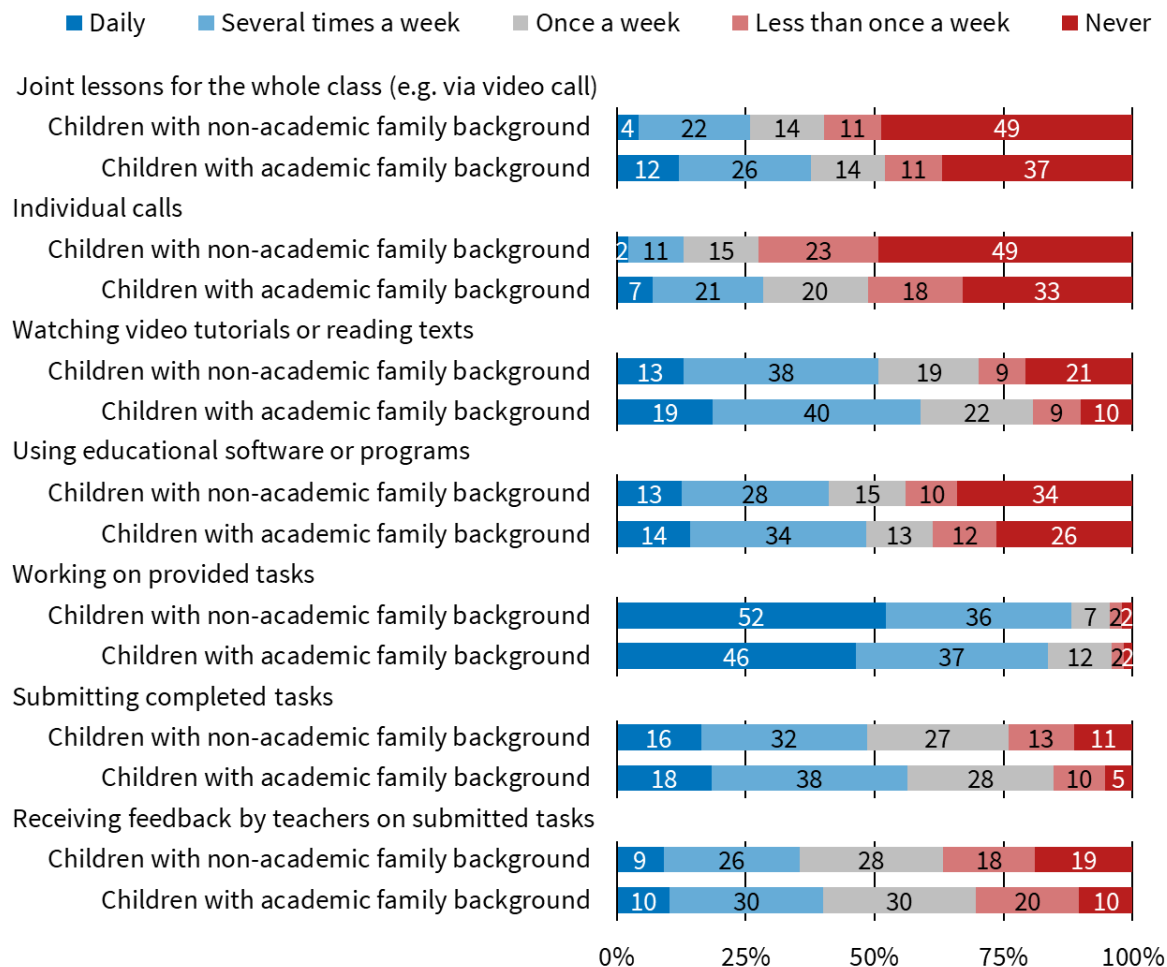
Source: ifo Education Survey 2020.

© ifo Institute

# What did the schools do? Activities and involvement of teachers

## Did the activities of the schools differ according to the students' family background?

Fewer online lessons and individual calls with children from non-academic family background



Source: ifo Education Survey 2020.

© ifo Institute

## Large learning loss during Covid-19 school closures

- Time spent with school-related activities decreased by  $\frac{1}{2}$
  - Learning activities substituted by rather passive activities
  - Non-academic family background students received less support by their schools than academic background students did
- very likely that educational inequality will increase

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**

**Comments and questions are very  
welcome**

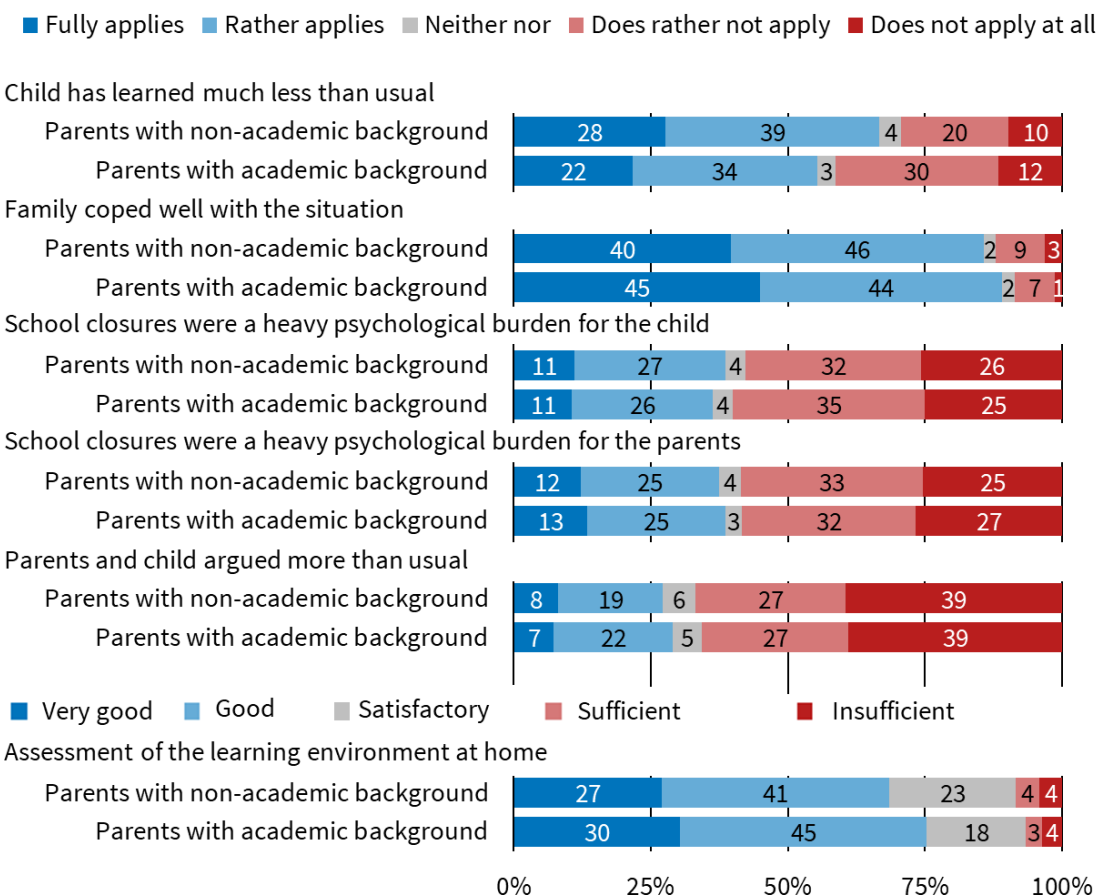
**zierow@ifo.de**

# BACK-UP

## How did the students, families and schools do? Evaluation of parents

### How do parents with different educational backgrounds evaluate the period during the school closures?

Parents with non-academic background witness greater loss of learning and rate the learning environment at home worse



Source: ifo Education Survey 2020.

© ifo Institute

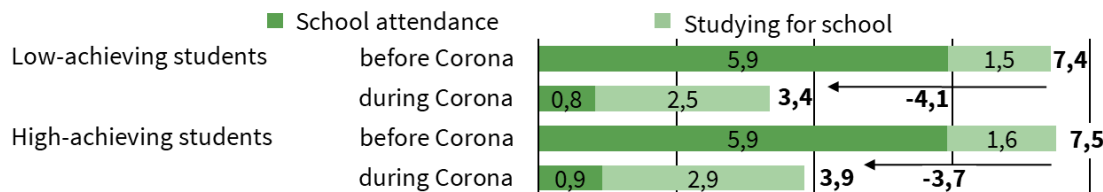


## Further inequality: Low-achieving vs. high-achieving students

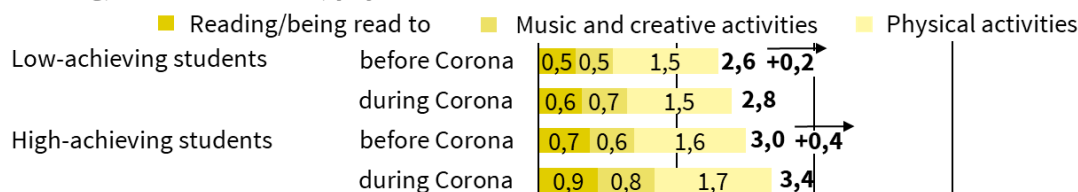
### How did students with different grades spend their time?

Low-performing students in particular replaced studying with passive activities

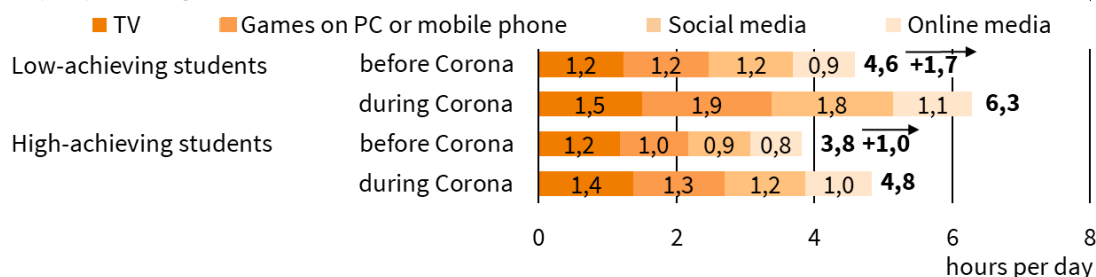
#### School-related activities



#### Reading, creative activities, physical activities



#### TV, PC, mobile phone



Source: ifo Education Survey 2020.

© ifo Institute