

Working Paper Series

Working From Home and Gendered Labour Time: COVID-19's Ongoing Impact

Lyn Craig
Irma Mooi-Reci
Federico Zilio

Working Paper 12/26

Working From Home and Gendered Labour Time: COVID-19's Ongoing Impact *

Lyn Craig ^a, Irma Mooi-Reci ^{a,b}, Federico Zilio ^{b,c}

**^a School of Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of Arts, The University of Melbourne,
Melbourne.**

**^b Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, The University of
Melbourne.**

**^c Section for Oral Health, Heidelberg Institute of Global Health, Heidelberg University
Hospital, Heidelberg University, Germany.**

**Melbourne Institute Working Paper No. 12/26
August 2026**

* This paper uses unit-record data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey. The HILDA Survey project was initiated and is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) and is managed by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research (Melbourne Institute). The findings and views reported in this paper, however, are those of the authors and should not be attributed to either DSS or the Melbourne Institute. The data used are available free of charge to researchers through the National Centre for Longitudinal Data Dataverse at the Australian Data Archive (<https://dataverse.ada.edu.au/dataverse/nclld>). We acknowledge the support of Australian Research Council Grant LP190100623. We thank seminar participants at the Caregiving over the Life Course Workshop, Lund University, Lund, Sweden 6th-8th May 2025.

**Melbourne Institute of
Applied Economic and Social Research
The University of Melbourne
Victoria 3010 Australia
T +61 3 8344 2100
E melb-inst@unimelb.edu.au
W melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au**

Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research working papers are produced for discussion and comment purposes and have not been peer-reviewed. This paper represents the opinions of the author(s) and is not intended to represent the views of Melbourne Institute. Whilst reasonable efforts have been made to ensure accuracy, the author is responsible for any remaining errors and omissions.

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic reshaped work arrangements, prompting widespread adoption of working from home (WFH) and raising questions about its implications for gendered labour. Using Australian panel data and fixed-effects models, this study investigates how WFH shapes time allocations to paid and domestic work among dual-earner households. We examine differential effects by gender, WFH intensity, and children's age. Findings indicate a post-pandemic rise in WFH prevalence and intensity, accompanied by divergent gendered patterns of labour time. Under high-intensity WFH, women particularly mothers of older children, expanded their paid work, while men, especially fathers of young children, substantially increased domestic work. Low-intensity WFH primarily supports additional paid work for both women and men. Overall, the results reveal that WFH does not consistently reinforce or challenge traditional gender patterns; rather, its effects are contingent on intensity and family context, producing both opportunities for and constraints on gender equality in the organisation of work.

JEL classification: D13; J16; J22

Keywords: Work from home, Gendered paid and unpaid work, COVID-19 pandemic, Time use, Flexible work arrangements

1 Introduction

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, working from home (WFH) has become an increasingly common feature of paid employment in many countries. In Australia, for example, the proportion of employees who worked exclusively from home skyrocketed from less than 1% prior to the pandemic to 13% in 2020 (Mooi-Reci and Wooden 2025). Similar expansions occurred globally as the COVID-19 pandemic transformed how and where paid work was performed, because governments worldwide responded to the crisis with mandated lockdowns and social distancing orders. Millions of people switched from on-site work to WFH, blurring the temporal and spatial boundaries between paid work, housework and caring for others (Carlson et al. 2021; Sevilla and Smith 2020).

At the beginning of the pandemic, it seemed possible that the exogenous shock might jump-start social change (see e.g., Alon et al. 2020; van Barneveld et al. 2020; Saad-Filho 2020). By requiring men and women to be at home simultaneously regardless of their prior individual choices about work and family roles, the lockdowns were seen as a ‘natural experiment’ that might facilitate more gender equality in paid and unpaid labour time (Shen 2023; Thomson 2020). It was suggested that many men would appreciate the unexpected opportunity to be more hands-on with children (e.g., Carlson et al. 2021; Swenson 2020) such that ‘more father involvement could erode social norms currently underpinning the unequal divisions of domestic labour’ (Alon et al. 2020: 1).

Early results from time use studies in multiple countries found that the pandemic did indeed cause a large increase in domestic labour, with both men and women averaging significantly more unpaid work than hitherto (see e.g., Andrew et al. 2022; Carlson et al. 2021; Craig 2020; Del Boca et al. 2020; Pasqualini et al. 2022; Shafer et al. 2020; Sevilla and Smith 2020). Evidence was mixed on whether gender gaps narrowed or widened under lockdowns (e.g., Derndorfer et al. 2021; Leap et al. 2023), but most studies reported at least temporary increases in men’s domestic labour and care (see e.g., Carlson and Petts 2022; Craig and

Churchill 2021; Garcia 2022; Haney and Barber 2022; Meraviglia and Dudka 2021; Sánchez et al 2021; Steinmetz et al 2022; van Tienoven et al 2023). It remains an open question as to whether and for whom any aspects of this changed behaviour will last. Emerging research suggests that gendered labour patterns began reverting to the mean alongside the widespread return to on-site work after the pandemic (e.g., Nishimura 2022; Steinmetz et al. 2022; Sullivan et al. 2021; Wojnicka and Kubisa 2024; Alipour 2025). However, others note exceptions. For example, an American time use study finds gendered housework gaps remain narrower post-COVID-19 (Marcén and Morales 2025) and notes that ‘a pandemic imprint on gender relations’ is apparent in men’s increased participation in domestic labour in the US, Canada, and the UK (Petts et al. 2023: 1).

Despite the growing literature on WFH since the pandemic, several limitations remain. First, most studies treat WFH as a binary condition, overlooking the potential differences between occasional, hybrid, and predominantly remote work. Second, the longitudinal effects of WFH on changes in paid and unpaid work remain underexplored, particularly in relation to gender and parental responsibilities. These gaps are especially consequential for analyses of gender inequality as little is known about how WFH interacts with household composition and care demands to shape gender patterns of labour allocation over time. In this study, we take an explicitly gendered analytical approach and move beyond binary classifications of WFH to consider its intensity—the proportion of working hours performed at home—recognizing that different configurations of remote work embody distinct constraints, opportunities, and gendered implications.

Using longitudinal data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey and two-way fixed-effects models, we assess how changes in WFH intensity influence time spent in paid work, unpaid domestic labour, and commuting, and how these relationships vary over time. We examine how caregiving responsibilities, captured by the number and age of children, shape women’s and men’s capacity to mobilize flexibility, and

advance theoretical understanding of how flexible work arrangements interact with gendered care structures and household dynamics in the post-pandemic era.

2 Background

Our study builds on extensive pre-pandemic and pandemic-era research examining how WFH shapes paid and unpaid labour. Evidence on its effects on paid labour is mixed. A recent systematic review of 26 studies on the impact of WFH on employee productivity and performance found that most reported a positive impact and few reported a neutral or negative effect (Anakpo et al. 2023). Kitagawa et al (2021) argue that the detail matters, concluding that those who work on-site generally have higher productivity than those who WFH, but that multiple workplace and demographic factors can confound this finding. WFH has been found to grant some workers greater autonomy and control over their work, improving their efficiency (Allen et al. 2015), and enhancing their job satisfaction (Golden and Gajendran, 2019; Laß et al. 2025) and mental health (Kitagawa et al. 2021). Conversely, WFH can increase workers' job insecurity and contribute to feelings of isolation (e.g., Mooi-Reci and Wooden 2025; Fan and Moen 2023), due to reduced visibility in the workplace (e.g., Bloom et al. 2015). The 'flexibility stigma' (Chung 2020) can negatively affect career progress, particularly among men (Mooi-Reci and Wooden 2025) and lead home-based and hybrid workers to try to counter employers' negative perceptions of WFH through the 'self-exploitation' of working longer hours (Chung 2022).

WFH's effects on domestic labour are also mixed. Flexible workplace arrangements such as WFH potentially help people combine domestic and employment obligations (e.g., van der Lippe and Lippényi 2020; Chung 2020) but again the picture is complicated by demographic variation (Kurowska 2020). Gender and parenthood are especially salient. Culturally defined gender roles shape participation in both employment and unpaid work, so 'teleworking can simultaneously enhance work-life balance while perpetuating traditional work and family

roles' (Sullivan and Lewis 2001: 123) for men and women. Some note more positive effects of WFH on work-family conflict for women than men (van der Lippe and Lippényi 2018; Laß and Wooden 2023). Research finds that women are more likely than men to use WFH to juggle care demands (Arwin et al 2021; Hilbrecht et al. 2008), and men more commonly use it to extend their paid work hours (Powell and Craig 2015).

2.1 Work from Home, Flexibility, and the Gendered Organization of Work

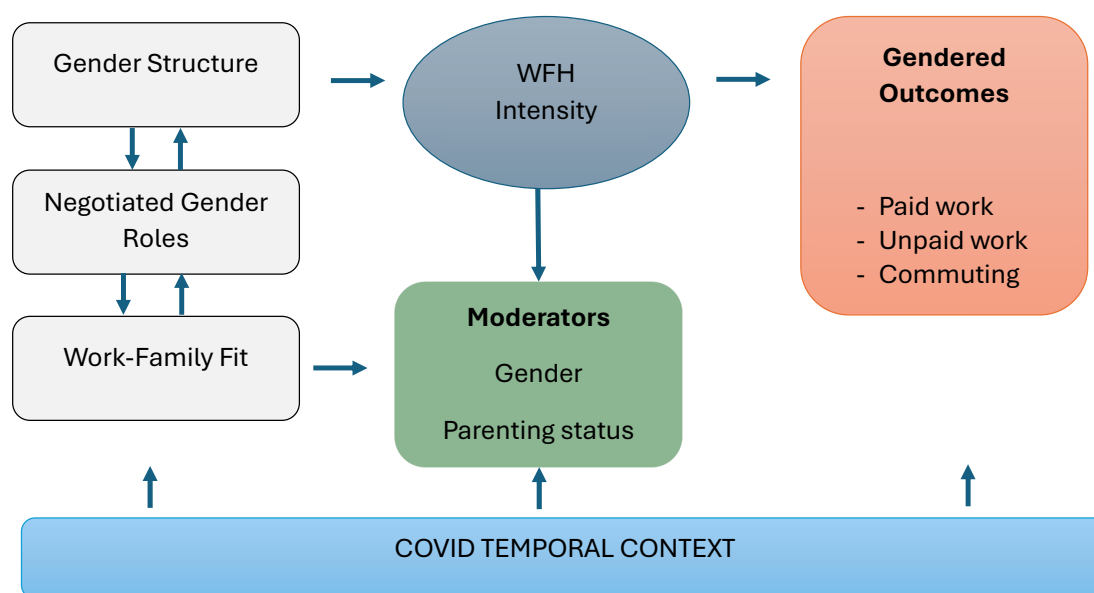
We conceptualize the relationship between WFH and gendered labour through three interrelated theoretical perspectives: gender structure theory, doing gender, and work-family fit theory (Risman 2004; West and Zimmerman 1987; Voydanoff 2005; Greenhaus and Powell 2006). As illustrated in Figure 1, each offers complementary insights into the organization of work, domestic labour and care.

Gender structure theory posits that gender operates as a multi-level system of inequality, embedded in institutions, organizational practices, and household arrangements (Risman 2004). It follows that men's and women's opportunities and constraints are shaped by structural forces such as labour market organization, social policies, and cultural norms. Within this framework, gender is a socially constructed pattern that organizes roles, expectations, and resource allocations across multiple contexts. Applied to WFH, this perspective draws attention to how institutional and policy contexts, such as the gendered structuring of employment, childcare provision, and taxation in Australia (see below) shape who can work from home, how often, and under what conditions.

Doing gender theory complements this structural view by focusing on the micro-level enactment of gender in everyday interactions and practices (West and Zimmerman 1987). Within households, men and women negotiate the allocation of paid and unpaid work in line with social norms of masculinity, femininity, and caregiving. In the context of WFH, men and women actively negotiate how paid and unpaid work are allocated within households, drawing

on socially normative expectations about masculinity, femininity, and caregiving. For example, men may leverage WFH to extend paid work, signaling commitment to employers, whereas women may strategically use WFH to accommodate caregiving and household responsibilities. Together, these theories link structural constraints with agency: while institutional and cultural arrangements shape possibilities, individuals' actions reinforce, negotiate, or sometimes challenge gender norms.

Figure 1. Expected Theoretical Relationships



Work–family fit theory provides a functional lens for understanding how the alignment between work demands and family responsibilities mediates outcomes (Voydanoff 2005; Greenhaus and Powell 2006). This framework focuses on the interaction between job characteristics, household responsibilities, and individual capacities, highlighting that flexible arrangements such as WFH do not automatically translate into equitable labour allocations. Instead, their impact is contingent on the interplay between the intensity and timing of WFH, the distribution of care responsibilities, and the broader social and policy environment. Work–

family fit thus bridges the structural and micro-level perspectives, explaining under what conditions WFH may facilitate or constrain gender equality in paid and unpaid labour.

Building on these theories, our study examines how WFH reshapes the gendered allocation of paid work, unpaid domestic work, and commuting time among dual-earner households before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic. We argue that if mandated WFH was a significant catalyst for paid and unpaid labour changes during COVID-19, we would expect it be amongst those who continue to (be able to) use it post-COVID-19 that these changes endure. We expect men to have returned to pre-COVID-19 WFH patterns more than women, and in line with the research outlined above, we expect both WFH usage patterns and time allocation effects to differ by gender. The expected relationships between WFH, gender, and time allocation are summarized in Figure 1 above.

2.2 Gender, Unpaid labour, Caregiving and Work from Home in Australia

That WFH's intra-household effects differ for men and women is unsurprising, given the longstanding imbalance in unpaid domestic work (e.g., caregiving, cooking, cleaning) which historically has mostly been done by women (e.g. Folbre 2014; Goldscheider et al. 2015). As many more women entered employment over recent decades, men's unpaid domestic work including caregiving did not rise to the same extent (e.g. Sullivan et al. 2018; England et al. 2020; Pailhé et al. 2021). If women are disproportionately responsible for domestic labour and care, it follows that if they are employed in a job that allows them to WFH, many will use it to maximise their unpaid work time. Conversely, if men are primarily focused on paid work, they will likely use WFH to maximise their employment effort. We would expect this to be particularly the case in a country like Australia, in which social and economic policies have historically tended to reinforce traditional gendered divisions of labour.

High education levels and rising costs of living have underpinned strong growth in Australian women's employment (Craig et al. 2024). However, childcare is very expensive (Adamson and Brennan 2017). Fees combine with tax and transfer policies to disincentivise

mothers of young children from full-time work by penalising secondary earners in couple-headed households (Stewart 2022). They face effective marginal tax rates near 100% of their earnings if they use childcare for more than three days a week (Wood et al. 2020). Thus, the 1½ earner family model (part-time employed woman and full-time employed man) is modal in heterosexual households with young children, and women are more likely than men to take jobs below their qualification levels and to be employed on casual contracts (Charlesworth and MacDonald 2015). Time demands are most pressing and gendered divisions of housework and care are widest when children are young (Baxter et al. 2024).

WFH patterns are also gendered in Australia. Time use research conducted prior to COVID-19 found, for example, that the dominant pattern for WFH men was bringing usually on-site work home to do in outside standard office hours, in the evenings or on weekends (Powell and Craig 2015). This type of WFH has been called ‘extension WFH’ (Yang et al. 2023; Laß and Wooden 2025). For women, the dominant WFH pattern was fitting part-time hours around their children’s school and daycare schedules or working with their young children also present (Powell and Craig 2015). Some mothers become self-employed explicitly to be able to WFH and care for children more flexibly and cheaply (Foley et al. 2018). This is more likely to be ‘replacement WFH’ in which all or most work is done at home (Yang et al. 2023; Laß and Wooden 2025). In Australia, WFH was thus associated with longer paid work hours for men and shorter paid work hours for women, and intensified, rather than reduced, gendered differences in unpaid work and care allocation (Powell and Craig 2015). However, that pre-COVID-19 research was cross-sectional and was only able to infer, rather than probe, differences between extension WFH and replacement WFH.

2.3 Hypotheses

Building on the theories and research outlined above, we conceptualize WFH as a *continuum of intensity*: from occasional home-based work after hours to regular WFH across multiple days.

The impact on paid and unpaid work and commuting time may be very different between people who WFH only after office hours and people that are entitled to work from home one or more days. WFH multiple days may lead to savings in commuting time that can be used to do more paid or unpaid work. We also expect WFH usage and time allocation effects to differ by the extent of domestic labour and care demand, in particular the number and age of children in the household. Australia provides an ideal context to test these expectations. Its strengthening dual-earner norm combined with moderate gender egalitarianism make it a critical case for understanding broader patterns in advanced economies. Our hypotheses are:

- **H1:** Post-COVID-19, the proportion of employment hours that are worked from home will be higher than pre-COVID-19, particularly among women.
- **H2:** The associations between WFH and time allocated to paid work, unpaid work and commuting will be most pronounced during COVID-19, but post-COVID-19 will not revert fully to pre-COVID-19 levels.
- **H3:** At low intensity, WFH will be positively associated with paid work time. At high intensity, WFH will be negatively associated with paid work and commuting and positively associated with unpaid work.
- **H4:** Period-related associations between WFH and time allocated to paid work, unpaid work and commuting will vary by WFH intensity.
- **H5:** Period-related associations between WFH and time allocated to paid work, unpaid work and commuting will be larger for parents of young children, and larger for mothers than fathers.

3 Approach and Method

3.1 Data

We use data from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) <https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/hilda>), an annual longitudinal survey that collects

information on socio-economic characteristics, labour market outcomes, earnings and income of Australians since 2001. In addition to a face-to-face interview, HILDA contains a self-completion questionnaire that includes questions on time use in specific activities. We analyse time use on three dimensions that together comprise total work time: paid work, unpaid work and commuting. Commuting is included because WFH may save travel time, which could be reallocated to additional paid and unpaid work, maintaining productivity (Ma et al. 2024).

For employed respondents, HILDA provides the employment hours and number of hours—if any—usually worked at home. Although HILDA does not record the reasons for WFH and the type of working arrangements, it allows us to capture heterogeneity of WFH intensity. We categorize respondents based on the proportion of their total paid hours they worked at home: 1) always on-site, 2) less than 20% of their paid hours at home (typically after office hours or occasionally), 3) 20% and 60% of paid hours at home (regular but partial WFH), and 4) more than 60% of their paid hours at home (predominantly remote workers).

HILDA data on unpaid work include time spent on childcare (playing with children, supervising, transporting and educating them), housework (preparing meals, cleaning, washing dishes and clothes, ironing and sewing), household errands (shopping, banking, paying bills, and keeping financial records), outdoor tasks (home maintenance, gardening, car repairing and maintenance), and caregiving (caring for a spouse, parents or other adult relatives). These activities are measured through survey questions asking respondents to report the number of hours spent on each activity during the previous week. While retrospective recall time measures are less precise than time-diary data (Sullivan et al. 2018), they offer consistent, longitudinally comparable estimates and are the only national data available to robustly analyse both paid and unpaid work within post-pandemic Australian households. Additionally, HILDA follows individuals over time and has a wealth of contextual information on employment and family conditions (see model specifications below).

We restrict the sample to men and women in couples in which both partners are employed and aged under 65. Applying these criteria and pooling across waves yields approximately 44,000 person-year observations for men and women combined.

3.2 Methods

We begin by studying descriptively and through multivariate regressions the association between WFH and time allocation separately by gender and across three periods: pre-pandemic (prior to 2020), the pandemic with COVID-19 restrictions in place (2020–21), and post-restrictions (2022–23). We then examine how the effects differ by family care demand including the age of children in the multivariate regression analyses. Our outcomes include weekly hours spent in paid work, unpaid work, and commuting, and total work time, defined as the sum of these three activities. In the analyses we allow the relationship between the outcome Y_{it} and WFH to vary across the three periods estimating a two-way fixed-effects model of the form:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \sum_{p=1}^3 \beta_p \text{period}_{ip} * wfh_{it} + \gamma x_{it} + \theta_i + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

$$p=1,...,3$$

where Y_{it} represents the time allocated to paid work, unpaid work and commuting by respondent i in year t . The term θ_i denotes individual fixed-effects, which control for stable personal attributes such as preferences, gender ideology or unmeasured ability while δ_t represents year fixed-effects capturing year-specific shocks common to all individuals. The variable wfh_{it} indicates whether the person i worked any hours from home in year t and period_{ip} are dummies that represent the three time-periods. The vector x_{it} includes a set of time-varying controls: marital status, age, type of contract, occupation, industry, health status, age of the youngest child, household income, individual labour earnings, number of adults in the household, number

of children in the household by age, spousal time in paid and unpaid work. The parameter of interest β_p captures the average change in the outcome for a WFH person in period p .

Equation (1) assumes that the association between WFH and time allocation is constant across all intensity levels. As noted above, this is not true in practice, so we extend Equation (1) by differentiating respondents according to the share of their employment hours conducted from home and divide the sample into four groups defined by j : 1) people who work all hours on-site, 2) people who work from home for up to 20% of their paid hours, 3) people who work from home between 20% and 60% of the hours, and 4) people who work from home more than 60% of the time. The model that accounts for differences in the fraction of hours worked from home is:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \sum_{p=1}^3 \sum_{j=1}^4 \beta_{pj} \text{period}_{ip} * \text{share_wfh}_{ijt} + \gamma x_{it} + \theta_i + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (2)$$

$$p=1, \dots, 3 \quad j=1, \dots, 4$$

where β_{pj} estimates the relationship between WFH intensity share_wfh_{ijt} and the outcome in period p .

Finally, we estimate a model to test if the relationship between WFH and time use varies with WFH intensity, the age of the youngest child and period. To do so, we split the sample into three groups according to the age of the youngest child: no dependent child, 0–9, 10 or older. For simplicity, in this Equation, (3), WFH intensity share_wfh_{ijt} is grouped into three categories (no WFH, $0 < \text{WFH} \leq 60\%$, $\text{WFH} > 60\%$) rather than four categories as in Equation (2). This consolidation does not affect the substantive results, which are robust to finer categorizations (full results available on request). The model includes interaction terms between the WFH intensity categories, dummies representing the three youngest-child age groups $\text{age_young_child}_{iat}$ and periods period_{ip} and is estimated by the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned}
Y_{it} = & \alpha + \sum_{j=1}^3 \beta_j \text{share_wfh}_{ijt} + \sum_{a=1}^3 \lambda_a \text{age_young_child}_{iat} + \sum_{j=1}^3 \sum_{a=1}^3 \mu_{ja} \text{share_wfh}_{ijt} * \\
& \text{age_young_child}_{iat} + \sum_{j=1}^3 \sum_{p=1}^3 \eta_{jp} \text{share_wfh}_{ijt} * \text{period}_{ip} + \sum_{a=1}^3 \sum_{p=1}^3 \theta_{ap} \text{age_young_child}_{iat} * \\
& \text{period}_{ip} + \sum_{j=1}^3 \sum_{a=1}^3 \sum_{p=1}^3 \tau_{jap} \text{share_wfh}_{ijt} * \text{age_young_child}_{iat} * \text{period}_{ip} + \gamma x_{it} + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{ijt} \quad (3)
\end{aligned}$$

4 Results

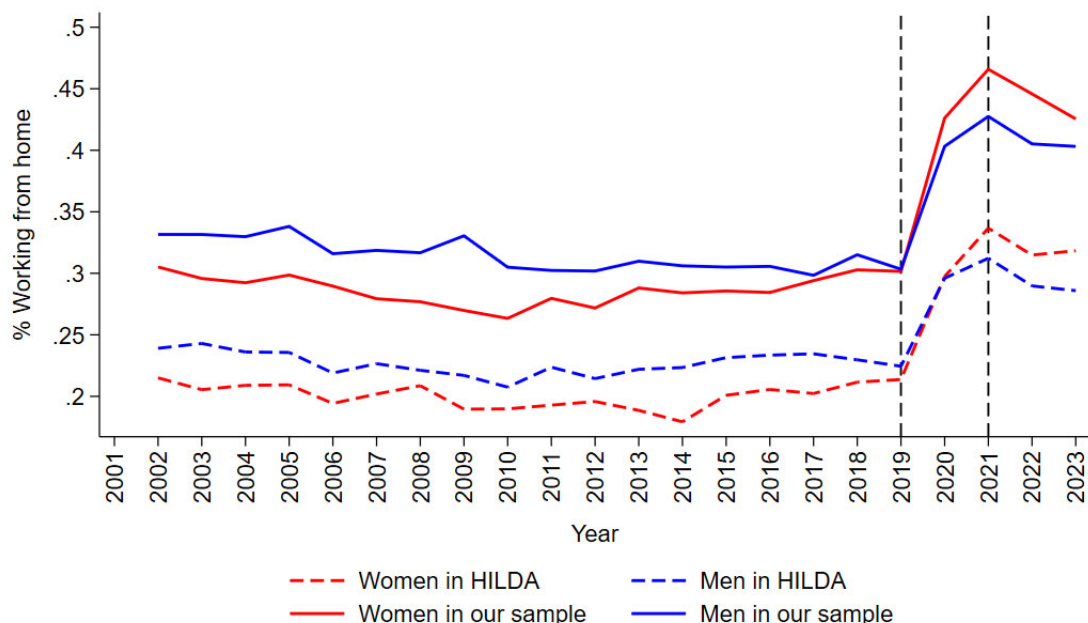
4.1 Descriptive Results

Consistent with studies elsewhere, in Australia WFH spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hybrid working arrangements were still accepted by many employers even after the pandemic restrictions were lifted. As shown in Figure 2, the share of employees in our sample who worked any hours from home was relatively stable prior to 2020, surged dramatically during 2020-2021 and barely declined in the two subsequent years. Before the pandemic, more men than women worked from home. However, the increase in WFH participation during the pandemic was markedly larger for women than men. The proportion of women WFH rose from 28.0% to 44.5%, while the proportion for men rose from 31% to 41.3%. The incidence of WFH is substantially higher among our sample than in the broad HILDA sample, suggesting that it is a work-family arrangement particularly drawn upon by dual earner households.

The pandemic also increased the *proportion* of employed hours WFH in dual earner couples. As shown in Table 1, prior to 2020, most employees who WFH did so for a small share of their total hours: 19% of men and 12% of women, suggesting that they were bringing usually on-site work home. This was the most common WFH arrangement for both sexes. During 2020-21, the share of women working more than 60% of their employed hours at home rose from 7% pre-COVID-19 to 26.3%. The corresponding figures for men grew from 4.1% to 19.9%. Thus, reflecting the lockdown mandates, 60% or more hours WFH was the most common WFH arrangement for both sexes during COVID-19. Many of these would have been full-time at home. The share of high-intensity WFH declined in 2022-23 but remained substantially higher than the years prior to 2020. Also, in 2022-23 the decline in the share of people working more

than 60% of their hours at home corresponded to an increase in the share of people doing between 20 and 60% of their hours at home. This means more people were doing larger shares of their work at home than before COVID-19. For women, over 60% of hours worked from home remains the highest category (18%), a substantial change in average WFH usage patterns. These descriptive patterns are consistent with H1 suggesting a sustained and gendered expansion in the intensity of WFH after the pandemic.

Figure 2 Proportion of persons working from home



Notes: Figure 2 shows the proportion of men and women working any hours from home. Sample of couples in which both spouses are employed and aged under 65. *Source:* HILDA, 2001-2023.

Table 1 also presents descriptive statistics for the average time spent on commuting, paid and unpaid work by gender, period and work arrangement. Low-intensity WFH individuals average more time in paid work and high-intensity WFH individuals average more time in unpaid work, and considerably less time commuting compared with those who work exclusively on-site. Within unpaid labour, there are large differences evident in time spent on childcare, housework and household errands (see Table A.1).

Table A.2a - A.2b show the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample by gender, period and WFH (women in Panel a; men in Panel b). Overall, WFH is associated with greater childcare responsibilities and older age reflecting life-course and occupational factors that shape access to flexible work. However, while prior to 2020 those who were doing WFH for more than 60% of their paid hours were mainly self-employed and had on average lower earnings, during COVID-19 and in the years afterwards there was a shift into this group of full-time employed workers with managerial and professional occupations and relatively high income. This was to be expected during lockdown as these types of employment could be done from home most readily, but Table A.2a - A.2b also show a substantial compositional change in who does more than 60% WFH that persists post-COVID-19.

Table 1 Working from home intensity and time use.

	Prior to 2020				2020-21				2022-23			
	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%
Women												
WFH intensity (%)	72.0	12.3	8.7	7.0	55.5	7.1	11.0	26.3	56.7	7.6	17.7	18.0
Time in paid work	31.4	38.2	33.8	25.4	31.1	37.7	36.2	34.4	31.6	37.7	37.9	33.7
Time in unpaid work	31.0	29.9	38.6	46.5	30.0	28.3	33.5	34.0	30.0	29.5	28.9	36.1
Time commuting	3.8	4.3	4.0	0.8	3.4	3.8	3.9	2.0	3.6	4.3	4.3	1.8
Total time	66.1	72.4	76.3	72.8	64.5	69.7	73.6	70.4	65.2	71.5	71.1	71.6
Observations	25,102	4,311	3,072	2,361	2,497	326	502	1,202	2,446	333	775	782
Men												
WFH intensity (%)	69.0	18.9	8.0	4.1	58.7	11.3	10.1	19.9	59.7	11.8	15.3	13.2
Time in paid work	42.8	47.2	45.2	41.6	41.5	45.0	42.2	41.6	42.3	44.9	41.5	40.8
Time in unpaid work	20.0	19.6	21.9	22.2	19.9	19.1	22.0	23.1	20.1	20.6	23.4	24.7
Time commuting	4.9	5.3	5.6	1.8	4.4	4.9	5.0	2.6	4.6	5.0	5.1	2.1
Total time	67.7	72.2	72.7	65.7	65.9	69.0	69.2	67.3	67.0	70.5	69.9	67.6
Observations	24,050	6,616	2,797	1,377	2,639	506	459	905	2,544	509	665	571

Notes: This table shows the proportion of men and women working from home and time use by period and share of hours worked from home.

4.2 The Impact of Work from Home on Time Use over Time. How are the COVID-19 Effects Working Out?

We first test H2 by studying the relationship between WFH and time allocation across three periods, pre-pandemic (before 2020), during pandemic with COVID-19 restrictions (2020–21), and post-restrictions (2022–23), using the fixed-effects model of Equation (1). As expected, WFH is associated with increased time in paid and unpaid work and reduced time in commuting. However, the results presented in Table 2 reveal marked temporal variation in the association between WFH and paid and unpaid labour. Specifically, the WFH gap in paid work reduced and the unpaid work effects of WFH intensified during the years when COVID-19 restrictions were in place, relative to the pre-pandemic period.

Table 2 The impact of working from home on time use by period

Time use (hrs/week)	Paid Work	Unpaid work	Commuting	Total
Women				
By period				
Prior to 2020	0.67*** (0.33; 1.02)	0.97*** (0.42; 1.52)	-0.24*** (-0.36; -0.12)	1.40*** (0.80; 2.00)
2020-21	0.49* (-0.07; 1.04)	2.38*** (1.41; 3.35)	-1.39*** (-1.61; -1.16)	1.48*** (0.42; 2.54)
2022-23	0.09 (-0.56; 0.74)	1.56*** (0.43; 2.68)	-1.19*** (-1.43; -0.95)	0.46 (-0.74; 1.65)
Observations	42,231	42,231	42,231	42,231
Men				
By period				
Prior to 2020	0.92*** (0.61; 1.24)	0.00 (-0.37; 0.37)	0.13* (-0.01; 0.26)	1.05*** (0.58; 1.52)
2020-21	0.17 (-0.39; 0.74)	1.45*** (0.70; 2.19)	-1.33*** (-1.60; -1.07)	0.29 (-0.62; 1.19)
2022-23	-0.36 (-1.03; 0.32)	1.63*** (0.77; 2.49)	-1.18*** (-1.45; -0.90)	0.10 (-0.98; 1.18)
Observations	41,685	41,685	41,685	41,685

Notes: This table reports the estimates of the impact of working from home on time use by period. Controls are age, health status, number of adults in the households, number of children aged 0-4, aged 5-9, aged 10-14, aged 15-29, age of the youngest child in the household, number of bedrooms, occupation, industry, employment arrangements, tenure at work, labour earnings, household income, spouse's time in paid and unpaid work. The estimates are obtained from two-way fixed effects models. Confidence Intervals are reported at 95% level. Standard errors are clustered at individual level. *p-value<0.1 ** p-value<0.05 *** p-value<0.01

For women, WFH was associated with an average increase of 2.38 hours per week in unpaid labour during the COVID-19 years (2020-21) compared with 0.97 hours before 2020. For men, WFH had no measurable impact on unpaid work prior to the pandemic but increased

it by 1.45 hours per week during the COVID-19 years (2020-21). These shifts indicate that when external constraints forced men and women alike to WFH both genders took on additional unpaid responsibilities, though women continued to devote more time overall to domestic labour. Importantly, the post-pandemic results show partial reversion: by 2022-23, the WFH unpaid work association for women had returned closer to its pre-pandemic level (+1.56 hours per week) whereas for men it remained elevated, suggesting a more enduring adjustment in some fathers' domestic involvement.

We next test H3 and H4 and estimate Equation (2) to examine whether the intensity of WFH matters for the allocation of time and if any associations change across periods. Estimates of this model are presented in Table 3. Results indicate that prior to 2020 people who WFH less than 20% of their hours spend substantially more time on paid work and slightly less time on unpaid work compared to people who work entirely on-site, suggesting that occasional WFH facilitates additional paid work while modestly displacing domestic tasks. WFH between 20% and 60% is associated with more time in both paid and unpaid work, although the increase in paid work is smaller than for the 20% category. In contrast, WFH more than 60% of paid hours is associated with substantially less time in paid work and considerably more time in unpaid work, indicating a substantial reallocation toward domestic labour. Reductions in commuting time are present across all WFH intensities, but the largest decreases occur when WFH exceeds 60% of paid hours. Supplementary analyses (Table A.3) indicate that the rise in unpaid work among those working more than 60% of their hours at home reflects increases across all categories of domestic labour, including childcare, housework and household errands. Individuals working between 20% and 60% of their paid hours at home spend more time on housework and errands than individuals who work on-site, although differences in time spent with children are small and statistically insignificant.

Table 3 The impact of WFH intensity on time use by period

Time use (hrs/week)	Paid Work	Unpaid work	Commuting	Total
Women				
Prior to 2020				
20% or less	1.64*** (1.28; 2.00)	-0.12 (-0.72; 0.49)	0.14* (-0.00; 0.28)	1.66*** (1.00; 2.32)
20< % WFH≤60	0.32 (-0.21; 0.85)	1.18*** (0.36; 1.99)	-0.09 (-0.25; 0.07)	1.41*** (0.54; 2.28)
More than 60%	-2.12*** (-3.01; -1.22)	4.39*** (3.15; 5.62)	-1.95*** (-2.16; -1.74)	0.32 (-1.11; 1.76)
2020-21				
20% or less	1.46*** (0.50; 2.42)	0.74 (-1.02; 2.49)	-0.11 (-0.49; 0.27)	2.09** (0.13; 4.05)
20< % WFH≤60	0.68 (-0.24; 1.59)	1.72** (0.32; 3.12)	-0.39** (-0.69; -0.09)	2.01** (0.38; 3.65)
More than 60%	-0.18 (-0.83; 0.46)	3.51*** (2.33; 4.68)	-2.41*** (-2.68; -2.14)	0.91 (-0.35; 2.18)
2022-23				
20% or less	1.14** (0.09; 2.19)	0.25 (-1.56; 2.07)	0.09 (-0.28; 0.46)	1.48 (-0.46; 3.42)
20< % WFH≤60	0.26 (-0.54; 1.06)	0.39 (-0.99; 1.76)	-0.45*** (-0.73; -0.16)	0.20 (-1.29; 1.69)
More than 60%	-1.06** (-1.54; 0.35)	3.81*** (2.19; 5.42)	-2.83*** (-3.16; -2.50)	-0.08 (-1.77; 1.61)
Observations	42,163	42,163	42,163	42,163
Men				
Prior to 2020				
20% or less	1.22*** (0.90; 1.53)	-0.43** (-0.81; -0.04)	0.28*** (0.14; 0.42)	1.07*** (0.58; 1.56)
20< % WFH≤60	1.00*** (0.42; 1.57)	0.45 (-0.17; 1.07)	0.34*** (0.12; 0.57)	1.79*** (0.97; 2.60)
More than 60%	-1.84*** (-2.91; -0.77)	2.44*** (1.49; 3.38)	-1.85*** (-2.17; -1.52)	-1.25* (-2.51; 0.01)
2020-21				
20% or less	0.54 (-0.33; 1.41)	-0.57 (-1.58; 0.44)	-0.05 (-0.43; 0.33)	-0.08 (-1.43; 1.27)
20< % WFH≤60	-0.19 (-1.16; 0.77)	0.96* (-0.13; 2.04)	-0.20 (-0.59; 0.19)	0.56 (-0.84; 1.97)
More than 60%	-0.08 (-0.78; 0.62)	3.11*** (2.13; 4.10)	-2.90*** (-3.23; -2.56)	0.14 (-1.05; 1.33)
2022-23				
20% or less	0.29 (-0.70; 1.27)	0.04 (-1.10; 1.17)	-0.18 (-0.57; 0.20)	0.14 (-1.34; 1.62)
20< % WFH≤60	-0.92** (-1.77; -0.06)	1.37** (0.24; 2.49)	-0.59*** (-0.91; -0.26)	-0.14 (-1.58; 1.29)
More than 60%	-0.59 (-1.64; 0.45)	4.13*** (2.75; 5.51)	-3.20*** (-3.59; -2.80)	0.34 (-1.37; 2.05)
Observations	41,629	41,629	41,629	41,629

Notes: This table reports the estimates of the impact of working from home intensity on time use by period. Controls are age, marital status, health status, number of adults in the households, number of children aged 0-4, aged 5-9, aged 10-14, aged 15-29, age of the youngest child in the household, number of bedrooms, occupation, industry, type of contract, tenure at work, labour earnings, household income, spouse's time in paid and unpaid work. The estimates are obtained from two-way fixed effects models. Confidence Intervals are reported at 95% level. Standard errors are clustered at individual level. *p-value<0.1 ** p-value<0.05 *** p-value<0.01

Overall, H3 is fully supported for women, who show the expected relationship between WFH intensity and paid and unpaid work, whereas for men the hypothesis is only partially supported, as post-COVID-19 changes in paid work are less consistent across WFH intensity levels.

To test H4 we now examine if the association between WFH intensity and time use changes across periods. The most notable change is the increased gap in unpaid work between WFH men and men that worked on-site during and after the pandemic compared to earlier years. As shown in Table 3, men who worked more than 60% of their paid hours from home spent 3.11 additional hours per week on unpaid work in 2020-21 and 4.13 additional hours on unpaid work in 2022-23, relative to people that worked exclusively on-site. Before 2020, this gap was only 2.44 hours. For women, the role of WFH intensity followed a different pattern. The unpaid work gap between women who worked more than 60% of hours from home and those who worked fully on-site declined over time: from 4.39 hours pre-2020, to 3.51 hours during COVID-19 and 3.81 hours post-COVID-19. In 2020-21 unpaid work also increased among women working between 20% and 60% of their hours from home, suggesting that hybrid arrangements intensified women's dual work-care responsibilities during lockdowns. By 2022-23, this effect had largely subsided, as unpaid work time for women working less than 60% of their hours at home was no longer meaningfully different from that of women working entirely on-site.

A further noteworthy pattern from Table 3 concerns paid work. During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, the gap in paid work between men who WFH and those who worked exclusively on-site narrowed, partly offsetting the contemporaneous rise in men's unpaid work. Prior to 2020, men who WFH less than 20%, or between 20% and 60%, devoted more time to paid work than men who worked entirely on-site, while those who worked primarily from home (over 60% of hours) spent fewer hours in paid employment. During and after the pandemic, however, these differences diminished substantially, indicating a convergence in men's paid

work effort across work locations. For women, the pattern was different. Women who WFH less than 20% of their hours consistently devoted more time in paid work than women working on-site across all years, but the most striking change occurred among women who worked primarily from home. Before the pandemic, those working more than 60% from home spent 2.19 fewer hours per week in paid work than women who worked on-site; this difference became smaller and statistically insignificant during the pandemic and only partially reverted in the years afterwards.

Taken together, these within-person changes suggest a structural rebalancing of gendered WFH practices. For women, the normalization of remote and hybrid work appears to have reduced the extent to which WFH serves as a mechanism for scaling back paid employment. For men, the same normalization diminished their earlier tendency to use WFH to extend paid hours beyond standard schedules. The pandemic thus reshaped both the meaning and function of home-based work, transforming it from a gendered flexibility strategy into a more routine feature of employment across genders. These findings support H4: the impacts of WFH on time allocation were most pronounced during COVID-19, with some persistence post-COVID-19, and also show that the effects are closely tied to the intensity of WFH.

4.3 The Impact of Work from Home on Time Use over Time by Age of the Youngest Child

To test H5, we next stratify the analysis by the age of the youngest child in the household, examining whether the relationship between WFH and time allocation varies with family care demands and across periods. Estimates from Table 4 illustrate these associations separately for women and men, as formalised in Equation (3). The rationale for this disaggregation is that parents with young children may reallocate the time saved from reduced commuting toward childcare and domestic responsibilities, while those with older or no children may instead devote it to paid work or personal activities.

The estimates from Equation (3) provide partial support for H5, which predicts that the effects of WFH on paid and unpaid work are larger for parents with young children and that those effects are more pronounced during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

For fathers with a youngest child aged 0-9 who WFH less than 60% of their hours, unpaid work increased considerably post-COVID-19 by 2.29 hours per week, relative to fathers of young children who worked exclusively on-site. Before the pandemic, this group of fathers tended instead to expand their paid work when working from home, with no comparable rise in unpaid labour. Moreover, in the two years following COVID-19, fathers working more than 60% of their hours from home spent 4.60 additional hours per week on unpaid work if their youngest child was aged 0-9, and 4.49 additional hours if the youngest child was 10 or older, compared with fathers working on-site. Thus, even after accounting for work intensity, fathers who worked primarily from home after the pandemic consistently devoted more time to unpaid labour than before it, suggesting a durable behavioural change across family stages. Another change for fathers concerned the relationship between WFH and paid work. Before the pandemic, low-intensity WFH was associated with higher paid work and high-intensity WFH with lower paid work; during and after the pandemic, both low- and high-intensity WFH fathers were spending a more similar number of hours in paid work to fathers working on-site regardless of the age of the youngest child.

Table 4 The impact of WFH intensity on time use by age of youngest child and period

	Paid Work	Unpaid work	Commuting	Total
Women				
No Children				
0< % WFH≤60				
Prior to 2020	1.56*** (1.04; 2.08)	0.37 (-0.33; 1.07)	0.21** (0.00; 0.42)	2.15*** (1.34; 2.96)
2020-21	0.43 (-0.78; 1.64)	0.79 (-0.43; 2.01)	-0.38* (-0.77; 0.02)	0.84 (-0.92; 2.61)
2022-23	0.30 (-0.81; 1.64)	0.76 (-0.45; 1.98)	-0.39** (-0.77; -0.01)	0.67 (-0.94; 2.28)
More than 60%				
Prior to 2020	-0.29 (-1.77; 1.20)	1.84** (0.26; 3.42)	-1.92*** (-2.23; -1.61)	-0.36 (-2.49; 1.76)
2020-21	0.20 (-0.78; 1.19)	2.62*** (1.26; 3.97)	-2.44*** (-2.85; -2.02)	0.38 (-1.22; 1.99)
2022-23	-1.24 (-2.73; 0.24)	2.40** (0.45; 4.34)	-2.64*** (-3.17; -2.10)	-1.48 (-3.73; 0.76)
Age 0 to 9				
0< % WFH≤60				
Prior to 2020	0.64** (0.09; 1.18)	-0.12 (-1.25; 1.01)	0.01 (-0.16; 0.18)	0.52 (-0.59; 1.63)
2020-21	0.90 (-0.24; 2.03)	1.07 (-1.45; 3.59)	-0.29 (-0.71; 0.13)	1.68 (-0.96; 4.32)
2022-23	-0.08 (-1.18; 1.03)	-1.17 (-3.77; 1.43)	-0.16 (-0.57; 0.24)	-1.41 (-4.07; 1.25)
More than 60%				
Prior to 2020	-2.79*** (-4.03; -1.55)	6.22*** (4.25; 8.20)	-1.89*** (-2.16; -1.63)	1.54 (-0.50; 3.59)
2020-21	-0.57 (-1.61; 0.47)	4.06*** (1.60; 6.51)	-2.27*** (-2.72; -1.83)	1.22 (-1.27; 3.70)
2022-23	-1.37** (-2.73; -0.01)	3.39** (0.27; 6.52)	-2.83*** (-3.31; -2.35)	-0.81 (-3.89; 2.28)
Age 10 or above				
0< % WFH≤60				
Prior to 2020	1.29*** (0.65; 1.92)	1.09** (0.08; 2.09)	-0.13 (-0.34; 0.07)	2.24*** (1.10; 3.39)
2020-21	1.75** (0.33; 3.17)	2.70** (0.40; 5.00)	-0.14 (-0.67; 0.38)	4.31*** (1.65; 6.97)
2022-23	1.78** (0.31; 3.25)	1.66 (-0.79; 4.12)	-0.30 (-0.82; 0.22)	3.14** (0.51; 5.77)
More than 60%				
Prior to 2020	-3.08*** (-4.40; -1.77)	3.95*** (1.90; 6.00)	-1.97*** (-2.27; -1.67)	-1.10 (-3.23; 1.03)
2020-21	-0.24 (-1.56; 1.09)	4.14*** (1.89; 6.38)	-2.52*** (-3.05; -2.00)	1.38 (-1.09; 3.84)
2022-23	-0.13 (-2.00; 1.75)	6.75*** (3.56; 9.94)	-3.06*** (-3.74; -2.39)	3.56** (0.18; 6.94)
Observations	42,163	42,163	42,163	42,163

(continue)

	Paid Work	Unpaid work	Commuting	Total
Men				
No Children				
0< % WFH≤60				
Prior to 2020	1.08*** (0.61; 1.56)	-0.02 (-0.49; 0.45)	0.38*** (0.18; 0.57)	1.44*** (0.77; 2.11)
2020-21	0.45 (-0.55; 1.44)	-0.20 (-1.16; 0.76)	-0.49** (-0.91; -0.07)	-0.24 (-1.67; 1.18)
2022-23	-0.39 (-1.54; 0.76)	0.26 (-0.83; 1.36)	-0.33 (-0.76; 0.10)	-0.46 (-2.05; 1.14)
More than 60%				
Prior to 2020	-2.02** (-3.58; -0.47)	2.09*** (1.01; 3.16)	-1.85*** (-2.28; -1.41)	-1.78** (-3.53; -0.03)
2020-21	0.30 (-1.12; 1.34)	1.61*** (0.57; 2.65)	-2.60*** (-3.11; -2.10)	-0.70 (-2.36; 0.97)
2022-23	-1.82* (-3.77; 0.13)	3.07*** (1.59; 4.54)	-2.89*** (-3.47; -2.31)	-1.64 (-3.97; 0.69)
Age 0 to 9				
0< % WFH≤60				
Prior to 2020	1.41*** (0.92; 1.90)	-0.67* (-1.39; 0.05)	0.28** (0.06; 0.50)	1.02** (0.19; 1.85)
2020-21	0.74 (-0.51; 2.00)	-0.15 (-1.58; 1.87)	-0.20 (-0.70; 0.30)	0.69 (-1.29; 2.68)
2022-23	0.14 (-0.98; 1.26)	2.29** (0.42; 4.15)	-0.77*** (-1.24; -0.31)	1.65 (-0.47; 3.78)
More than 60%				
Prior to 2020	-1.60* (-3.23; 0.02)	1.87* (-0.22; 3.96)	-1.84*** (-2.34; -1.34)	-1.57 (-3.93; 0.79)
2020-21	0.24 (-0.79; 1.27)	4.60*** (2.64; 6.57)	-2.92*** (-3.45; -2.39)	1.93* (-0.22; 4.07)
2022-23	0.24 (-1.10; 1.57)	4.60*** (2.04; 7.17)	-3.58*** (-4.23; -2.93)	1.26 (-1.61; 4.14)
Age 10 or above				
0< % WFH≤60				
Prior to 2020	0.87*** (0.33; 1.41)	0.11 (-0.53; 0.76)	0.18* (-0.04; 0.40)	1.17*** (0.36; 1.98)
2020-21	-1.06 (-2.47; 0.35)	0.80 (-0.90; 2.51)	0.56* (-0.07; 1.18)	0.30 (-1.96; 2.56)
2022-23	-0.88 (-2.40; 0.63)	-0.85 (-2.49; 0.78)	0.04 (-0.49; 0.57)	-1.70 (-4.00; 0.61)
More than 60%				
Prior to 2020	-1.75** (-3.32; -0.17)	2.98*** (1.60; 4.36)	-1.88*** (-2.36; -1.39)	-0.64 (-2.59; 1.30)
2020-21	-1.10 (-2.49; 0.29)	2.72*** (0.93; 4.51)	-3.38*** (-4.05; -2.70)	-1.76* (-3.82; 0.30)
2022-23	0.35 (-1.63; 2.34)	4.49*** (1.45; 7.53)	-3.00*** (-3.78; -2.21)	1.85 (-1.78; 5.47)
Observations	41,629	41,629	41,629	41,629

Notes: This table reports the estimates of the impact of working from home on time use by age of the youngest child and period. Controls are age, health status, number of adults in the households, number of children aged 0-4, aged 5-9, aged 10-14, aged 15-29, age of the youngest child in the household, number of bedrooms, occupation, industry, employment arrangements, tenure at work, labour earnings, household income, spouse's time in paid and unpaid work. The estimates are obtained from two-way fixed effects models. Confidence Intervals are reported at 95% level. Standard errors are clustered at individual level.
*p-value<0.1 ** p-value<0.05 *** p-value<0.01

For mothers, the post-COVID-19 changes are less marked and, in some respects, move in the opposite direction. For example, among mothers of children aged 0-9, working more than 60% of their paid hours at home had a stronger association with both lower paid work and higher unpaid work before the pandemic (-2.79 and +6.22 hours, respectively) than it did after-COVID-19 (-1.37 and +3.39 hours). This attenuation indicates that for mothers, high-intensity WFH has become less tightly coupled to unpaid labour demands. Post-COVID-19, mothers of children aged 10 and older who worked less than 60% of their time from home spent 1.75 additional hours per week in paid work, while also doing more unpaid work, relative to mothers that worked on-site. While women with older children who worked primarily from home continued to perform more unpaid work than their on-site-working counterparts in all periods, the pre-pandemic penalty in paid work was no longer evident after COVID-19. These findings indicate that H5 is only partially supported, as after the COVID-19 pandemic WFH fathers did more unpaid work and similar paid hours compared to fathers working on-site. On the other hand, while for high-intensity WFH mothers of younger children the differences in paid and unpaid work relative to mothers working on-site seem to reduce, for mothers of older children in the post-COVID-19 period the positive relationship between low-intensity WFH and paid work is actually strengthened.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

In Australia, the persistence of remote and hybrid work after the COVID-19 pandemic marks a significant reorganization of the temporal and spatial boundaries of employment for dual-earner couples. Using rich Australian longitudinal household data with observations before, during and after the pandemic, alongside fixed-effect models, our findings show that WFH has become both more common and more intensive since 2020, reshaping how paid and unpaid labour are allocated within households. For women, especially mothers of older children, high-intensity WFH (60% or more of paid hours) is no longer associated with less time in paid work,

suggesting that flexible work is no longer primarily used as a strategy to accommodate domestic responsibilities. For men, however, the post-pandemic period has brought an expansion of unpaid work among those who WFH intensively, without a corresponding reduction in paid work. Together, these results signal more similarity in gendered labour patterns within dual-earner households, as men's unpaid work expands and women's paid work consolidates under conditions of normalized flexibility.

These patterns contribute to long-standing debates on gender equality in paid and unpaid work (West and Zimmerman 1987; Voydanoff 2005; Greenhaus and Powell 2006; Goldscheider et al. 2015). Prior to COVID-19, men's limited engagement in unpaid work and women's disproportionate share of household labour were often understood as structural features of the gendered organization of time (Risman 2004), enacted and perpetuated through everyday interactions and practices, in line with social norms of gender roles (West and Zimmerman 1987). Our findings suggest that the diffusion of WFH may have slightly disrupted this pattern, not through deliberate policy intervention, but through a systemic shift in where and how work is performed. We gained insight into conditions under which WFH can offer a work-family fit that facilitates more gender-equal participation in paid and unpaid labour (Voydanoff 2005; Greenhaus and Powell 2006). When spatial separation between market and domestic spheres is blurred, some traditional gender asymmetries appear to weaken. Fathers' increased unpaid work, particularly among those with young children, signals a potential reconfiguration of domestic norms once flexibility becomes commonplace rather than exceptional.

At the same time, the results underscore the persistence of structural privilege in access to flexible work. Individuals who can work from home are disproportionately older, higher-income, and employed in professional or managerial roles; groups that already enjoy greater autonomy over their time management. Our results thus reflect patterns among the most

advantaged dual-earner households, not a widespread transformation in gender relations. The “flexibility dividend” remains socially stratified.

From a broader theoretical perspective, our findings highlight that WFH does not operate as a consistent mechanism of gender equality. Its effects depend on intensity, family stage, and the social meanings attached to working from home. Post-pandemic, flexibility appears to have shifted from being a *female accommodation strategy* to a more *gender-neutral organizational practice*, yet its potential to advance equality will depend on whether men’s growing unpaid work involvement endures once the novelty of home-based work wanes. Also, it may have been that during and after COVID-19 men who were already (at least somewhat) in favour of more-equal division of domestic labour took advantage of the opportunity to do more unpaid work and childcare. This would imply that enduring change in the domestic sphere will require cultural and attitudinal shifts alongside flexible work conditions.

In sum, COVID-19 has not only expanded the prevalence of WFH but has also subtly recalibrated the boundaries of paid and unpaid work participation. For some households, particularly those with dual earners and older children, this shift has opened new space for shared domesticity and sustained employment. For others, the benefits remain limited by occupational and structural constraints. Policy and organizational implications follow directly from these findings. To consolidate gender-equal gains from remote work, flexibility needs to be more widely available. The Australian federal government has moved in this direction through the Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) Act 2022, which amends the Fair Work Act 2009 to strengthen the right to request flexible working arrangements. Employers and policymakers can also promote gender-neutral flexible work policies, normalize men’s use of remote work for caregiving, and safeguard boundaries through measures such as the right to disconnect. It is notable that 60%+ WFH was much more heavily dominated by the self-employed before COVID-19 than after it, suggesting that employees whose jobs allowed it seized the new opportunity to WFH within the relative security of their

organizational employment. Organizational cultures that reward output rather than physical presence, and family policies that support men's and women's domestic labour and caregiving without career penalties, are essential if the normalization of WFH is to become a driver of gender equality in work and family life.

Several caveats should be noted. First, our analyses rely on survey-based recall of time use, which are less precise than time diaries. Second, the sample is restricted to dual-earner heterosexual couples under age 65, limiting generalizability to single parents or single-earner couples. Third, WFH access and intensity remain unevenly distributed across occupations and income levels, meaning the results reflect relatively advantaged households. Finally, while our longitudinal fixed-effects design accounts for within-person changes, unobserved time-varying shocks may still influence both work arrangements and labour allocation. Despite these caveats, our study shows that the post-pandemic expansion of WFH has created a tentative opportunity for more equitable participation in paid and unpaid labour, particularly among families in which the father works most of the hours at home, and among mothers of older children. Whether this opportunity translates into lasting gender equality will depend less on the technology that enables remote work and more on the social, cultural, and policy frameworks that shape how it is used.

References

- Adamson, Elizabeth, and Deborah Brennan. "Return of the nanny: Public policy towards in-home childcare in the UK, Canada and Australia." *Social Policy & Administration* 51, no. 7 (2017): 1386-1405.
- Alipour, Jean-Victor. *Does Remote Work Reinforce Gender Gaps in (Un) Paid Labor?*. No. 12052. CESifo Working Paper, 2025.

Allen, Tammy D., Timothy D. Golden, and Kristen M. Shockley. "How effective is telecommuting? Assessing the status of our scientific findings." *Psychological science in the public interest* 16, no. 2 (2015): 40-68.

Alon, Titan, Matthias Doepke, Jane Olmstead-Rumsey, and Michèle Tertilt. *The impact of COVID-19 on gender equality*. No. w26947. National Bureau of economic research, 2020.

Anakpo, Godfred, Zanele Nqwayibana, and Syden Mishi. "The impact of work-from-home on employee performance and productivity: a systematic review." *Sustainability* 15, no. 5 (2023): 4529.

Andrew, Alison, Sarah Cattan, Monica Costa Dias, Christine Farquharson, Lucy Kraftman, Sonya Krutikova, Angus Phimister, and Almudena Sevilla. "The gendered division of paid and domestic work under lockdown." *Fiscal Studies* 43, no. 4 (2022): 325-340.

Arwin, Arwin, Ivone Ivone, Supriyanto Supriyanto, and Ruri Aditya Sari. "The effect of work from home on work life balance and work stress on female workers." *Enrichment: Journal of Management* 12, no. 1 (2021): 317-320.

Baxter, Jennifer, Mikayla Budinski, and Emily Stevens. "Take-up of Parental Leave Pay and Dad and Partner Pay among Australian parents." Australian Institute of Family Studies (2024).

Bloom, Nicholas, James Liang, John Roberts, and Zhichun Jenny Ying. "Does working from home work? Evidence from a Chinese experiment." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 130, no. 1 (2015): 165-218.

Carlson, Daniel L., Richard J. Petts, and Joanna R. Pepin. "Flexplace work and partnered fathers' time in housework and childcare." *Men and Masculinities* 24, no. 4 (2021): 547-570.

Carlson, Daniel L., and Richard J. Petts. "US parents' domestic labor during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic." *Population Research and Policy Review* 41, no. 6 (2022): 2393-2418.

Charlesworth, Sara, and Fiona Macdonald. "Women, work and industrial relations in Australia in 2014." *Journal of Industrial Relations* 57, no. 3 (2015): 366-382.

Chung, Heejung. "Gender, flexibility stigma and the perceived negative consequences of flexible working in the UK." *Social Indicators Research* 151, no. 2 (2020): 521-545.

Chung, Heejung. *The flexibility paradox: Why flexible working leads to (self-) exploitation*. Policy Press, 2022.

Craig, Lyn. "Coronavirus, domestic labour and care: Gendered roles locked down." *Journal of Sociology* 56, no. 4 (2020): 684-692.

Craig, Lyn, and Brendan Churchill. "Dual-earner parent couples' work and care during COVID-19." *Gender, Work & Organization* 28 (2021): 66-79.

Craig, Lyn, Signe Ravn, Brendan Churchill, and Maria Rebecca Valenzuela. "A matter of time? Institutional timescapes and gendered inequalities in the transition from education to employment in Australia." *Journal of Sociology* 60, no. 1 (2024): 209-228.

Del Boca, Daniela, Noemi Oggero, Paola Profeta, and Mariacristina Rossi. "Women's and Men's Work, Housework and Childcare, Before and During COVID-19." *Review of Economics of the Household* 18, no. 4 (2020): 1001-17.

Derndorfer, Jakob, Franziska Disslbacher, Vanessa Lechinger, Katharina Mader, and Eva Six. "Home, Sweet Home? The Impact of Working from Home on the Division of Unpaid Work During the COVID-19 Lockdown." *PloS One* 16, no. 11 (2021): e0259580.

England, Paula, Ian Privalko, and Andrew Levine. "Has the Gender Revolution Stalled?" *The Economic and Social Review* 51, no. 4 (2020): 463-88.

Fan, Wen, and Phyllis Moen. "Ongoing Remote Work, Returning to Work at Work, or In Between During COVID-19: What Promotes Subjective Well-Being?" *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 64, no. 1 (2023): 152–71.

Folbre, Nancy. *Who Cares? A Feminist Critique of the Care Economy*. New York: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, 2014.

Foley, Meredith, Marian Baird, Rae Cooper, and Sarah Williamson. "Is Independence Really an Opportunity? The Experience of Entrepreneur-Mothers." *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development* 25, no. 2 (2018): 313–29.

Garcia, Robert. "Exploring the Domestic Division of Labour When Both Parents Are Involuntarily Working from Home: The Effects of the UK COVID Pandemic." *Gender, Work & Organization* 29, no. 4 (2022): 1065–81.

Golden, Timothy D., and Ravi S. Gajendran. "Unpacking the Role of a Telecommuter's Job in Their Performance: Examining Job Complexity, Problem Solving, Interdependence, and Social Support." *Journal of Business and Psychology* 34, no. 1 (2019): 55–69.

Goldscheider, Frances, Eva Bernhardt, and Trude Lappegård. "The Gender Revolution: A Framework for Understanding Changing Family and Demographic Behavior." *Population and Development Review* 41, no. 2 (2015): 207–39.

Greenhaus, Jeffrey H., and Gary N. Powell. "When Work and Family Are Allies: A Theory of Work-Family Enrichment." *Academy of Management Review* 31, no. 1 (2006): 72–92.

Haney, Timothy J., and Kristen Barber. "The Extreme Gendering of COVID-19: Household Tasks and Division of Labour Satisfaction During the Pandemic." *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue Canadienne de Sociologie* 59, no. S1 (2022): 26–47.

Hilbrecht, Margo, Susan M. Shaw, Laura C. Johnson, and Jean Andrey. "'I'm Home with Kids': Contradictory Implications for Work–Life Balance of Teleworking Mothers." *Gender, Work and Organization* 15, no. 5 (2008): 454–76.

Kitagawa, Ritsu, Sachiko Kuroda, Hiroko Okudaira, and Hideo Owan. "Working from Home: Its Effects on Productivity and Mental Health." *COVID Economics* 74, no. 30 (2021): 142–71.

Kurowska, Anna. "Gendered Effects of Home-Based Work on Parents' Capability to Balance Work with Non-Work: Two Countries with Different Models of Division of Labour Compared." *Social Indicators Research* 151, no. 2 (2020): 405–25.

Laß, Inga, and Mark Wooden. "Working from Home and Work–Family Conflict." *Work, Employment and Society* 37, no. 1 (2023): 176–95.

Laß, Inga, and Mark Wooden. "Working From Home: The Australian Experience." *Australian Economic Review* (2025).

Laß, Inga, Esperanza Vera-Toscano, and Mark Wooden. "Working from Home, COVID-19, and Job Satisfaction." *ILR Review* 78, no. 2 (2025): 330–54.

Leap, Braden, Mary Nell Trautner, and Kimberly Kelly. "Reorganizations of Gendered Labor During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Review and Suggestions for Further Research." *Sociological Inquiry* 93, no. 1 (2023): 179–200.

Ma, Liang, Yan Liu, Xiaoxia Sun, and Runing Ye. "Impact of Commuting Time on Self-Reported Work Productivity: A Quasi-Longitudinal Examination." *Travel Behaviour and Society* 37 (2024): 100837.

Marcén, Miriam, and Marina Morales. "The Post-COVID-19 Gender Gap in the Division of Household Labor." GLO Discussion Paper No. 1563, 2025.

Meraviglia, Cinzia, and Agnieszka Dudka. "The Gendered Division of Unpaid Labor During the COVID-19 Crisis: Did Anything Change? Evidence from Italy." *International Journal of Sociology* 51, no. 1 (2021): 64–75.

Mooi-Reci, Irma, and Mark Wooden. "Working from Home and the Consequences for Labour Turnover and Career Progression." Melbourne Institute, Melbourne, 2025.

Nishimura, Junko. "Domestic Help and the Gender Division of Domestic Labour During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Gender Inequality Among Japanese Parents." *Japanese Journal of Sociology* 31, no. 1 (2022): 67–85.

Pailhé, Ariane, Anne Solaz, and Maria Stanfors. "The Great Convergence: Gender and Unpaid Work in Europe and the United States." *Population and Development Review* 47, no. 1 (2021): 181–217.

Pasqualini, Marta, Marta Dominguez-Folgueras, Emanuele Ferragina, Olivier Godechot, Ettore Recchi, and Mirna Safi. "Who Took Care of What? The Gender Division of Unpaid Work During the First Year of the COVID-19 Pandemic in France." *Demographic Research* 46 (2022): 1007–36.

Petts, Richard J., Stéfanie André, Daniel L. Carlson, Heejung Chung, Melissa A. Milkie, Chantal Remery, Casey Scheibling, Kevin Shafer, and Mara A. Yerkes. "Fathers Stepping Up? A Cross-National Comparison of Fathers' Domestic Labour and Parents' Satisfaction with the Division of Domestic Labour During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Journal of Family Studies* 29, no. 6 (2023): 2650–79.

Powell, Abigail, and Lyn Craig. "Gender Differences in Working at Home and Time Use Patterns: Evidence from Australia." *Work, Employment and Society* 29, no. 4 (2015): 571–89.

Risman, Barbara. "Gender as a Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism." *Gender and Society* 18, no. 4 (2004): 429–51.

Saad-Filho, Alfredo. "From COVID-19 to the End of Neoliberalism." *El Trimestre Económico* 87, no. 348 (2020): 1211–29.

Sánchez, Alicia R., Anette E. Fasang, and Susan Harkness. "Gender Division of Housework During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Demographic Research* 45 (2021): 1297–1316.

Sevilla, Almudena, and Sarah Smith. "Baby Steps: The Gender Division of Childcare During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 36, Supplement 1 (2020): S169–S186.

Shafer, Kevin, Casey Scheibling, and Melissa A. Milkie. "The Division of Domestic Labour Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Canada: Stagnation Versus Shifts in Fathers' Contributions." *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue Canadienne de Sociologie* 57, no. 4 (2020): 523–49.

Shen, Lucy. "Does Working from Home Work? A Natural Experiment from Lockdowns." *European Economic Review* 151 (2023): 104323.

Steinmetz, Stephanie, Leen Vandecasteele, Florence Lebert, Marieke Voorpostel, and Oliver Lipps. "The Gendered Consequences of the COVID-19 Lockdown on Unpaid Work in Swiss Dual Earner Couples with Children." *Gender, Work & Organization* 29, no. 6 (2022): 2034–51.

Stewart, Miranda. *Tax and Government in the 21st Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

Sullivan, Oriel. "The Gendered Division of Household Labor." In *Handbook of the Sociology of Gender*, 377–92. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.

Sullivan, Cath, and Sue Lewis. "Home-Based Telework, Gender and the Synchronization of Work and Family: Perspectives of Teleworkers and Their Co-residents." *Gender, Work & Organization* 8, no. 2 (2001): 123–45.

Sullivan, Oriel, Jonathan Gershuny, Almudena Sevilla, Francesca Foliano, Maria Vega-Rapun, Juana Lamote de Grignon, and Pierre Walthéry. "Using Time-Use Diaries to Track Changing Behavior Across Successive Stages of COVID-19 Social Restrictions." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 118, no. 35 (2021): e2101724118.

Swenson, Haley. *Engaged Dads and the Opportunities for and Barriers to Equal Parenting in the United States*. Washington, DC: New America, 2020.

Thomson, Benoit. "The COVID-19 Pandemic: A Global Natural Experiment." *Circulation* 142, no. 1 (2020): 14–16.

Van Barneveld, Kristine, Michael Quinlan, Peter Kriesler, Anne Junor, Fran Baum, Anis Chowdhury, and Al Rainnie. "The COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons on Building More Equal and Sustainable Societies." *The Economic and Labour Relations Review* 31, no. 2 (2020): 133–57.

van der Lippe, Tanja, and Zoltán Lippényi. "Beyond Formal Access: Organizational Context, Working from Home, and Work–Family Conflict of Men and Women in European Workplaces." *Social Indicators Research* 151, no. 2 (2020): 383–402.

van Tienoven, Theun Pieter, Joeri Minnen, Aurélie Glorieux, Ignace Laurijssen, Peter Te Braak, and Ignace Glorieux. "Locking Down Gender Roles? A Time-Use Perspective on Gender

Division of Household Labour During the COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown in Belgium." *Journal of Family Issues* 44, no. 3 (2023): 654–80.

Voydanoff, Patricia. "Toward a Conceptualization of Perceived Work-Family Fit and Balance: A Demands and Resources Approach." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67, no. 4 (2005): 822–36.

West, Candace, and Don H. Zimmerman. "Doing Gender." *Gender & Society* 1, no. 2 (1987): 125–151.

Wojnicka, Katarzyna, and Joanna Kubisa. "The COVID-19 Pandemic and Caring Masculinity: New Prospects or a Wasted Opportunity?" *Gender, Work & Organization* 31, no. 5 (2024): 1723–37.

Wood, Danielle, Kate Griffiths, and Owain Emslie. *Cheaper Childcare: A Practical Plan to Boost Female Workforce Participation*. Melbourne: Grattan Institute, 2020.

Yang, Duanyi, Erin L. Kelly, Laura D. Kubzansky, and Lisa Berkman. "Working from Home and Worker Well-being: New Evidence from Germany." *ILR Review* 76, no. 3 (2023): 504–31.

Appendix

Table A.1 Descriptive statistics. Time use.

	Pre-2020				2020-2021				2022-2023			
	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%
Women												
Time in paid work	31.4	38.2	33.8	25.4	31.1	37.7	36.2	34.4	31.6	37.7	37.9	33.7
Time in unpaid work	31.0	29.9	38.6	46.5	30.0	28.3	33.5	34.0	30.0	29.5	28.9	36.1
<i>Childcare</i>	9.8	9.6	14.7	15.9	10.8	10.6	13.7	12.8	11.0	11.4	10.9	13.5
<i>Housework</i>	13.7	12.9	15.3	19.3	12.1	10.9	12.5	13.3	11.8	11.3	11.1	13.6
<i>Errands</i>	4.5	4.4	5.3	7.2	4.1	4.1	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.2	4.3	5.4
<i>Outdoor tasks</i>	2.4	2.4	2.7	3.5	2.5	2.2	2.1	2.6	2.3	2.2	2.0	2.5
<i>Caregiving</i>	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.7	1.2
Time commuting	3.8	4.3	4.0	0.8	3.4	3.8	3.9	2.0	3.6	4.3	4.3	1.8
Total	66.1	72.4	76.3	72.8	64.5	69.7	73.6	70.4	65.2	71.5	71.1	71.6
Observations	25,102	4,311	3,072	2,361	2,497	326	502	1,202	2,446	333	775	782
Men												
Time in paid work	42.8	47.2	45.2	41.6	41.5	45.0	42.2	41.6	42.3	44.9	41.5	40.8
Time in unpaid work	20.0	19.6	21.9	22.2	19.9	19.1	22.0	23.1	20.1	20.6	23.4	24.7
<i>Childcare</i>	5.6	5.8	6.3	5.4	5.9	5.7	6.4	7.3	5.9	6.8	7.7	7.6
<i>Housework</i>	6.1	5.8	6.5	6.7	6.1	5.6	6.8	7.6	6.3	5.5	7.6	8.3
<i>Errands</i>	3.2	3.3	4.0	4.4	3.2	3.1	4.0	4.0	3.3	3.4	4.0	4.7
<i>Outdoor tasks</i>	4.8	4.4	4.7	5.4	4.4	4.5	4.4	3.9	4.3	4.4	3.8	3.7
<i>Caregiving</i>	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4
Time commuting	4.9	5.3	5.6	1.8	4.4	4.9	5.0	2.6	4.6	5.0	5.1	2.1
Total	67.7	72.2	72.7	65.7	65.9	69.0	69.2	67.3	67.0	70.5	69.9	67.6
Observations	24,050	6,616	2,797	1,377	2,639	506	459	905	2,544	509	665	571

Table A.2a Descriptive statistics. Socio-demographic characteristics. Women

	Pre-2020				2020-2021				2022-2023			
	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%
Women												
Age	39.8	41.5	42.2	44.1	40.2	42.5	41.7	41.4	40.4	41.6	42.0	42.5
Health (%)												
<i>No disability</i>	0.852	0.850	0.841	0.827	0.836	0.822	0.806	0.834	0.816	0.861	0.845	0.799
<i>Mild disability</i>	0.072	0.075	0.065	0.063	0.079	0.098	0.108	0.083	0.076	0.057	0.076	0.109
<i>Moderate disability</i>	0.075	0.074	0.092	0.110	0.084	0.080	0.080	0.082	0.107	0.075	0.076	0.092
<i>Severe disability</i>	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.006	0.001	0.002	0.006	0.003	0.000
Employment arrangement (%)												
<i>Permanent full-time</i>	0.383	0.528	0.377	0.064	0.370	0.472	0.508	0.438	0.375	0.538	0.565	0.392
<i>Permanent part-time</i>	0.285	0.161	0.176	0.122	0.335	0.169	0.191	0.209	0.317	0.168	0.190	0.195
<i>Fixed-Term</i>	0.095	0.115	0.117	0.030	0.081	0.117	0.096	0.099	0.084	0.129	0.106	0.102
<i>Casual employee</i>	0.194	0.062	0.091	0.071	0.173	0.049	0.050	0.045	0.178	0.030	0.039	0.068
<i>Other employee</i>	0.002	0.001	0.003	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.001
<i>Self-Employed</i>	0.042	0.134	0.236	0.709	0.041	0.193	0.153	0.208	0.046	0.135	0.099	0.241
Years with current employer	6.1	8.2	8.5	8.6	6.8	8.3	7.8	7.3	6.5	8.3	7.4	7.1
Occupation (%)												
<i>Managers</i>	0.083	0.203	0.172	0.160	0.071	0.218	0.237	0.160	0.083	0.189	0.242	0.202
<i>Professionals</i>	0.268	0.524	0.588	0.273	0.308	0.460	0.512	0.448	0.319	0.535	0.470	0.370
<i>Technicians and Trades Workers</i>	0.049	0.023	0.016	0.040	0.051	0.034	0.018	0.030	0.043	0.012	0.017	0.029
<i>Community and Personal Service Workers</i>	0.163	0.066	0.044	0.117	0.194	0.101	0.056	0.052	0.200	0.087	0.058	0.073
<i>Clerical and Administrative Workers</i>	0.266	0.125	0.124	0.352	0.202	0.120	0.147	0.270	0.181	0.141	0.185	0.298
<i>Sales Workers</i>	0.093	0.041	0.036	0.032	0.099	0.046	0.020	0.032	0.094	0.015	0.023	0.023
<i>Machinery Operators and Drivers</i>	0.011	0.002	0.002	0.009	0.018	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.022	0.000	0.000	0.001
<i>Labourers</i>	0.067	0.016	0.017	0.017	0.057	0.022	0.010	0.005	0.059	0.021	0.005	0.004

(continue)

	Pre-2020				2020-2021				2022-2023			
	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%
Industry (%)												
<i>Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing</i>	0.010	0.011	0.014	0.084	0.008	0.022	0.008	0.019	0.009	0.015	0.004	0.026
<i>Mining</i>	0.006	0.005	0.004	0.003	0.006	0.003	0.008	0.005	0.010	0.003	0.008	0.005
<i>Manufacturing</i>	0.045	0.028	0.031	0.062	0.042	0.016	0.036	0.048	0.042	0.030	0.031	0.038
<i>Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services</i>	0.005	0.004	0.001	0.002	0.002	0.006	0.008	0.013	0.002	0.000	0.004	0.010
<i>Construction</i>	0.013	0.012	0.019	0.102	0.010	0.012	0.014	0.038	0.018	0.021	0.022	0.052
<i>Wholesale Trade</i>	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.020	0.013	0.009	0.010	0.026	0.012	0.006	0.027	0.018
<i>Retail Trade</i>	0.112	0.051	0.037	0.037	0.122	0.050	0.034	0.028	0.118	0.054	0.022	0.022
<i>Accommodation and Food Services</i>	0.058	0.027	0.018	0.022	0.039	0.034	0.020	0.013	0.044	0.021	0.010	0.014
<i>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</i>	0.023	0.013	0.013	0.032	0.021	0.006	0.012	0.019	0.030	0.000	0.020	0.018
<i>Information Media and Telecommunications</i>	0.020	0.022	0.016	0.017	0.004	0.006	0.018	0.021	0.004	0.009	0.020	0.024
<i>Financial and Insurance Services</i>	0.049	0.036	0.050	0.036	0.020	0.022	0.048	0.103	0.016	0.030	0.065	0.153
<i>Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services</i>	0.015	0.020	0.013	0.027	0.010	0.025	0.018	0.023	0.009	0.009	0.023	0.012
<i>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</i>	0.065	0.104	0.118	0.210	0.052	0.065	0.086	0.159	0.038	0.099	0.121	0.171
<i>Administrative and Support Services</i>	0.033	0.024	0.030	0.057	0.030	0.034	0.028	0.038	0.025	0.033	0.030	0.043
<i>Public Administration and Safety</i>	0.074	0.047	0.033	0.010	0.056	0.050	0.090	0.118	0.044	0.042	0.133	0.091
<i>Education and Training</i>	0.121	0.359	0.430	0.079	0.138	0.350	0.301	0.153	0.165	0.355	0.216	0.072
<i>Health Care and Social Assistance</i>	0.286	0.167	0.106	0.117	0.392	0.207	0.212	0.123	0.378	0.232	0.199	0.175
<i>Arts and Recreation Services</i>	0.015	0.014	0.012	0.021	0.006	0.028	0.012	0.013	0.009	0.012	0.010	0.009
<i>Other Services</i>	0.029	0.033	0.033	0.064	0.028	0.056	0.036	0.040	0.030	0.027	0.034	0.047

(continue)

	Pre-2020				2020-2021				2022-2023			
	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%
Household Income (\$/year)	143,625	168,324	167,980	149,969	156,209	177,692	186,275	187,582	152,821	184,512	189,866	186,169
Labour Earnings (\$/year)	58,536	87,166	80,981	53,780	65,253	91,918	92,437	89,890	62,555	94,703	99,166	90,551
Adults in the household	2.47	2.44	2.46	2.43	2.44	2.52	2.49	2.40	2.48	2.49	2.45	2.38
Dependent Children	0.93	0.99	1.28	1.23	0.97	1.07	1.22	1.04	1.01	1.12	1.06	1.13
Age Youngest Child	8.74	9.21	8.00	7.52	7.90	8.74	8.36	7.68	7.80	8.20	8.50	7.55
Number of bedrooms	3.37	3.45	3.55	3.66	3.48	3.57	3.57	3.46	3.51	3.59	3.48	3.57

Table A.2b Descriptive statistics. Socio-demographic characteristics. Men

	Pre-2020				2020-2021				2022-2023			
	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%
Men												
Age	41.3	43.7	45.4	48.2	41.2	44.4	43.7	43.1	41.6	44.4	42.8	43.6
Health (%)												
<i>No disability</i>	0.850	0.847	0.833	0.765	0.840	0.820	0.852	0.887	0.837	0.853	0.842	0.862
<i>Mild disability</i>	0.085	0.084	0.083	0.090	0.087	0.077	0.087	0.064	0.082	0.088	0.096	0.079
<i>Moderate disability</i>	0.064	0.069	0.083	0.145	0.072	0.101	0.061	0.048	0.078	0.059	0.060	0.058
<i>Severe disability</i>	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.002	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.002	0.000	0.002	0.002
Employment arrangement (%)												
<i>Permanent full-time</i>	0.688	0.531	0.453	0.140	0.688	0.455	0.605	0.687	0.686	0.515	0.693	0.621
<i>Permanent part-time</i>	0.036	0.012	0.019	0.021	0.066	0.022	0.046	0.035	0.056	0.014	0.033	0.046
<i>Fixed-Term</i>	0.077	0.075	0.075	0.032	0.055	0.044	0.061	0.069	0.061	0.051	0.063	0.072
<i>Casual employee</i>	0.098	0.019	0.023	0.026	0.098	0.022	0.015	0.020	0.104	0.030	0.018	0.028
<i>Other employee</i>	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.004	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.002	0.000	0.000
<i>Self-Employed</i>	0.100	0.364	0.428	0.777	0.092	0.459	0.273	0.189	0.092	0.389	0.193	0.233
Years with current employer	7.7	10.2	10.1	11.3	7.7	10.8	9.2	8.1	7.7	10.3	8.4	7.8
Occupation (%)												
<i>Managers</i>	0.151	0.324	0.276	0.337	0.147	0.293	0.290	0.312	0.155	0.301	0.338	0.314
<i>Professionals</i>	0.200	0.297	0.440	0.412	0.155	0.259	0.451	0.507	0.167	0.314	0.439	0.531
<i>Technicians and Trades Workers</i>	0.233	0.168	0.130	0.122	0.265	0.249	0.113	0.061	0.251	0.206	0.102	0.077
<i>Community and Personal Service Workers</i>	0.075	0.033	0.029	0.040	0.088	0.044	0.033	0.020	0.085	0.045	0.012	0.005
<i>Clerical and Administrative Workers</i>	0.090	0.043	0.029	0.034	0.065	0.034	0.041	0.069	0.058	0.033	0.060	0.058
<i>Sales Workers</i>	0.042	0.048	0.035	0.034	0.047	0.022	0.031	0.025	0.040	0.024	0.023	0.014
<i>Machinery Operators and Drivers</i>	0.119	0.034	0.017	0.004	0.143	0.030	0.013	0.003	0.147	0.033	0.011	0.000
<i>Labourers</i>	0.089	0.054	0.044	0.017	0.090	0.071	0.028	0.003	0.097	0.043	0.015	0.002

(continue)

	Pre-2020				2020-2021				2022-2023			
	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%
Industry (%)												
<i>Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing</i>	0.022	0.042	0.024	0.144	0.023	0.054	0.020	0.025	0.025	0.054	0.003	0.029
<i>Mining</i>	0.033	0.020	0.008	0.004	0.046	0.022	0.029	0.009	0.049	0.026	0.021	0.013
<i>Manufacturing</i>	0.140	0.087	0.058	0.093	0.130	0.097	0.059	0.070	0.127	0.074	0.073	0.059
<i>Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services</i>	0.022	0.009	0.005	0.002	0.022	0.008	0.009	0.016	0.017	0.012	0.024	0.016
<i>Construction</i>	0.128	0.176	0.140	0.024	0.160	0.240	0.145	0.037	0.171	0.203	0.119	0.016
<i>Wholesale Trade</i>	0.041	0.050	0.066	0.051	0.045	0.036	0.040	0.054	0.040	0.028	0.035	0.043
<i>Retail Trade</i>	0.067	0.045	0.029	0.040	0.084	0.038	0.029	0.027	0.080	0.046	0.027	0.025
<i>Accommodation and Food Services</i>	0.030	0.022	0.013	0.022	0.026	0.024	0.011	0.005	0.027	0.020	0.006	0.009
<i>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</i>	0.077	0.043	0.037	0.018	0.084	0.034	0.020	0.008	0.082	0.040	0.026	0.029
<i>Information Media and Telecommunications</i>	0.019	0.026	0.033	0.050	0.003	0.010	0.026	0.050	0.003	0.012	0.032	0.064
<i>Financial and Insurance Services</i>	0.033	0.045	0.061	0.040	0.013	0.018	0.037	0.144	0.007	0.016	0.084	0.153
<i>Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services</i>	0.011	0.020	0.023	0.018	0.010	0.014	0.026	0.015	0.011	0.012	0.009	0.013
<i>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</i>	0.068	0.108	0.160	0.279	0.038	0.079	0.169	0.255	0.038	0.101	0.184	0.283
<i>Administrative and Support Services</i>	0.024	0.035	0.024	0.020	0.022	0.060	0.015	0.015	0.027	0.042	0.015	0.025
<i>Public Administration and Safety</i>	0.115	0.071	0.030	0.021	0.092	0.064	0.134	0.094	0.079	0.084	0.131	0.089
<i>Education and Training</i>	0.043	0.124	0.201	0.043	0.051	0.121	0.108	0.096	0.058	0.117	0.102	0.046
<i>Health Care and Social Assistance</i>	0.069	0.037	0.032	0.021	0.095	0.048	0.077	0.039	0.102	0.070	0.075	0.043
<i>Arts and Recreation Services</i>	0.016	0.014	0.015	0.032	0.019	0.012	0.022	0.013	0.017	0.012	0.012	0.014
<i>Other Services</i>	0.045	0.029	0.041	0.079	0.038	0.024	0.024	0.030	0.041	0.034	0.023	0.034

(continue)

	Pre-2020				2020-2021				2022-2023			
	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%	No WFH	20% or less	20< % WFH≤60	More than 60%
Household Income (\$/year)	144,350	162,961	167,299	141,840	155,828	174,745	182,999	198,648	155,766	184,012	188,241	189,511
Labour Earnings (\$/ year)	98,198	118,352	115,632	79,767	101,905	111,880	129,674	145,283	100,412	135,353	136,201	131,774
Adults in the household	2.46	2.48	2.50	2.43	2.42	2.50	2.44	2.43	2.45	2.52	2.41	2.41
Dependent Children	0.96	1.16	1.13	0.93	1.00	1.17	1.13	1.09	0.98	1.22	1.26	1.09
Age Youngest Child	8.30	8.70	8.99	9.63	7.40	8.11	8.60	8.05	7.42	7.99	7.90	8.09
Number of bedrooms	3.36	3.54	3.54	3.53	3.43	3.66	3.60	3.50	3.45	3.72	3.55	3.55

Table A.3 Impact of working from home and proportion of paid hours worked from home on unpaid work activities.

Time use (hrs/week)	Caring for children	Housework	Errands	Outdoor activities	Caregiving	Total
Women						
Prior to 2020						
20% or less	-0.18 (-0.61; 0.25)	0.04 (-0.24; 0.32)	-0.10 (-0.24; 0.04)	0.05 (-0.06; 0.16)	0.07 (-0.04; 0.19)	-0.12 (-0.72; 0.49)
20< % WFH≤60	0.41 (-0.18; 1.00)	0.55** (0.15; 0.94)	0.19* (-0.00; 0.38)	0.08 (-0.08; 0.25)	-0.06 (-0.17; 0.06)	1.18*** (0.36; 1.99)
More than 60%	0.99** (0.12; 1.87)	2.12*** (1.56; 2.68)	1.13*** (0.80; 1.46)	0.12 (-0.14; 0.37)	0.02 (-0.29; 0.33)	4.39*** (3.15; 5.62)
2020-21						
20% or less	0.40 (-0.91; 1.72)	0.09 (-0.61; 0.80)	0.26 (-0.14; 0.66)	-0.03 (-0.40; 0.34)	0.01 (-0.22; 0.24)	0.74 (-1.02; 2.49)
20< % WFH≤60	0.33 (-0.74; 1.39)	0.94*** (0.30; 1.58)	0.32* (-0.05; 0.69)	-0.05 (-0.31; 0.20)	0.19 (-0.09; 0.46)	1.72** (0.32; 3.12)
More than 60%	0.65 (-0.18; 1.48)	1.73*** (1.19; 2.26)	0.44*** (0.17; 0.71)	0.39*** (0.15; 0.64)	0.29** (0.01; 0.57)	3.51*** (2.33; 4.68)
2022-23						
20% or less	-0.73 (-2.06; 0.59)	0.53 (-0.23; 1.30)	0.29 (-0.17; 0.75)	0.06 (-0.34; 0.45)	0.11 (-0.21; 0.43)	0.25 (-1.56; 2.07)
20< % WFH≤60	-0.30 (-1.32; 0.72)	0.37 (-0.20; 0.94)	0.01 (-0.30; 0.33)	-0.02 (-0.26; 0.21)	0.32** (0.07; 0.58)	0.39 (-0.99; 1.76)
More than 60%	0.52 (-0.64; 1.69)	1.70*** (1.05; 2.34)	0.76*** (0.37; 1.14)	0.21 (-0.08; 0.50)	0.62*** (0.17; 1.08)	3.81*** (2.19; 5.42)
Observations	42,163	42,163	42,163	42,163	42,163	42,163

(continue)

Time use (hrs/week)	Caring for children	Housework	Errands	Outdoor activities	Caregiving	Total
Men						
Prior to 2020						
20% or less	-0.12 (-0.35; 0.11)	-0.10 (-0.25; 0.05)	-0.02 (-0.13; 0.08)	-0.17** (-0.31; -0.04)	-0.01 (-0.10; 0.08)	-0.43** (-0.81; -0.04)
20< % WFH≤60	-0.01 (-0.36; 0.34)	0.36*** (0.11; 0.61)	0.25*** (0.09; 0.42)	-0.09 (-0.31; 0.14)	-0.06 (-0.17; 0.05)	0.45 (-0.17; 1.07)
More than 60%	0.68*** (0.21; 1.14)	0.92*** (0.54; 1.29)	0.64*** (0.36; 0.91)	0.30 (-0.14; 0.74)	-0.09 (-0.22; 0.03)	2.44*** (1.49; 3.38)
2020-21						
20% or less	-0.18 (-0.79; 0.43)	-0.12 (-0.52; 0.28)	-0.22* (-0.47; 0.03)	-0.07 (-0.48; 0.33)	0.03 (-0.17; 0.23)	-0.57 (-1.58; 0.44)
20< % WFH≤60	-0.02 (-0.65; 0.62)	0.35 (-0.09; 0.78)	0.37** (0.07; 0.67)	0.20 (-0.18; 0.57)	0.06 (-0.11; 0.23)	0.96* (-0.13; 2.04)
More than 60%	0.81*** (0.22; 1.39)	1.29*** (0.89; 1.69)	0.45*** (0.20; 0.70)	0.65*** (0.34; 0.96)	-0.09 (-0.22; 0.05)	3.11*** (2.13; 4.10)
2022-23						
20% or less	0.42 (-0.31; 1.15)	-0.54*** (-0.94; -0.14)	0.03 (-0.27; 0.34)	-0.04 (-0.46; 0.37)	0.17 (-0.11; 0.44)	0.04 (-1.10; 1.17)
20< % WFH≤60	0.39 (-0.28; 1.06)	0.57** (0.13; 1.00)	0.26* (-0.03; 0.55)	0.08 (-0.26; 0.43)	0.07 (-0.22; 0.36)	1.37** (0.24; 2.49)
More than 60%	0.82* (-0.08; 1.71)	1.85*** (1.33; 2.37)	0.99*** (0.62; 1.35)	0.39** (0.01; 0.76)	0.09 (-0.15; 0.32)	4.13*** (2.75; 5.51)
Observations	41,629	41,629	41,629	41,629	41,629	41,629

Notes: This table reports the estimates of the impact of working from home on time spent in unpaid work activities. Controls are age, health status, number of adults in the households, number of children aged 0-4, aged 5-9, aged 10-14, aged 15-29, age of the youngest child in the household, number of bedrooms, occupation, industry, employment arrangements, tenure at work, labour earnings, household income, spouse's time in paid and unpaid work. The estimates are obtained from two-way fixed effects models. Confidence Intervals are reported at 95% level. Standard errors are clustered at individual level. *p-value<0.1 ** p-value<0.05 *** p-value<0.01

