

Beyond Access in Social Mobility Research

Investigating the 'Class' Ceiling

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Our Research Questions

1. What is the relative social exclusivity of different elite occupations in Britain?
2. Do the upwardly mobile face a 'class ceiling' in terms of earnings within elite occupations?



Mobility *within* elite occupations

- Dominant focus on mobility *rates* between ‘**big classes**’ of the NS-SEC or EGP
- Reduces conversation around mobility to issues of occupational *access*
- Little known about how the upwardly mobile fare *within* elite occupations



A Class Ceiling?

- Do the mobile achieve highest level of success or face **'glass ceiling'** associated with women and ethnic minorities?
- Our work on BBC Great British Class Survey indicates upwardly mobile may **earn considerably less** than the stable within elite occupations (Friedman, Laurison, Miles, 2015)

Data and Approach

Elite occupations: NS-SEC 1

higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations;
63 unique occupations, plus media professionals

Excluded respondents:

in full-time education
not aged 23-69
without parental occupation data

43,444 respondents from the July-September 2014 Quarterly Labour Force Survey

6,104 in NS-SEC 1 occupations plus 127 media
3,427 with income, origin, AND occupation data

How We Measure Social Mobility

Higher Manager and Professional parents (NS-SEC 1)

 inter-generationally stable

Lower Manager and Professional parents (NS-SEC 2)

 short-range upwardly mobile

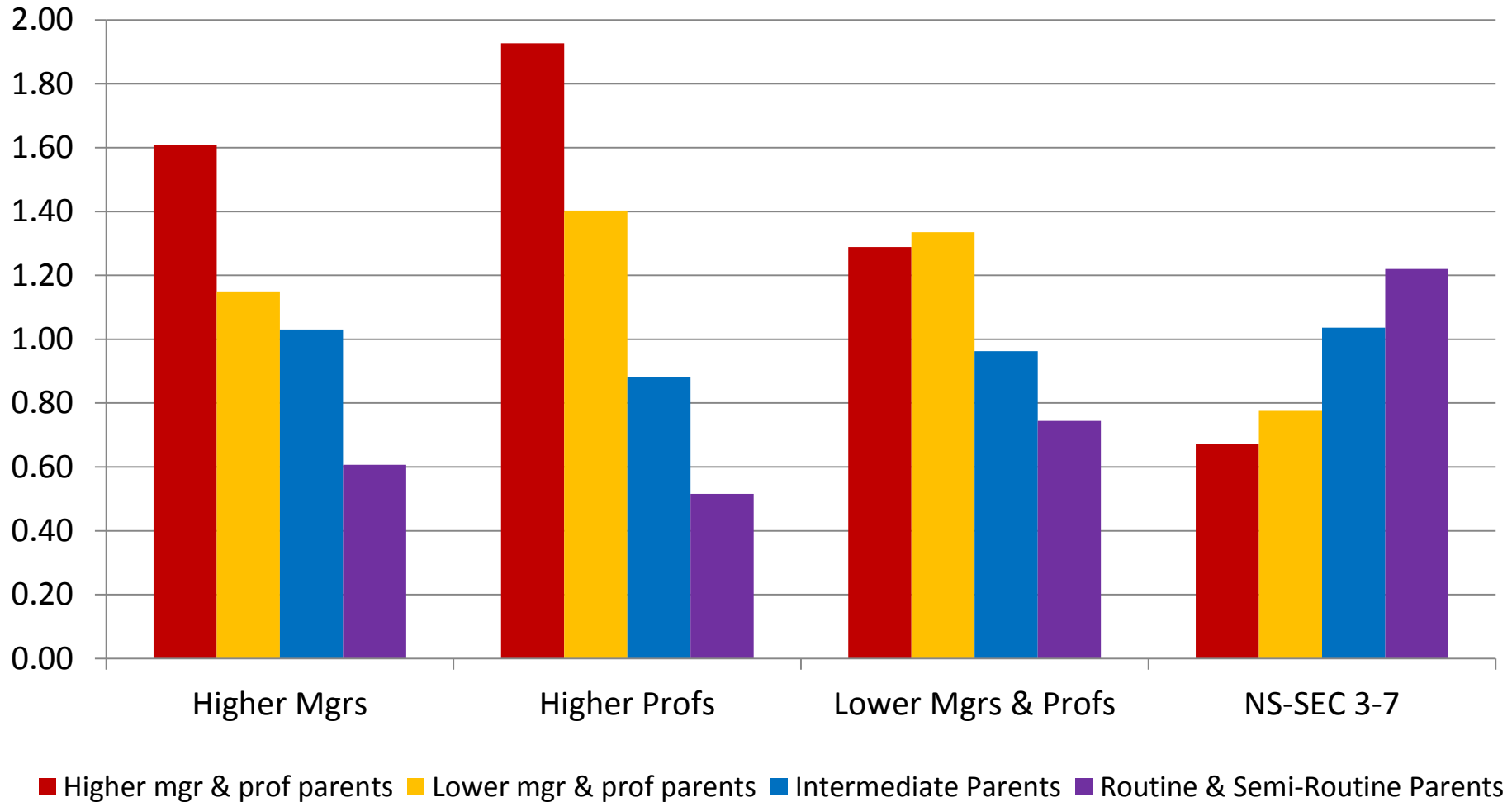
Parents in Intermediate Occupations, Self-Employed, or Lower Supervisory positions (NS-SEC 3, 4 and 5)

 mid-range upwardly mobile

Parents in Semi-Routine or Routine work (NS-SEC 6 and 7)

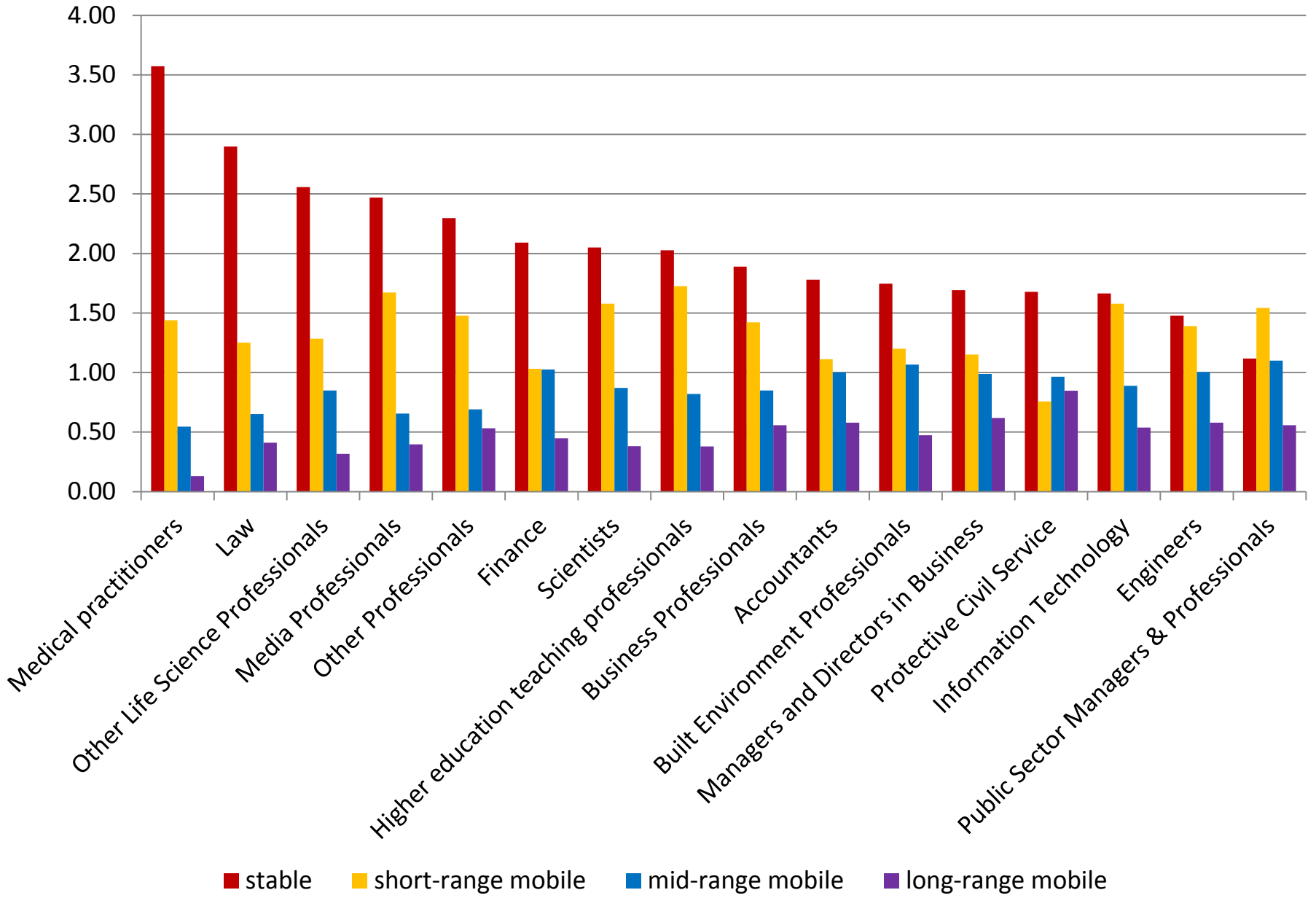
 long-range upwardly mobile

Reproduction of Privilege



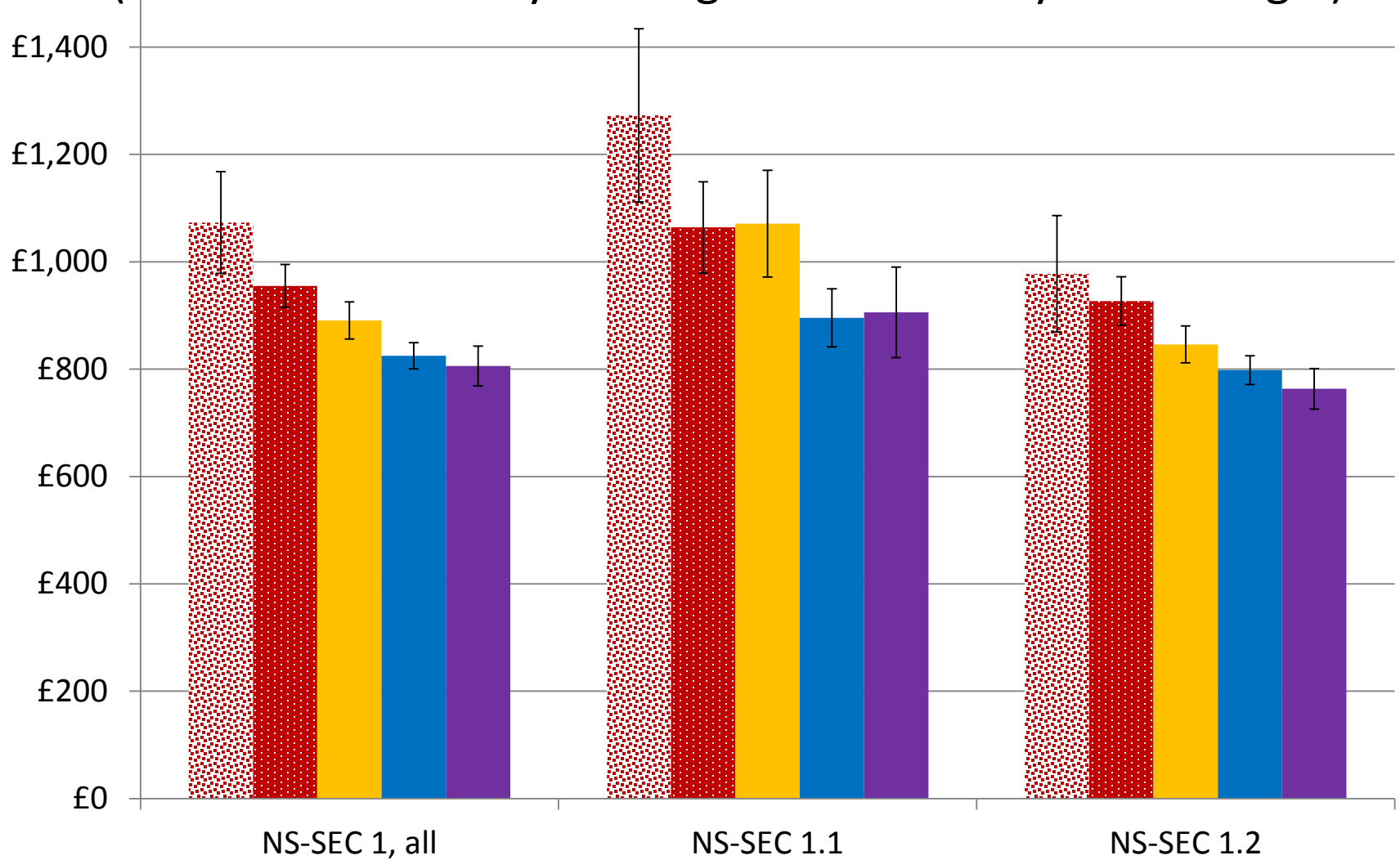
Continuing Exclusivity of Medicine And Law

	micro- stable	stable	short-range mobile	mid-range mobile	long-range mobile	N
Medical practitioners	21.6%	52.6%	22.6%	20.7%	4.2%	259
Law	18.8%	42.6%	19.6%	24.7%	13.0%	214
Other Life Science Professionals	6.5%	37.6%	20.2%	32.2%	10.0%	180
Media Professionals	4.9%	36.3%	26.2%	24.9%	12.6%	127
Other Professionals	9.0%	33.8%	23.2%	26.2%	16.8%	146
Finance	4.8%	30.8%	16.2%	38.9%	14.2%	249
Scientists	3.9%	30.2%	24.8%	33.0%	12.1%	247
Academics	7.3%	29.8%	27.1%	31.1%	12.0%	164
Business Professionals	2.6%	27.8%	22.3%	32.2%	17.7%	949
Accountants	1.8%	26.2%	17.5%	38.0%	18.4%	323
Built Environment Professionals	7.6%	25.7%	18.9%	40.5%	15.0%	150
Managers and Directors in Business	2.7%	24.9%	18.1%	37.4%	19.6%	773
Protective Civil Service	8.2%	24.7%	11.9%	36.6%	26.8%	82
Information Technology	3.1%	24.5%	24.8%	33.7%	17.1%	736
Engineers	3.2%	21.8%	21.8%	38.1%	18.4%	452
Public Sector Managers & Professionals	1.6%	16.4%	24.2%	41.7%	17.7%	298



The 'Class' Ceiling

(Mean Gross Weekly Earnings in NS-SEC 1 by Social Origin)



micro-stable macro-stable short-range mobile mid-range mobile long-range mobile

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Modelling Earnings Differences

OLS regression, DV = weekly gross earnings, also logged weekly gross earnings, gross hourly pay.

IV of interest = origin (short-range mobile, mid-range mobile, long-range mobile vs stable)

“Human Capital”/skills Educational Qualifications: reference= University Degree, Post-Graduate education, Less than University Degree; Job-Related Training last 3 months (binary); Job Tenure (in years)

Work Context: Paid hours worked in last week; Public sector (vs private); Industry 9-category: reference=Public admin, education and health, Agriculture, forestry and fishing, Energy and water, Manufacturing, Construction, Distribution, hotels and restaurant, Transport and communication, Banking and finance, Other services; Firm Size, reference= less than 25 employees, 25 to 49, 50 to 499, 500 or more

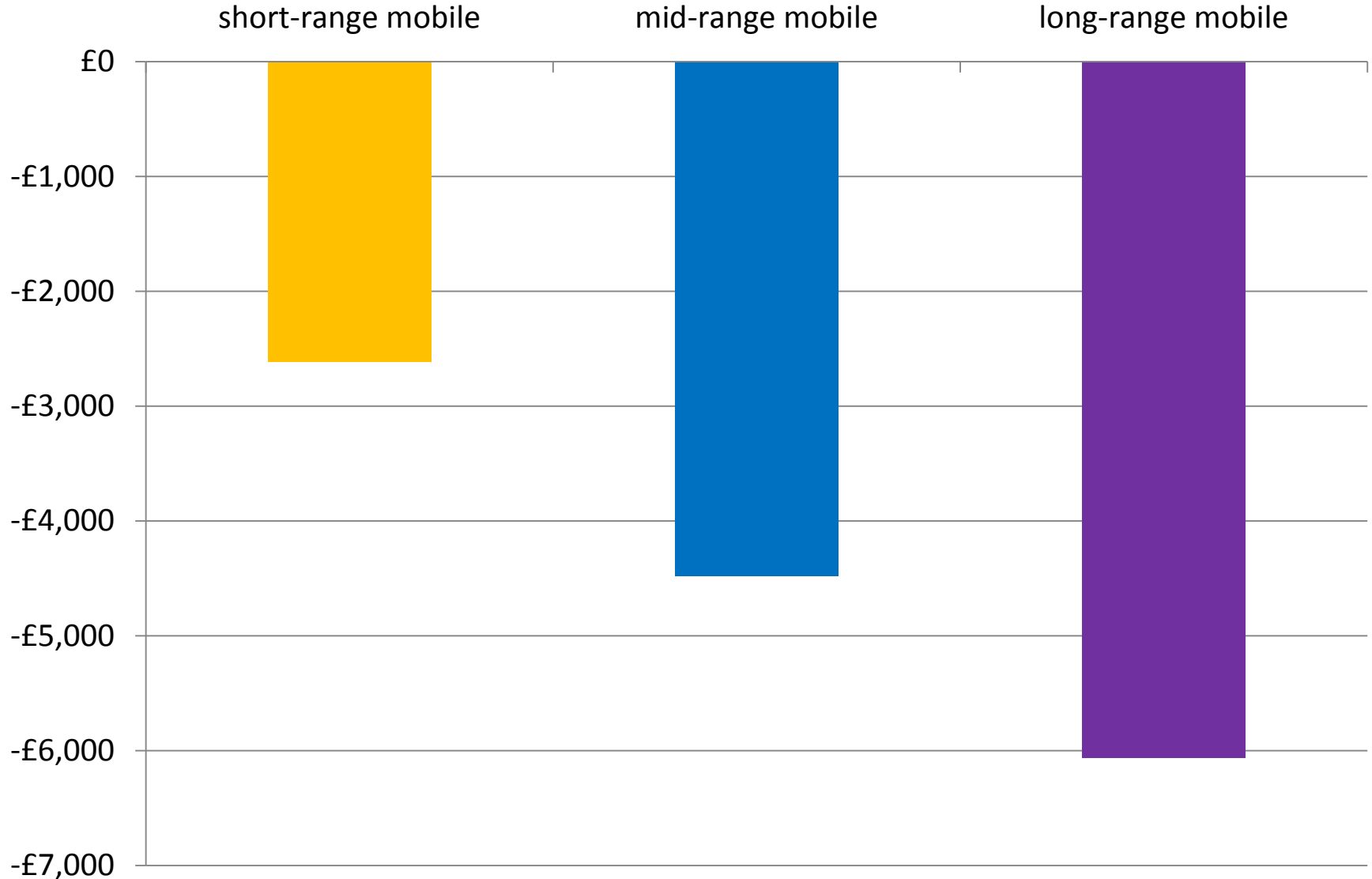
Individual Attributes: Age (in years); Age squared; Female; Not White; Location: reference = London, Southeast Urban, Rest of UK Urban, SE Non-Urban, Rest of UK Non-Urban; Immigrant status (binary).

Occupation: Professionals (vs Managers) (in models with both NS-SEC 1.1 & 1.2), specific SOC 2010 code (I let Stata choose the reference category)

Results: OLS Regressions, Earnings Coefficients for Class Origin (vs Stable)

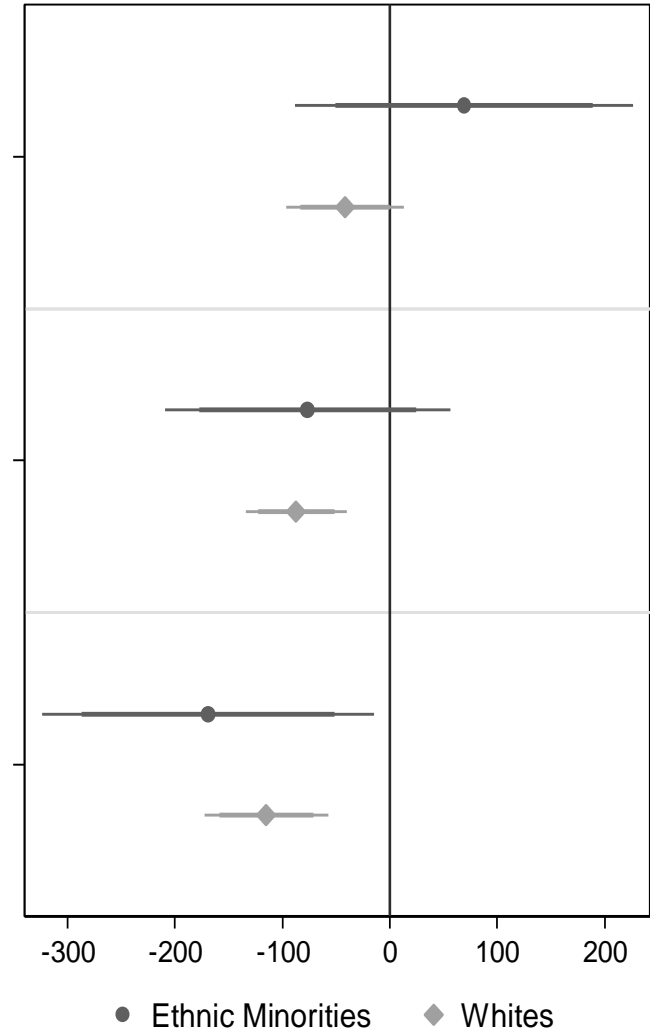
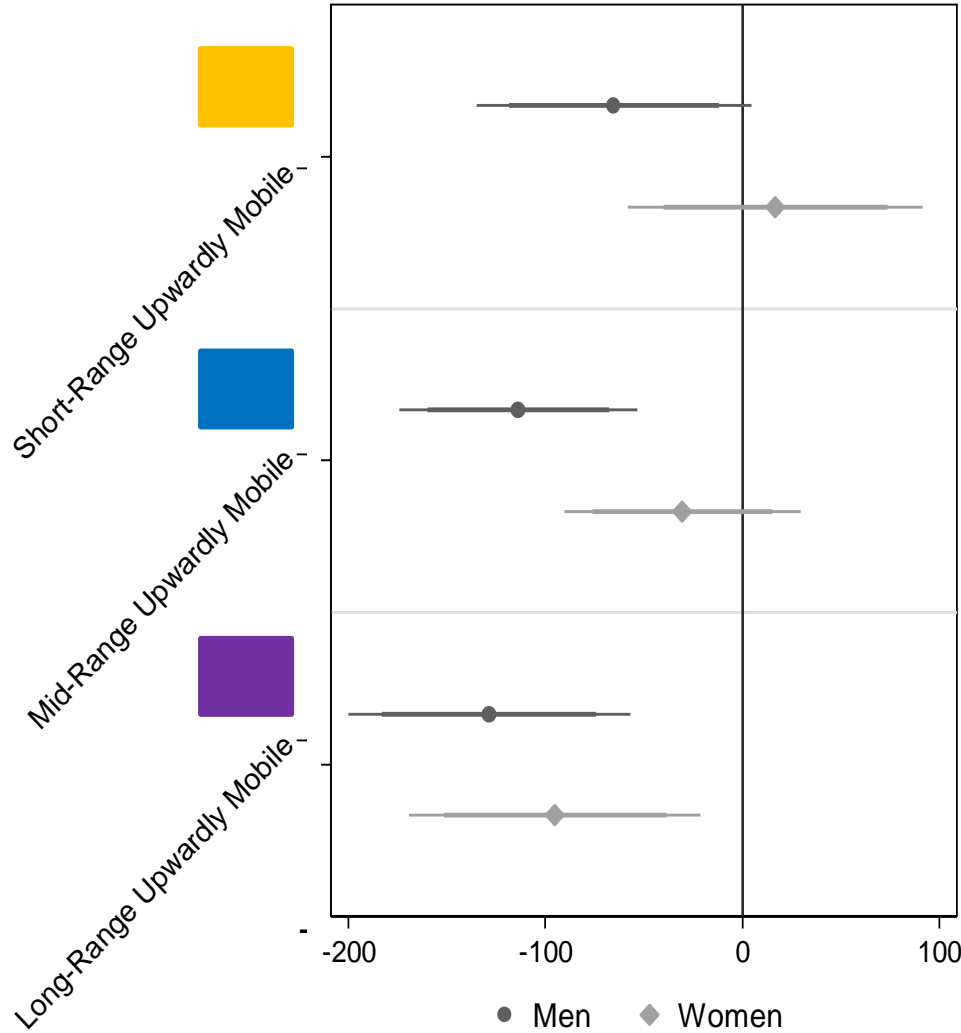
	NS-SEC 1 (ALL)	NS-SEC 1.1	NS-SEC 1.2
Weekly Gross Earnings (untransformed GBP)			
Short-range Mobile (NS-SEC 2 parents)	-40.19	-11.81	-50.75*
Mid-range Mobile (NS-SEC 3, 4, 5)	-87.33***	-81.65*	-86.81***
Long-range Mobile (NS-SEC 6 & 7)	-115.38***	-110.99*	-117.45***
Logged Weekly Gross Earnings			
Short-range Mobile	-0.039	-0.013	-0.047
Mid-range Mobile	-0.080***	-0.077	-0.081***
Long-range Mobile	-0.127***	-0.108*	-0.135***
Hourly Gross Earnings £			
Short-range Mobile	-1.118	-1.368	-1.072
Mid-range Mobile	-2.243***	-2.329	-2.112***
Long-range Mobile	-3.495***	-2.98	-3.308***
	N 3219	798	2421

Estimated Class Pay Gap Among Higher Professionals

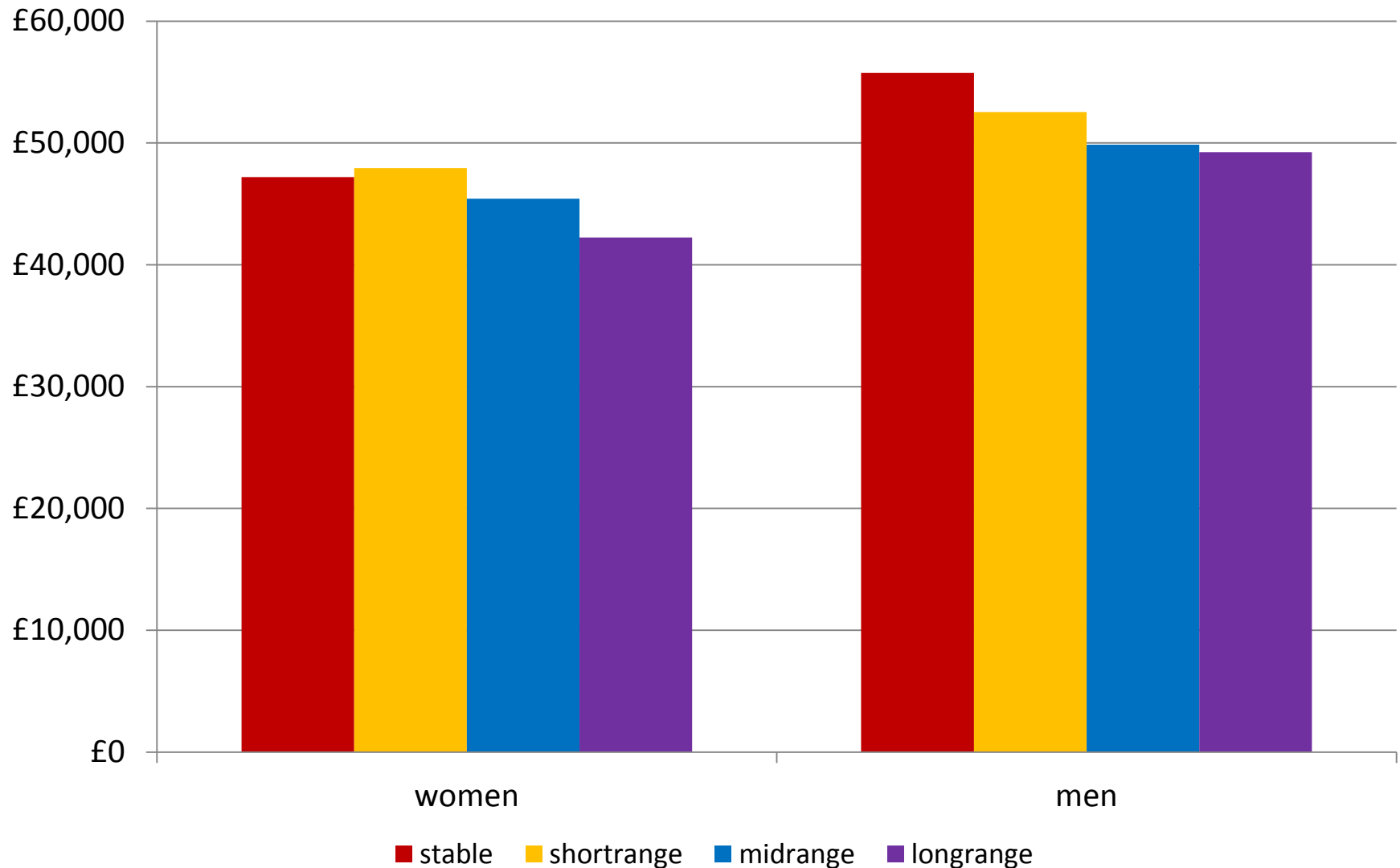


Separate Models by Gender

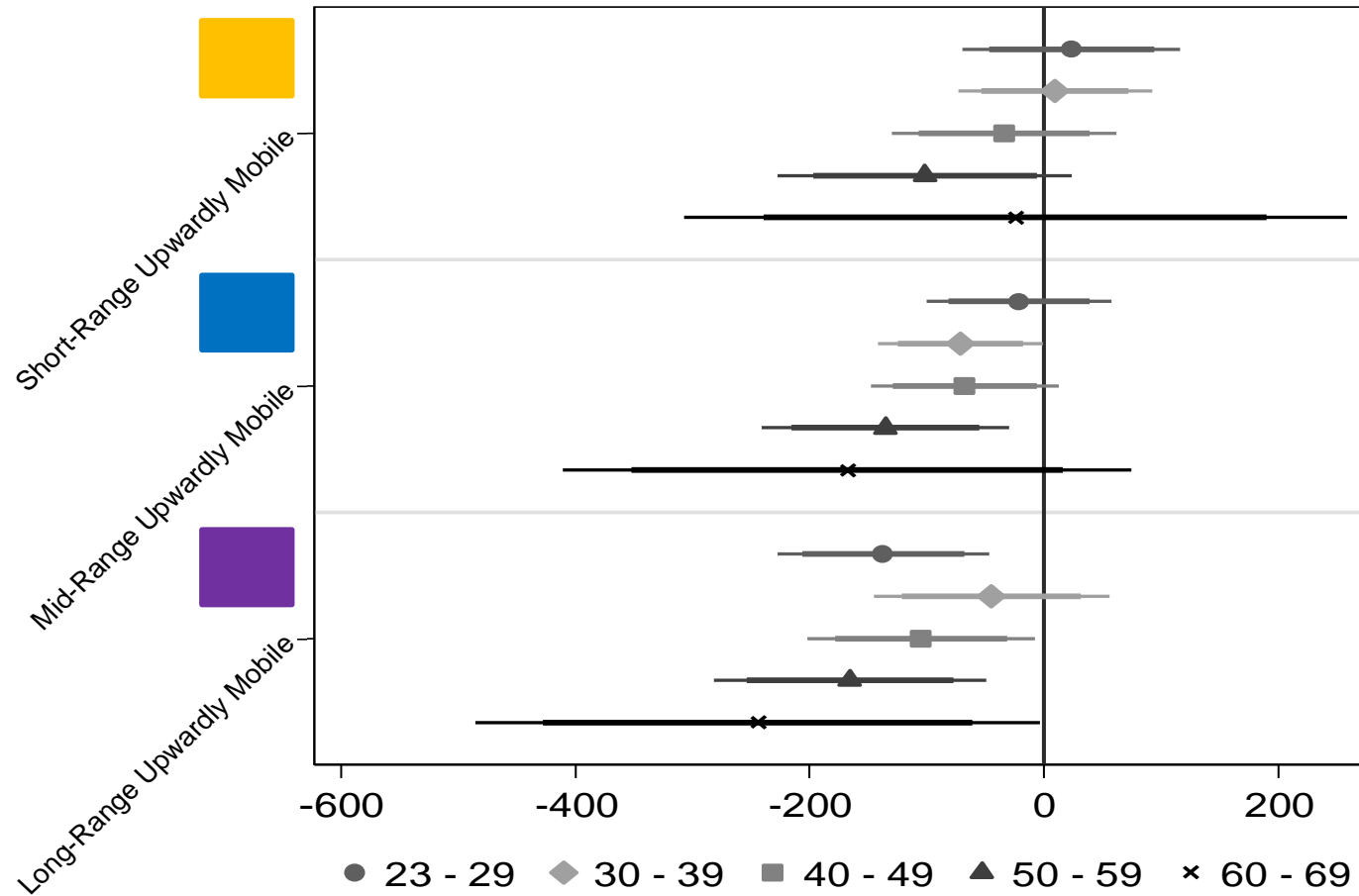
Separate Models by Ethnic Group



Double Disadvantage for Women

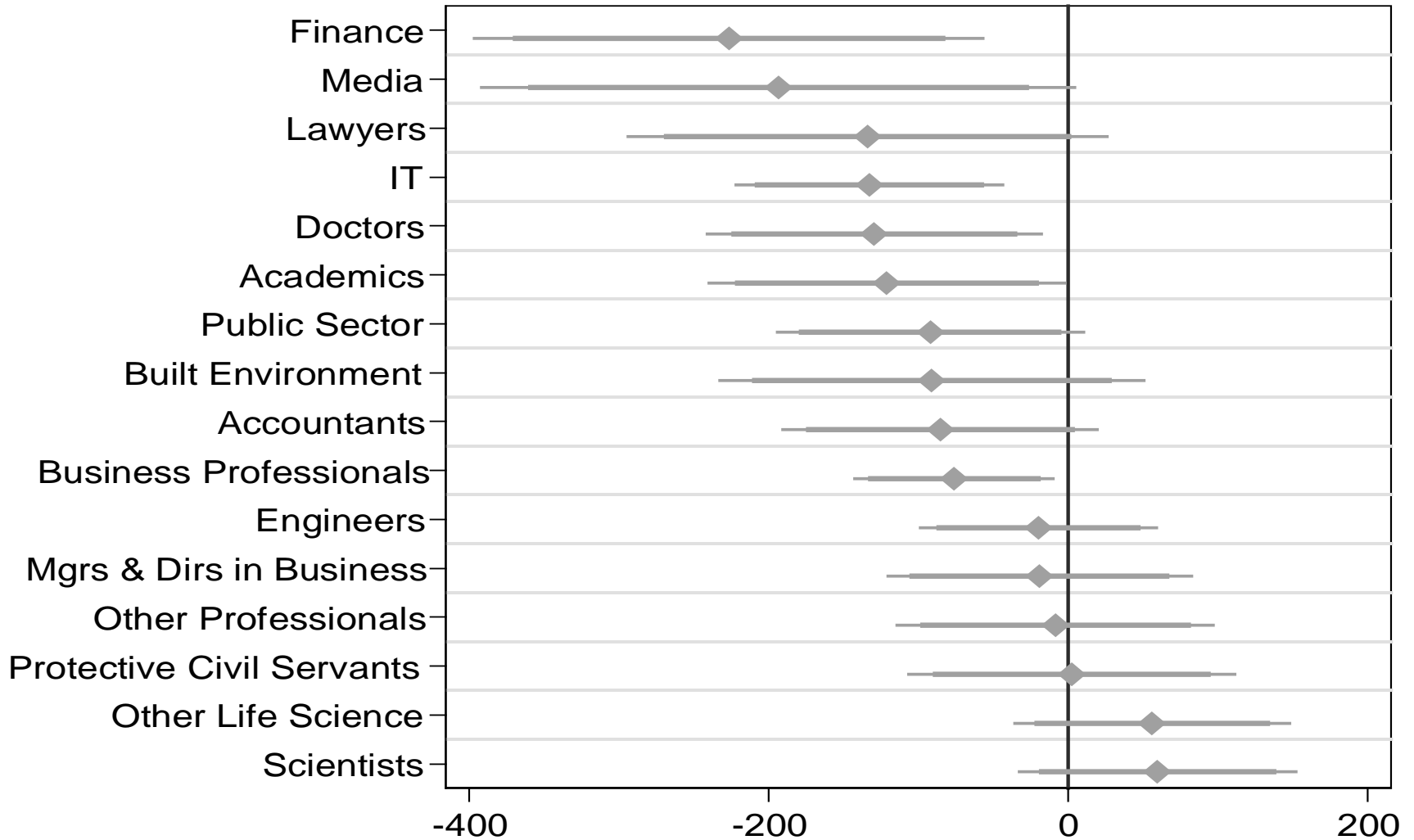


Separate Models by Age Group

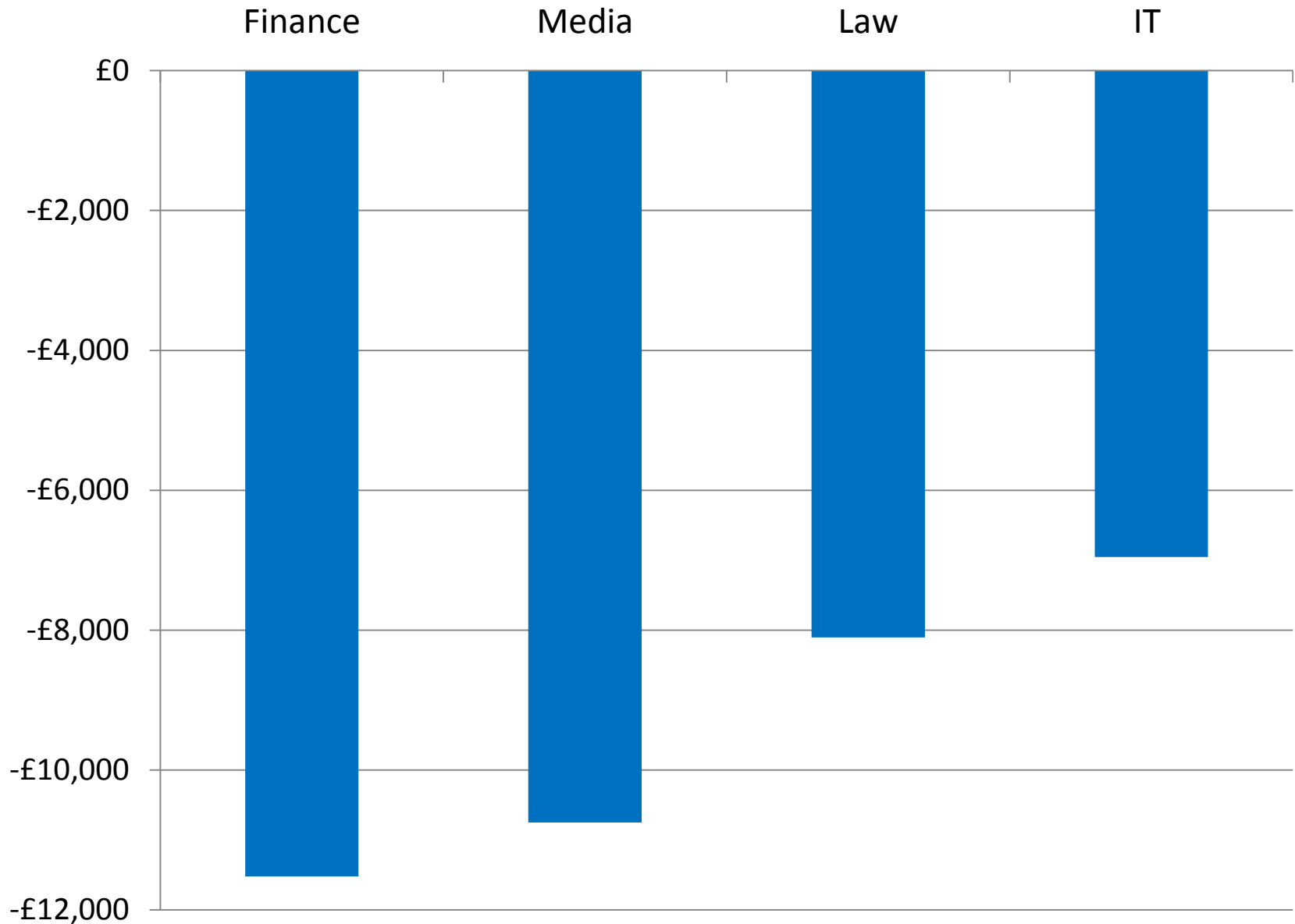


Class Pay Gap by Occupational Group

all controls, all mobile vs stable

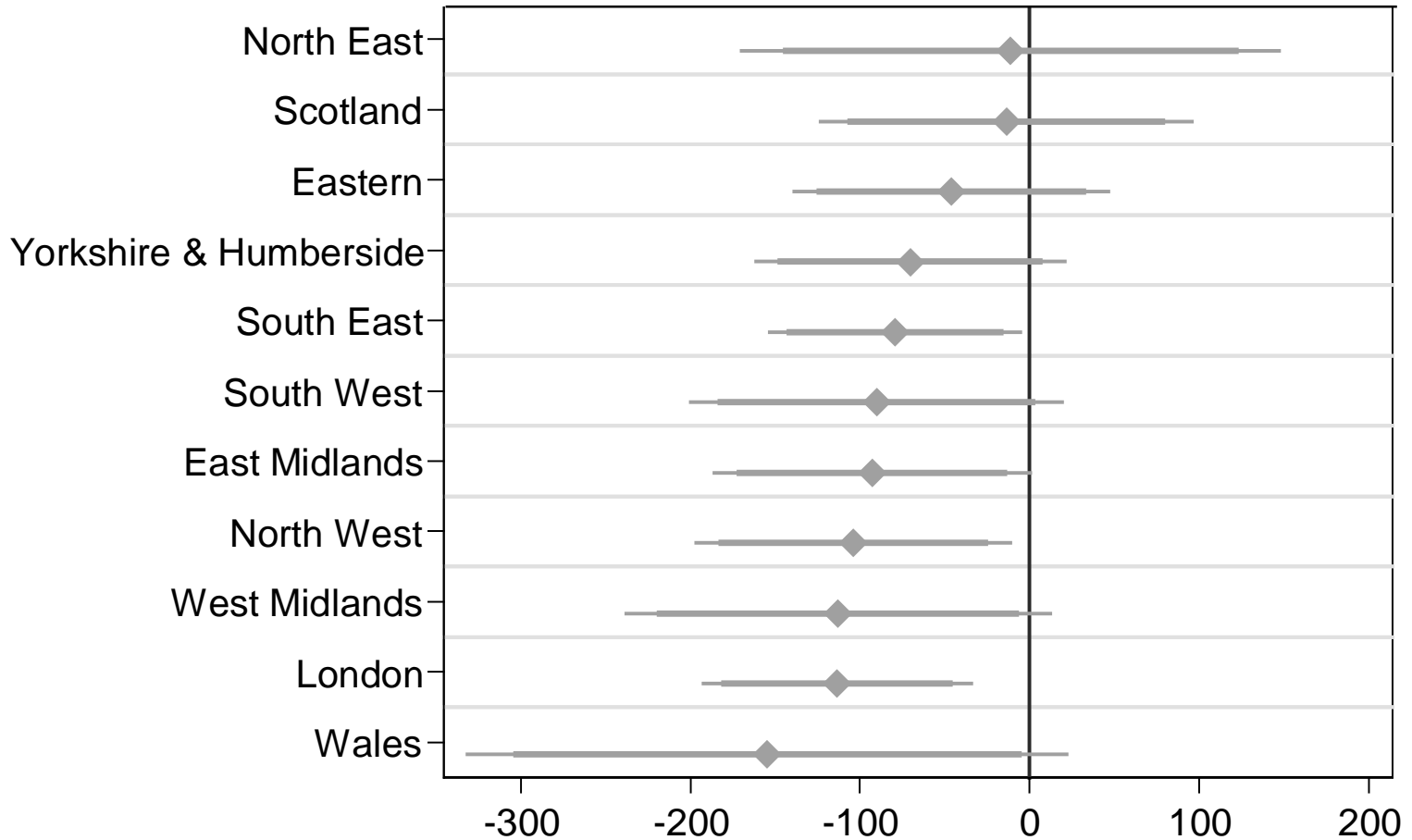


Estimated Annual Earnings Gap, All Mobile vs Stable



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... and finally, by Region



Summary of Key Findings

1. Beyond 'access', upwardly mobile face a powerful ***class ceiling*** in terms of pay progression
2. Class pay gap exacerbated for women who face a ***double disadvantage***
3. Class Ceiling not uniform among elite occupations – particularly strong in **law, finance, IT and media**

Implications for Mobility Studies

1. Importing Feminist concept of 'glass ceiling' may be useful for mobility scholars
2. Going beyond 'access' shows *importance of resources that stem from both big- and micro-class origins*

Limitations and Future Research

LFS data is a game-changer but sample size for specific occupations is still small

We aim to follow up in two main ways:

1. To use longitudinal data to examine whether there are particular points in career **trajectories** where mobile face barriers
2. To conduct 200 qualitative interviews with bankers, journalists, engineers, actors and barristers to explore **experience** of mobility in elite occupations