

## Working Paper Series

# Working from home, gendered divisions of labor and subjective time pressure: a cross-spousal analysis

Lyn Craig  
Irma Mooi-Reci  
Federico Zilio

Working Paper 14/26

# **Working from home, gendered divisions of labor and subjective time pressure: a cross-spousal analysis\***

**Lyn Craig <sup>a</sup>, Irma Mooi-Reci <sup>a,b</sup>, Federico Zilio <sup>b,c</sup>**

**<sup>a</sup> School of Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of Arts, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne.**

**<sup>b</sup> Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, The University of Melbourne.**

**<sup>c</sup> Section for Oral Health, Heidelberg Institute of Global Health, Heidelberg University Hospital, Heidelberg University, Germany.**

**Melbourne Institute Working Paper No. 14/26  
September 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>). Lyn Craig acknowledges the support of the Australian Research Council Grant LP190100623. Irma Mooi-Reci acknowledges the support of the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) (Synergy Grant GNT2010290 2022-2026). 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](mailto:melb-inst@unimelb.edu.au)  
W [melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au](http://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of Applied Economic and Social Research working papers are produced for discussion and comment purposes and have not been peer-reviewed.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**

This study examines how working from home (WFH) shapes time allocation, divisions of labor, and subjective time pressure within dual-earner couples. Using high-quality longitudinal panel data from Australian couples, we analyse the joint effects of partners' WFH arrangements, distinguishing impacts by intensity and frequency of home-based work. Results from family fixed-effect models reveal that short-hours WFH is associated with increased paid work for both partners, higher total workloads, and elevated time stress. In contrast, high-intensity WFH redistributes unpaid labour more equitably when men work from home, modestly alleviating women's time pressure, but is largely concentrated among men with high job autonomy. Gendered effects are pronounced: women's workloads and time stress respond to both their own and their partner's WFH, whereas men's outcomes are largely unaffected by their partner's arrangements. Overall, WFH does not systematically narrow gender gaps in couples; its effects depend critically on relative WFH intensity between partners.

**Keywords:** working from home, time use, gender inequality, time stress, family arrangements

**JEL Codes:** D13; J16; J22

## 1. Introduction

Doing paid work at or from home (WFH) has become more widespread over recent years (Laß and Wooden 2025; Laß, Vera-Toscano and Wooden 2025). The large spike caused by the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns in 2020-21 seems to be continuing post-pandemic, suggesting it is highly valued by workers whose job situation allows it (Craig et al 2026). In Australia there have been political moves to legislate the right to WFH at least two days a week (Kolovos 2025).<sup>1</sup> A quarterly survey found that nationally those who WFH did so for 30% of their time on average, but respondents said their ideal would be a roughly 50:50 split (48%) (NAB Australian Wellbeing Survey 2025).

Among the factors underpinning the popularity of WFH is its apparent potential to assist work-family balance and to narrow gender gaps in paid and unpaid work (Fan and Moen 2023). Yet it has both strengths and weaknesses as an employment and work-family arrangement and its effectiveness in engendering convergence in men's and women's employment and domestic labor time is not clear. One reason for this is that WFH patterns and their consequences for time spent in work and care are usually examined individually, when whole-of-household information is required.

To ameliorate this gap, this paper uses nationally representative longitudinal data from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey to analyze the effects of WFH arrangements of both members of couples in combination, enabling us to capture gendered cross-spousal effects. Also, we consider the frequency and intensity of WFH, rather than viewing it as binary. These innovations allow us to identify the level and gender distribution of home-based employment that can support greater equity in paid and unpaid work activity. We ask: in dual-earner households,

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/aug/02/victoria-work-from-home-two-days-a-week-law-jacinta-allan-labor-party-state-conference>

how do different couple configurations of WFH affect the combined amount and gender shares of time spent in paid work, unpaid work time and commuting, and the subjective time pressure of men and women?

### **1.1 Influences on gendered divisions of labor**

Progress towards convergence in gendered divisions of labor has been so slow and uneven that it has been labelled an ‘incomplete’ or ‘stalled’ revolution (e.g., England, Levine and Mishel 2020). Influential early theories on the causes of inequity in domestic labor were that it was due to limited (male) time availability, unequal relative resources, and conformity to traditional gender ideology (Brines, 1994; Coltrane, 2000; Greenstein, 2000). Over time research has shown these explanations to be not only partial but also inextricably linked. Labor markets yielded unequal earnings for men and women, which reflected and influenced couples’ decisions on who should commit more time to market work, affecting each partner’s relative resources and household bargaining power, and reinforcing attitudes about appropriate gender roles (Hook, 2010). Gender has consistently outweighed other influences on time allocation, such that women continue to do the lion’s share of domestic labor, because gender differences rest upon a long history of social attitudes and ideological beliefs, reflexively intertwined with institutional structures that reinforce existing gaps (Lewis, 2009).

Workplaces and the family are primary institutional sites in which gender roles are reproduced and perpetuated through everyday interactions and behaviour (Deutsch, 2007; West and Zimmerman 2009). Therefore, it is to be expected theoretically that work arrangements will affect men and women differently and can generate contrasting cross-spousal effects within families. Prior research has shown, for example, that men’s long work hours have more effect on their partner’s domestic time allocation (Goldin, 2014), wellbeing (Offer and Schneider 2011) and subjective time pressure (Craig and Brown 2017) than vice versa. Moreover, ‘family friendly’ workplace measures like paid parental leave and part time employment hours are not only much more likely to be used by women than men

(Baxter, Budinski and Stevens 2024) but also, if used, tend to deepen gender divisions of paid and unpaid work in families (Cass, 2024). Exceptions to this general finding give insight into the specifics of what can trigger behaviour change to perhaps challenge and ‘undo’ gender roles (Deutsch, 2007; Risman, 2009) by increasing male involvement in domestic work. For example, nonstandard work schedules (working variable shifts or outside office hours) typically widen gendered labor gaps in families whether they are worked by men or by women (Craig and Powell 2012; Lozano, Hamplová and Le Bourdais 2016). That is, men who work nonstandard hours tend to do lower shares of the domestic labor; women who work nonstandard hours tend to do higher shares of the domestic labor (Craig and Brown 2017). An exception is if nonstandard hours involve men being responsible for family care while women are absent. For example, when mothers who work evening shifts leave their partner at home in solo charge of children, their partners are estimated to do more childcare (Craig and Powell 2012). Similarly, men are more likely to provide care for their elderly parents if they are not partnered and have no sisters (Grigoryeva, 2017).

## **1.2 The effect of work from home on divisions of labor**

Work from home is a further example of a workplace policy that has gendered intra-household effects. Some identify positive impacts on work-life balance and reduced work-family conflict (Arwin et al 2021; Orešković et al 2023; Laß and Wooden 2023), but it is clear that ‘teleworking can simultaneously enhance work–life balance while perpetuating traditional work and family roles’ (Sullivan and Lewis 2001: p123). In line with this, research conducted before Covid-19 generally found that compared to working on-site, WFH was associated with women doing more domestic labor and care, but the opposite was true for men (Hilbrecht et al 2008; Powell and Craig 2015). This suggests both motivations and outcomes of WFH differed by gender. The pandemic lockdown mandates required all but ‘essential’ workers to work from home, abruptly rendering individual views on work and care irrelevant to WFH decisions. There was considerable international research interest in whether this

exogenous shock, causing both partners to be home at the same time irrespective of their individual views and work histories, would trigger more-equal divisions of labor. Most international evidence shows that men did become more involved in domestic labor and care during Covid lockdowns, but that the associated spikes in domestic labor were even higher for women than men, such that gender gaps did not narrow (e.g., Alipour, 2025; Haney and Barber 2022; Meraviglia and Dudka 2021; Steinmetz et al 2022). This is like long term trends in parental childcare, which has risen over time for both men and women without causing gender convergence (Sullivan 2018).

This fitful progress means it is important to identify even incremental shifts in behaviour, and to tease out what factors limit or facilitate change. For example, gendered divisions of labor persist despite attitudes about men's domestic involvement evolving over time. Fatherhood ideals are now less traditional (Churchill and Craig 2022; Offer and Kaplan 2021), and more men wish to be more hands-on as fathers (Petts et al 2023) or are opting to be stay-at-home dads (Tarrant, Ladlow and Way 2025). However, there is a mismatch between action and ideas (Tai and Baxter 2018) and practical impediments to translating nontraditional ideals into widespread behaviour change. The workplace norm that sees the 'ideal worker' as one who can prioritize their employment unencumbered by care demands is mainly associated with men (Williams, 2001; Acker, 2006; Williamson, Taylor and Weeratunga 2024). Employer assumptions that most women will prioritize family have been shown to limit their career prospects as a class (e.g. Lee and Craig 2025), but men who access flexible arrangements to maximise their family time also risk falling short of ideal worker norms and damaging their individual job prospects (Coron and Garbe 2023; Tanquerel and Santistevan 2022; Mooi-Reci and Wooden 2025; Fan and Moen 2023, 2025). Thus, workplace expectations can limit couples' opportunities to share paid and unpaid work more equally even if men want to do more in the home and would like to adopt apparently helpful work-family arrangements like WFH (Parry, 2025; Thébaud and Pedulla 2022).

Chung (2022) describes a mechanism behind this, a workplace ‘flexibility stigma’ whereby flex workers are thought to have less commitment to their employment and to be less productive than other workers. This can lead to the ‘flexibility paradox’ and ‘self-exploitation’ of overwork, doing more hours or producing more output to try and counteract the flexibility stigma (Chung 2022). Employer expectations that work output should not fall due to WFH were evident during the pandemic lockdowns, notwithstanding that many workers were simultaneously providing care or homeschooling their children (Craig and Churchill 2021a; Petts, Carlson and Pepin 2021). A gendered by-product was longer male work hours and the phenomenon of men being able to use a private work area while their female spouses worked at a table in a room shared with their children (Craig, 2020). Couples privileging the male partner’s workspace and work time reflects the view that men’s employment is more important than women’s employment (Parry, 2025) and contributes to WFH affecting men’s and women’s unpaid household work differently. It is an example of how employment expectations and family role assumptions can combine to derogate from the effectiveness of WFH as a work-family policy that could lead to more equal sharing of home duties (Thébaud and Pedulla 2022).

Social and economic policy environment is also important in shaping how men and women (can) share paid and unpaid work (Lewis, 2009), so we now present an overview of the Australian context.

### **1.3 The Australian context and work from home**

Australian social and economic policies have historically tended to reinforce traditional gendered divisions of labor. Childcare is very expensive and combines with tax and transfer policies to penalise secondary earners in couple-headed households (Stewart, 2022). Secondary earners incur effective marginal tax rates near 100% of their income if day-care costs for more than three days a week are factored in (Wood, Griffiths and Emslie 2020). This disincentivizes mothers from full-time work and thus the dominant work-family arrangement in dual-earner heterosexual Australian households with young children has been the male partner working full time and the female partner working part time

(1½ earner family model). Women are disproportionately likely to be employed in ‘casual’ jobs without benefits such as sick and annual leave, to work variable hours and to be in positions which underutilize their education and skill levels (Charlesworth and MacDonald 2015; Craig et al 2024). To balance work and family demands, over time most Australian women have limited their paid work hours and moved in and out of the workforce as family care needs change over the life course (Baxter et al 2024).

Within this context, patterns of work from home have also been gendered in Australia. Women who WFH have been more likely than men who WFH to do so for a high proportion or all of their paid work hours, and to blur the boundaries between employment and family demands by doing short hours of paid work whilst supervising children at the same time (Powell and Craig 2015). The ability to WFH was not always possible with organisational employment, so many women became self-employed explicitly to be able to WFH and care for children more flexibly and cheaply (Foley et al 2018). Men’s likelihood of doing some WFH was higher than women’s, but the proportion of men’s total paid work time that was WFH was smaller than women’s. It was associated with longer paid work time overall, indicating that men were primarily working on site and bringing work home to do outside office hours, so not taking up WFH for care reasons (Powell and Craig 2015). Women who WFH were more likely than men who WFH to multitask work and care and to frequently switch between activities due to interruptions from children, which could contribute to time stress (Craig and Brown 2017). The longer work hours of men who WFH could also lead to higher time stress (Powell and Craig 2015).

During Covid-19, households reacted similarly in Australia to elsewhere. Both men and women took on more domestic labor and care while in lockdown than they had before, but gender gaps did not narrow because women put in even more extra time than men did (Craig and Churchill 2021a; 2021b). Notably, during lockdowns, subjective time stress was lower despite the extra domestic labor, which surveys suggested was due to time savings from not having to commute or do child drop-offs or pick-

ups (Craig, 2020). Post-Covid, associations between WFH and individual time use have not all reverted to pre-pandemic patterns (Craig et al 2026). This appears to apply to men and women in different ways. The ongoing Covid-triggered changes for men who WFH are concentrated in higher unpaid work, particularly among those who work a high proportion (60%+) of their paid hours at home. In contrast, ongoing Covid-triggered changes for women who WFH are concentrated in higher *paid* work amongst those working a lower proportion (up to 60%) of their paid hours at home (Craig et al 2026). These positive effects of WFH on men's unpaid labor and on women's paid labor imply that WFH can facilitate gender convergence in paid and unpaid work in some circumstances and for some people.

In this paper, we build on that research, to directly test the effects of WFH on intra-household shares of paid and unpaid labor and subjective time pressure. We pay attention to the frequency and level of each partner's WFH, as we expect the detail to matter to labor patterns and to do so differently for men and women. The goal is to discover whether, how and for whom WFH arrangements contribute to 'de-gendering' divisions of labor, by examining the effects of dual earner couples' configurations of on-site versus homebased work on both partners.

Our hypotheses are:

H1: WFH will not lower combined couple time devoted to paid work, unpaid work and commuting.

Rather, WFH will either increase or be used to redistribute (but not reduce) couples' total workloads.

H1a: Positive effects on *paid work* will be highest in households in which one or both partners work *less* than 60% of their paid time at home. H1b. Positive effects on *unpaid work* will be highest in households in which one or both partners work *more* than 60% of their paid time at home.

H2: Men and women's WFH will have opposite effects on gendered divisions of labor. WFH will be associated with more gender-equal shares of time devoted to paid work, unpaid work and commuting only if men work more than 60% of their paid time at home and their partners do not. H2a: If women

work more than 60% of their time at home and their partners do not, shares of combined couple time devoted to paid work, unpaid work and commuting will be *less* gender equal.

H3: WFH will be associated with lower subjective time stress, but only for workers who do more than 60% of their paid work time at home and/or (H3a) whose spouse does more than 60% of their paid work time at home.

H4: Cross-spousal effects of WFH on time allocation and subjective time stress will be stronger for women than men.

## **2. Data and methods**

### **2.1 Data**

We use data from the longitudinal and nationally representative Household Income and Labor Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, which encompasses 8,928 households and 15,987 individuals aged over 15 years, and has been fielded annually since 2001 (Summerfield et al 2024; Wooden, Watson and Butterworth 2024). In addition to a face-to-face interview, HILDA conducts a self-completion questionnaire that includes questions on time use, time pressure and opinions on own job. For employed persons HILDA provides the working hours and the number of hours – if any - usually worked at home. Our outcomes are three dimensions of time use (weekly hours spent in paid work, unpaid work, commuting time), total time spent on these three activities and a self-reported indicator of time pressure. Data on unpaid work includes time spent on non-market activities such as childcare (playing with children 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). Time pressure is recovered from the question “How often do you feel rushed or pressed for time?” with answers that range from a score of

1 (“*Almost always*”) to 5 (“*Never*”). We reverse the score so that the indicator takes a high value for people that experience time pressure.

## 2.2 Sample

As our interest is in the relationship between working from home and time use and how working from home affects time allocation and time pressure within the household, we focus on heterosexual couples in which both spouses are aged under 65 and employed. We draw an unbalanced sample covering HILDA waves from 2005 to 2023, selecting employed individuals in couple-headed households who provided valid information on their usual hours worked from home at the time of the interview. From the original HILDA sample composed of 13,812 couples and 47,770 individuals we exclude non-coupled individuals (22,295), same-sex couples (258 couples), couples with at least one individual older than 64 (1,286 couples), single-earner couples (4,797 couples), and couples only surveyed in the first 4 waves in which some job type and job stress indicators were not collected (626 couples). We end up with 6,873 couples and 39,254 person-year observations for both men and women.

The behaviour of a person who works from home outside office hours may be very different than that of a person who has a hybrid job and works some days from home and some days on-site. Only in the last available HILDA wave it is possible to separate workers with a hybrid job from those who WFH extended hours (Laß and Wooden 2025). As this study uses the longitudinal dimension of HILDA we cannot identify how the worker organises their work schedule for the whole period so we deal with the issue by accounting for differences in the share of hours worked at home and divide men and women into three groups: those who work only on-site, those who work from home less than 60% of their paid hours, and those who work from home more than 60% of their paid hours. Table 1 shows the distribution of the couple configurations obtained by combining men and women by their WFH intensity group. In just over half of the families, both spouses work on-site, while in around 40% of the families at least one spouse works from home less than 60% of their paid hours. Although only

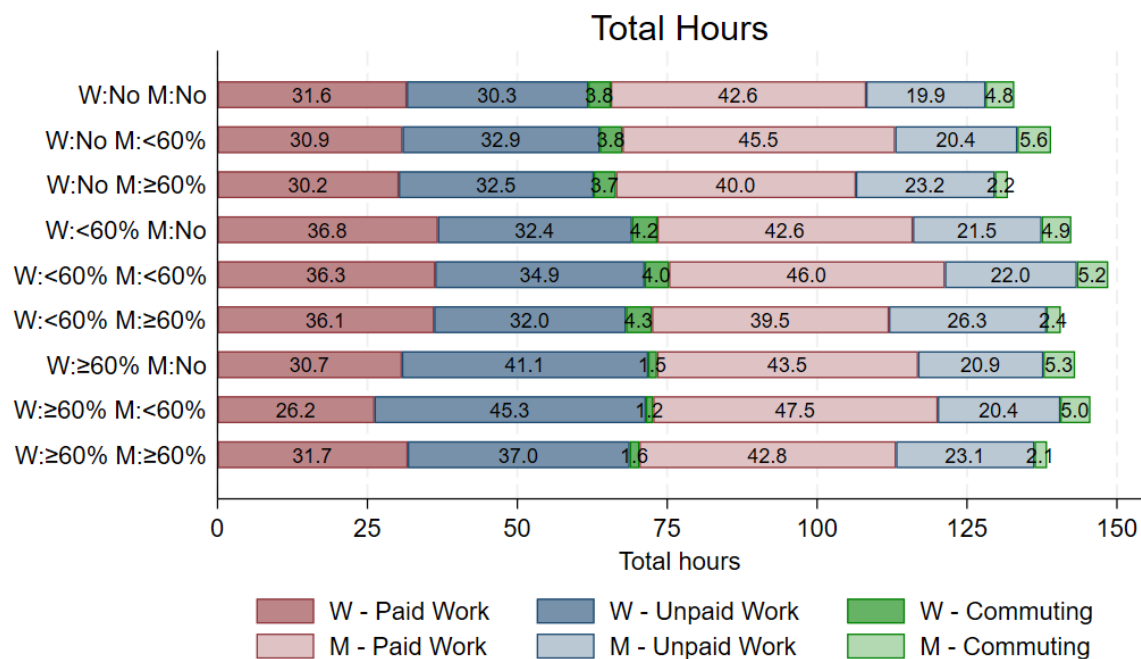
15% of the families have at least one spouse who works from home more than 60% of the time, this type of family has become more common during the Covid-19 pandemic and in recent years (Craig et al 2026).

**Table 1 Descriptive statistics. Couple configurations of working from home intensity.**

| Share of WFH |      | Observations | %    |
|--------------|------|--------------|------|
| Women        | Men  |              |      |
| No           | No   | 19,919       | 50.7 |
| No           | <60% | 5,950        | 15.2 |
| No           | ≥60% | 1,132        | 2.9  |
| <60%         | No   | 4,680        | 11.9 |
| <60%         | <60% | 3,114        | 7.9  |
| <60%         | ≥60% | 513          | 1.3  |
| ≥60%         | No   | 1,775        | 4.5  |
| ≥60%         | <60% | 1,225        | 3.1  |
| ≥60%         | ≥60% | 946          | 2.4  |
| <b>Total</b> |      | 39,254       | 100  |

Notes: This table shows the distribution of couple configurations by work from home arrangements.

**Figure 1 Time use and couple configurations of working from home intensity.**



Notes: This figure shows the average hours per week on paid work, unpaid work and commuting by gender and couple work from home arrangements. M: Men; W: Women.

**Table 2 Descriptive statistics. Time use and time pressure.**

| Share of WFH     | W      |      | M     |      | W     |      | M     |      | W     |      | M    |      | W     |      | M     |      | W    |      | M   |      |
|------------------|--------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|-----|------|
|                  | No     | No   | No    | <60% | No    | <60% | No    | <60% | No    | <60% | No   | <60% | No    | <60% | No    | <60% | No   | <60% | No  | <60% |
| Time use         | (1)    | (1)  | (2)   | (2)  | (3)   | (3)  | (4)   | (4)  | (5)   | (5)  | (6)  | (6)  | (7)   | (7)  | (8)   | (8)  | (9)  | (9)  | (9) | (9)  |
| Time Paid Work   | 31.6   | 42.6 | 30.9  | 45.3 | 30.2  | 40.2 | 36.8  | 42.7 | 36.3  | 46.0 | 36.2 | 39.9 | 30.7  | 43.4 | 26.4  | 47.3 | 31.9 | 42.7 |     |      |
| Time Unpaid Work | 30.3   | 19.9 | 32.8  | 20.4 | 32.6  | 23.2 | 32.3  | 21.4 | 34.9  | 21.9 | 31.8 | 25.8 | 41.1  | 20.8 | 45.3  | 20.5 | 36.7 | 23.1 |     |      |
| Childcare        | 10.1   | 5.5  | 11.0  | 5.9  | 11.1  | 6.6  | 11.8  | 6.4  | 13.1  | 7.0  | 12.3 | 7.6  | 15.9  | 6.6  | 16.4  | 6.4  | 12.7 | 6.7  |     |      |
| Housework        | 13.0   | 6.1  | 14.1  | 6.1  | 13.7  | 7.3  | 12.9  | 6.8  | 14.1  | 6.7  | 12.3 | 8.6  | 15.7  | 5.9  | 18.2  | 5.6  | 14.9 | 7.2  |     |      |
| Errands          | 4.5    | 3.3  | 4.8   | 3.6  | 4.4   | 4.3  | 4.7   | 3.3  | 4.8   | 3.7  | 4.3  | 4.8  | 6.0   | 3.3  | 6.8   | 3.5  | 5.6  | 4.2  |     |      |
| Outdoor tasks    | 2.3    | 4.7  | 2.4   | 4.4  | 2.6   | 4.6  | 2.3   | 4.7  | 2.4   | 4.3  | 2.3  | 4.6  | 2.8   | 4.7  | 3.2   | 4.7  | 2.8  | 4.6  |     |      |
| Caregiving       | 0.5    | 0.3  | 0.5   | 0.3  | 0.7   | 0.3  | 0.5   | 0.2  | 0.6   | 0.3  | 0.5  | 0.2  | 0.7   | 0.3  | 0.8   | 0.3  | 0.7  | 0.3  |     |      |
| Time Commuting   | 3.8    | 4.8  | 3.8   | 5.6  | 3.7   | 2.2  | 4.2   | 5.0  | 4.0   | 5.2  | 4.3  | 2.4  | 1.5   | 5.3  | 1.2   | 5.0  | 1.6  | 2.1  |     |      |
| Total Time       | 65.7   | 67.2 | 67.6  | 71.3 | 66.5  | 65.6 | 73.3  | 69.0 | 75.3  | 73.1 | 72.3 | 68.1 | 73.3  | 69.5 | 72.9  | 72.8 | 70.2 | 67.9 |     |      |
| Time Pressure    | 3.52   | 3.24 | 3.60  | 3.47 | 3.47  | 3.32 | 3.82  | 3.31 | 3.88  | 3.55 | 3.84 | 3.36 | 3.53  | 3.31 | 3.54  | 3.52 | 3.49 | 3.32 |     |      |
| Observations     | 19,919 |      | 5,950 |      | 1,132 |      | 4,680 |      | 3,114 |      | 513  |      | 1,775 |      | 1,225 |      | 946  |      |     |      |

Notes: This table provides average statistics for time use and pressure by gender and couple work from home arrangements. Sample of couples in which both spouses are aged under 65 and employed. M: Men; W: Women.

In Table 2 and Figure 1 we show the average weekly hours spent on paid and unpaid work, commuting and the total time spent on the three activities by couple WFH configuration. Within the families, regardless of the intensity of WFH, men average more paid work, and women average more unpaid work. People who WFH less than 60% spend more time on paid work. WFH more than 60% increases time on unpaid work and reduces commuting hours. Couples in which both the man and the woman WFH less than 60% of their paid hours average the highest combined total time in the three activities.

Table A.1 in Appendix presents the socio-demographic characteristics and the job-type and job-stress indicators of men and women by couple WFH configuration. Those who WFH tend to be older and to work in professional or managerial occupations. They are more likely to be self-employed. Families with at least one spouse who WFH less than 60% average the highest household income as people that WFH less than 60% on average earn more than their counterparts. Note however that they experience higher stress at work and feel their work is complex and non-routine.

## 2.3 Methods

In this paper we study how couple configurations of WFH affect combined couple time use, gender inequality in the allocation of time use, and subjective time pressure. Our outcomes are total couple time for each activity defined as the sum of time spent in the activity by the two spouses, gender inequality in time allocation measured by the share of couple time spent by the woman in each activity and an indicator of time pressure that ranges from 1 to 5 where the value of 5 indicates high pressure.

WFH intensity, measured by the dummies  $\text{share\_wfh\_man}_{fg1t}$  and  $\text{share\_wfh\_woman}_{fg2t}$ , is captured by classifying men and women into three groups based on the share of their paid hours worked from home: (1) exclusively on-site; (2) less than 60% WFH; and (3) more than 60% WFH. We also tested an alternative set of cutoffs (<20%, 20–60%, >60%), but the substantive findings were unchanged. For simplicity, we rely on the three-category scheme.

To test Hypotheses 1–3, we estimate fixed-effects regressions at the family level  $f$  on two sets of outcomes: total couple time-use measures and the woman's share of combined couple time in each activity. Denoting these outcomes by  $Y_{ft}$ , we estimate the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned}
Y_{ft} = & \alpha + \sum_{g1=1}^3 \beta_{g1} \text{share\_wfh\_man}_{fg1t} + \sum_{g2=1}^3 \lambda_{g2} \text{share\_wfh\_woman}_{fg2t} \\
& + \sum_{g1=1}^3 \sum_{g2=1}^3 \mu_{g1g2} (\text{share\_wfh\_man}_{fg1t} \times \text{share\_wfh\_woman}_{fg2t}) + \gamma x_{ft} + \theta_f \\
& + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{ft}
\end{aligned}$$

where  $g1, g2 = 1, \dots, 3$ .

where outcome  $Y_{ft}$  for family  $f$  at time  $t$  is a function of men's and women's WFH intensity across three groups. The coefficients  $\beta_{g1}$  and  $\lambda_{g2}$  capture the associations between the shares of men and women in each WFH group and the outcome, while the interaction terms  $\mu_{g1g2}$  allow the effect of one partner's WFH intensity to vary with the other's. The vector  $x_{ft}$  includes time-varying controls, and the specification incorporates family fixed effects ( $\theta_f$ ) and time fixed effects ( $\delta_t$ ) to account for unobserved heterogeneity and period-specific influences.

For ease of interpretation, consider couples in which both partners are in the highest WFH category (group 3), defined as WFH for more than 60% of their paid hours. In this case, the model-implied association with the outcome is  $\beta_3 + \lambda_3 + \mu_{33}$ , where  $\beta_3$  reflects men's WFH intensity,  $\lambda_3$  reflects women's WFH intensity, and  $\mu_{33}$  captures their interaction. This sum therefore represents the combined effect for couples in which both partners have high levels of WFH. The control vector  $x_{ft}$  includes age, marital status, health, employment characteristics, occupation and industry, household demographics including children by age, individual earnings and household income, and the number of bedrooms in the home.

To test Hypotheses 3 and 4, we estimate individual-level fixed-effects regressions for subjective time pressure,  $TP_{ist}$ , separately for women ( $s = w$ ) and men ( $s = m$ ):

$$\begin{aligned}
TP_{ist} = & \alpha + \sum_{g1=1}^3 \beta_{sg1} \text{share\_wfh\_man}_{ig1t} + \sum_{g2=1}^3 \lambda_{sg2} \text{share\_wfh\_woman}_{ig2t} \\
& + \sum_{g1=1}^3 \sum_{g2=1}^3 \mu_{sg1g2} (\text{share\_wfh\_man}_{ig1t} \times \text{share\_wfh\_woman}_{ig2t}) + \gamma x_{ist} + \theta_i \\
& + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{ist}
\end{aligned}$$

where  $g1, g2 = 1, \dots, 3$  and  $s \in \{w, m\}$ .  $\theta_i$  denotes an individual fixed effect.

This specification models  $TP_{ist}$  as a function of men's and women's WFH intensity across the three WFH groups. The main and interaction terms capture how respondents' time pressure varies with partners' WFH patterns. The vector  $x_{ist}$  includes time-varying individual and household controls, and the specification incorporates individual and year fixed effects. For the time-pressure regressions, we additionally include subjective indicators of job stress and job type.

### 3. Results

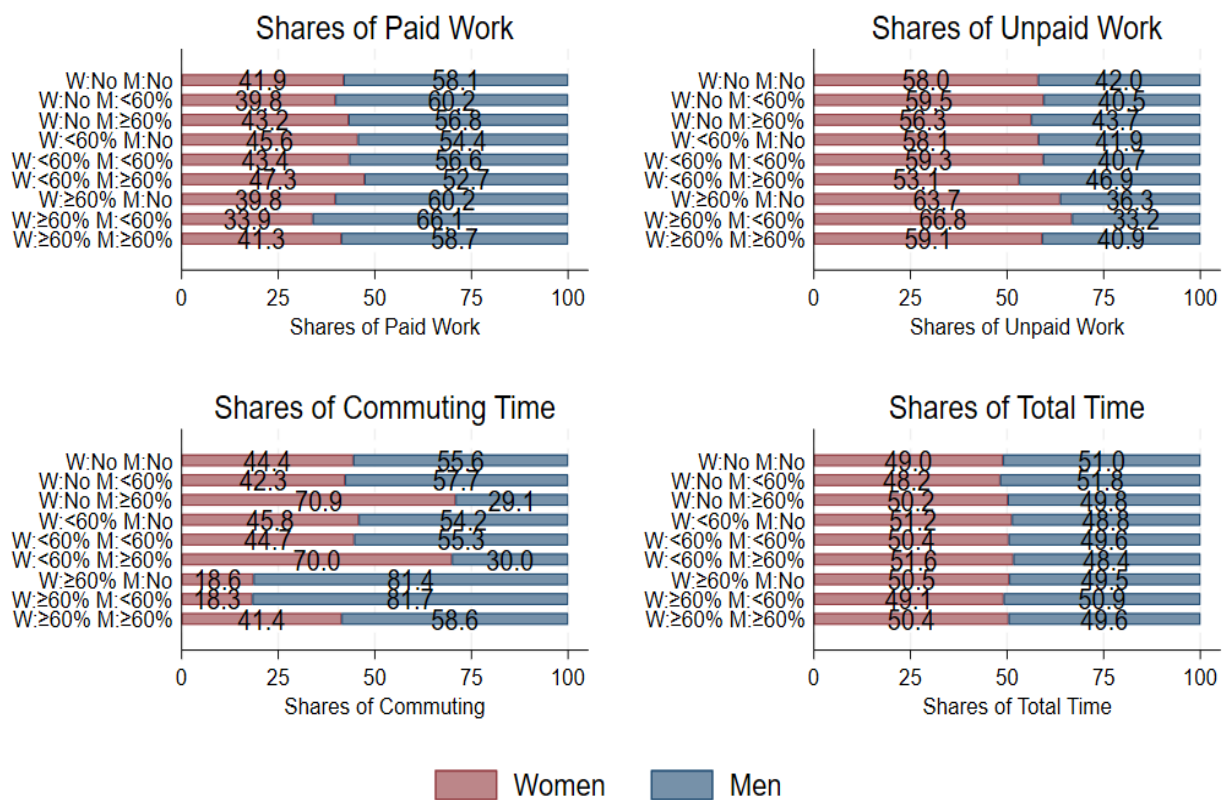
#### 3.1 Working from home, amount and in/equality in the allocation of time

We explore how the allocation of time changes when one or both spouses WFH. This allows us to study whether WFH reduces gender inequality in the division of paid and unpaid work. Using the woman's share of couple time spent on paid or unpaid work as a measure of inequality, we examine if the share approaches the perfect equality value of 50% when one or both spouses work some of their employment hours at home.

Figure 2 shows that on average in couples where both spouses work on-site, the woman's share of paid work is 41.9%, and the woman's share of unpaid work is 58.1%. To reduce inequality the woman's

fraction of total paid hours needs to increase, and the fraction of total unpaid hours needs to decrease. The descriptive statistics of Figure 2 show that the most equal configuration is a couple in which the woman works less than 60% from home and the man works more than 60% from home. In this household configuration the woman's share of paid work is 47.3% and her share of unpaid work is 53.1%.

**Figure 2 Couple configurations of working from home and spousal time shares.**



Notes: This figure shows the shares of paid work, unpaid work, commuting and total time in the three activities by couple work from home arrangements. M: Men; W: Women.

The descriptive statistics in Figure 2 do not account for differences in household and individual socio-demographic characteristics of the spouses. To adjust for observed characteristics and account for time-invariant unobserved heterogeneity we present the impact of WFH estimated from the fixed-effect models in Table 3. Column (5) confirms that, within couples, there is a more equal allocation of paid work if the woman works from home less than 60% of her paid hours. The share of these women's

paid work increases by 0.9 percentage points if the man continues to work entirely on site, and by 1.7 percentage points if the man works more than 60% of his paid hours at home. This pattern implies that women who work less than 60% of their hours at home do more hours of paid work than other women (see Table A.2 in Appendix, Column (1)). The same is true for men, such that total family paid work increases by 2.08 hours a week if both the woman and the man work from home less than 60% of their paid hours (Table 3, Column 1). Total weekly paid work rises by about 1.31 hours when the man works on-site, and the woman works from home less than 60% of the time. In contrast, when the woman works from home more than 60% of her paid hours, gender inequality in paid work tends to rise (Table 3, Column 5).

Turning to unpaid work, Table 3 shows that, within couples, transitions to WFH are associated with increases in total unpaid work time. When both spouses WFH more than 60% of their paid hours, total couple unpaid work is 7 hours a week higher than for couples who work on-site. If only one of the spouses works more than 60% at home, the rise in total couple unpaid work ranges from 3.12 hours a week to 4.78 hours a week, with the increase slightly higher if the other spouse also works some hours at home. In contrast, the increase in couple unpaid work is smaller and statistically insignificant if one spouse works from home less than 60% of the hours (and the other spouse does not work more than 60% from home).

Column (6) of Table 3 presents the estimated effects of WFH on the woman's *share* of couple unpaid work. The results indicate that gender inequality in unpaid work declines only when the man works from home more than 60% of his paid hours. Compared to a couple in which both spouses work on-site, the woman's share of family unpaid work decreases by 2.04 percentage points if the woman works on-site and by 1.38 percentage points if she works from home less than 60% of her paid hours. However, if both the man and the woman WFH more than 60% of their paid hours the reduction in the woman's share of family unpaid work is small and not statistically significant. Conversely, gender inequality increases if the woman works from home more than 60% of her hours and the man works

**Table 3 Working from home, couple time use and spousal time shares.**

| Time Use<br>(hrs/week) |            | Total Couple<br>Paid Work | Total Couple<br>Unpaid<br>Work | Total<br>Couple<br>Commuting | Total Couple<br>Time in the 3<br>activities | Share of<br>Women's<br>Paid Work | Share of<br>Women's<br>Unpaid Work | Share of<br>Women's<br>commuting<br>time | Share of<br>Women's total<br>time in the 3<br>activities |
|------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
|                        |            | (1)                       | (2)                            | (3)                          | (4)                                         | (5)                              | (6)                                | (7)                                      | (8)                                                      |
| <b>Share of WFH</b>    |            |                           |                                |                              |                                             |                                  |                                    |                                          |                                                          |
| <b>Women</b>           | <b>Men</b> |                           |                                |                              |                                             |                                  |                                    |                                          |                                                          |
| No                     | No         | -                         | -                              | -                            | -                                           | -                                | -                                  | -                                        | -                                                        |
| No                     | <60%       | 1.09***<br>(0.59; 1.58)   | -0.23<br>(-1.04; 0.57)         | 0.34***<br>(0.13; 0.55)      | 1.19**<br>(0.24; 2.15)                      | -0.35*<br>(-0.72; 0.02)          | 0.21<br>(-0.36; 0.77)              | -1.32***<br>(-2.27; -0.37)               | -0.24<br>(-0.55; 0.06)                                   |
| No                     | ≥60%       | -1.30**<br>(-2.47; -0.12) | 3.12***<br>(1.34; 4.90)        | -2.55***<br>(-3.03; -2.06)   | -0.72<br>(-2.82; 1.38)                      | 0.42<br>(-0.51; 1.35)            | -2.04***<br>(-3.37; -0.70)         | 19.44***<br>(16.61; 22.28)               | 0.73**<br>(0.02; 1.45)                                   |
| <60%                   | No         | 1.31***<br>(0.77; 1.84)   | 0.07<br>(-0.79; 0.93)          | 0.16<br>(-0.05; 0.38)        | 1.54***<br>(0.57; 2.51)                     | 0.90***<br>(0.50; 1.29)          | 0.35<br>(-0.27; 0.97)              | -0.95**<br>(-1.89; -0.01)                | 0.57***<br>(0.25; 0.88)                                  |
| <60%                   | <60%       | 2.08***<br>(1.38; 2.79)   | 0.60<br>(-0.48; 1.68)          | 0.10<br>(-0.17; 0.37)        | 2.78***<br>(1.53; 4.03)                     | 0.23<br>(-0.27; 0.72)            | 0.22<br>(-0.53; 0.98)              | -0.78<br>(-2.04; 0.49)                   | 0.10<br>(-0.28; 0.47)                                    |
| <60%                   | ≥60%       | -0.27<br>(-1.87; 1.32)    | 4.78***<br>(2.65; 6.92)        | -3.10***<br>(-3.66; -2.54)   | 1.41<br>(-1.12; 3.93)                       | 1.69***<br>(0.44; 2.93)          | -1.38*<br>(-2.97; 0.20)            | 17.58***<br>(13.91; 21.26)               | 0.94**<br>(0.05; 1.83)                                   |
| ≥60%                   | No         | -0.03<br>(-1.02; 0.96)    | 3.28***<br>(1.84; 4.72)        | -2.09***<br>(-2.45; -1.73)   | 1.16<br>(-0.63; 2.94)                       | -0.67*<br>(-1.43; 0.08)          | 2.95***<br>(1.94; 3.96)            | -20.53***<br>(-22.64; -18.42)            | 0.38<br>(-0.16; 0.91)                                    |
| ≥60%                   | <60%       | -0.87<br>(-2.05; 0.31)    | 4.11***<br>(2.34; 5.88)        | -1.95***<br>(-2.39; -1.52)   | 1.30<br>(-0.66; 3.25)                       | -2.23***<br>(-3.13; -1.34)       | 2.48***<br>(1.35; 3.61)            | -16.95***<br>(-19.33; -14.56)            | -0.32<br>(-1.00; 0.36)                                   |
| ≥60%                   | ≥60%       | -0.59<br>(-1.88; 0.71)    | 7.00***<br>(5.05; 8.95)        | -5.06***<br>(-5.62; -4.50)   | 1.35<br>(-0.89; 3.60)                       | -0.54<br>(-1.52; 0.44)           | -0.57<br>(-1.87; 0.74)             | -4.06**<br>(-7.72; -0.40)                | 0.06<br>(-0.70; 0.82)                                    |
| Observations           |            | 35,786                    | 35,786                         | 35,786                       | 35,786                                      | 35,786                           | 35,785                             | 35,213                                   | 35,786                                                   |

Notes: This table reports the estimated impact of own and spousal working from home on couple time use and woman's share of family time in paid, unpaid work and commuting. Controls are own and spouse's age, marital 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, health status, number of bedrooms, own and spouse's occupation, industry, type of contract, tenure at work, labor earnings, household income. Estimates are obtained from two-way fixed effects models. Confidence Intervals are reported at 95% level. Standard errors are clustered at couple level. \* $p$ -value<0.1 \*\*  $p$ -value<0.05 \*\*\*  $p$ -value<0.01

on-site or works from home less than 60% of his hours. These results suggest reductions in gender inequality in unpaid work arise only when two household conditions align: men do a high proportion of their work at home, and women are not also present to take default responsibility for domestic work.

Finally, couple commuting time is lower when one or both partners work more than 60% of their paid hours at home. The time savings from lower household commuting seem predominantly directed into unpaid work. We have shown that households in which one or both partners WFH less than 60% have higher total workloads than those who work solely on site. We now investigate whether any of these time allocation changes in association with WFH are also apparent in subjective time stress.

### **3.2 Working from home and time pressure**

In this section we directly test whether subjective time pressure changes when couples shift to WFH (Hypotheses 3 through 4). Conceptually, if both partners devote the same total number of hours to paid and unpaid work but one works from home, we expect lower time pressure for the partner who works from home due to savings in commuting time. The first two columns of Table 4 report results controlling for socio-demographic and employment characteristics. The results indicate that individuals in couples with one or both partners working from home for less than 60 percent of their paid hours experience higher time pressure than couples in which both partners work entirely on-site. This pattern holds for both men and women. A plausible explanation is that partial WFH is accompanied by higher total workloads: partners who WFH less than 60% of their paid hours tend to increase their paid work time and, in some cases, their unpaid work, without fully compensating for these increases through reduced commuting (see Table A.2 in Appendix). Another interpretation relates to behavioural responses and workplace dynamics. Workers who engage in partial WFH may seek to counteract the “flexibility stigma” (Chung 2022) by demonstrating commitment to their employer through longer or more intense work periods. Alternatively, causality may operate in the

**Table 4 Couple configurations of work from home and own and spousal time pressure.**

| Couple WFH arrangements                       |            | Time Pressure<br>Women<br>(1) | Time Pressure<br>Men<br>(2) | Time Pressure<br>Women<br>(3) | Time Pressure<br>Men<br>(4) | Time Pressure<br>Women<br>(5) | Time Pressure<br>Men<br>(6) |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Women</b>                                  | <b>Men</b> |                               |                             |                               |                             |                               |                             |
| No                                            | No         | -                             | -                           | -                             | -                           | -                             | -                           |
| No                                            | <60%       | -0.00<br>(-0.03; 0.03)        | 0.04***<br>(0.01; 0.07)     | -0.01<br>(-0.03; 0.02)        | 0.04***<br>(0.01; 0.06)     | -0.01<br>(-0.04; 0.01)        | 0.02*<br>(-0.00; 0.05)      |
| No                                            | ≥60%       | -0.09***<br>(-0.14; -0.03)    | -0.04*<br>(-0.10; 0.01)     | -0.10***<br>(-0.15; -0.04)    | -0.04<br>(-0.09; 0.01)      | -0.11***<br>(-0.17; -0.06)    | -0.03<br>(-0.08; 0.02)      |
| <60%                                          | No         | 0.04***<br>(0.02; 0.07)       | 0.00<br>(-0.02; 0.03)       | 0.03*<br>(-0.00; 0.05)        | 0.00<br>(-0.02; 0.03)       | 0.01<br>(-0.02; 0.04)         | 0.01<br>(-0.01; 0.04)       |
| <60%                                          | <60%       | 0.04**<br>(0.00; 0.08)        | 0.04**<br>(0.01; 0.08)      | 0.02<br>(-0.01; 0.06)         | 0.03*<br>(-0.00; 0.07)      | 0.00<br>(-0.03; 0.04)         | 0.02<br>(-0.01; 0.05)       |
| <60%                                          | ≥60%       | 0.01<br>(-0.06; 0.08)         | -0.04<br>(-0.10; 0.03)      | 0.00<br>(-0.07; 0.08)         | -0.01<br>(-0.08; 0.05)      | -0.02<br>(-0.09; 0.05)        | -0.01<br>(-0.07; 0.05)      |
| ≥60%                                          | No         | -0.09***<br>(-0.14; -0.05)    | -0.04*<br>(-0.08; 0.01)     | -0.11***<br>(-0.16; -0.06)    | -0.04<br>(-0.08; 0.01)      | -0.10***<br>(-0.15; -0.05)    | -0.02<br>(-0.06; 0.02)      |
| ≥60%                                          | <60%       | -0.08***<br>(-0.13; -0.02)    | 0.03<br>(-0.02; 0.08)       | -0.07**<br>(-0.13; -0.01)     | 0.03<br>(-0.02; 0.09)       | -0.07**<br>(-0.13; -0.01)     | 0.02<br>(-0.03; 0.08)       |
| ≥60%                                          | ≥60%       | -0.13***<br>(-0.19; -0.06)    | -0.02<br>(-0.08; 0.04)      | -0.13***<br>(-0.20; -0.07)    | -0.02<br>(-0.08; 0.04)      | -0.13***<br>(-0.20; -0.07)    | -0.00<br>(-0.06; 0.06)      |
| <b>Controls</b>                               |            |                               |                             |                               |                             |                               |                             |
| Socio-economic and employment characteristics |            | x                             | x                           | x                             | x                           | x                             | x                           |
| Working hours + Unpaid work hours             |            |                               |                             | x                             | x                           | x                             | x                           |
| Job stress and job type indicators            |            |                               |                             |                               |                             | x                             | x                           |
| Observations                                  |            | 37,084                        | 37,620                      | 36,116                        | 36,190                      | 35,008                        | 35,164                      |

*Notes:* This table reports the estimates of the impact of own and spousal working from home on time pressure. Socio-economic and employment characteristics are own and spouse's age, marital 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, health status, number of bedrooms, own and spouse's occupation, industry, type of contract, tenure at work, labor earnings, household income. Job stress/type indicators are subjective indicators of stress at work, fear of becoming ill because of work, fair pay, job security, confidence in the future of the company, worries for the future of the job, complex job, job that requires new skills to learn, use of own skills, freedom in how and when to work, having a lot of say on what happens at work, choice of what to do at work, time flexibility, freedom to take a break, routinary job, variety of things to do at work, requirement to take initiative at work, working fast, work intensely, not having enough time to do all the work. Estimates are obtained from two-way fixed effects model. 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

opposite direction: partners who already feel time-stressed might use adopt partial WFH as a coping strategy to manage high job demands, which results in greater reported time pressure.

When we control for both partner's paid and unpaid work hours and a battery of indicators for job stress and job type, the estimated effects decrease in magnitude and remain positive and statistically significant (at the 10% level) only for men in couples in which the man works partially from home and the woman works on-site (Column 6). When the woman works from home for more than 60% of her paid hours, there is a significant reduction in her average time pressure regardless of the man's working arrangements (Column 5).

This negative and statistically significant coefficient suggests that, compared to women who work on-site, engaging in high-intensity WFH is associated with lower perceived time pressure for women, even after accounting for job type and stress-related factors. No comparable effect is found for couples in which the man works from home more than 60% of his paid hours: a man in high-intensity WFH does not significantly change his reported time pressure relative to couples in which both partners work entirely on-site.

We find that women's time pressure reduces if the man works from home more than 60% of the hours and the woman works on-site. Together with the results shown in Figure 2 and Table 3, this pattern suggests that when men WFH a substantial proportion of hours they may both alleviate the burden of unpaid work on their spouse and reduce their time pressure. By contrast, no cross-spousal effects on men were evident: their time pressure changes very little across different WFH configurations of their partners and appears largely unaffected by their spouse's WFH intensity.

#### **4. Discussion**

This paper used high-quality longitudinal household panel data to investigate how working from home affects time allocation, divisions of labor and subjective time pressure within dual-earner couples. It

contributed to the literature by examining the joint effects of both partners' WFH arrangements and distinguishing associations by the level and frequency of each partner's WFH. Overall, the results suggest that, depending on the specific WFH configuration adopted by the couple, WFH is more likely to widen than to narrow gender disparities in the division of labor.

A series of family fixed-effects models showed that, as expected, WFH did not lead to lower total workloads for couples (H1). Across WFH configurations, it either had no measurable association with combined couple paid and unpaid labor or was associated with higher workloads. These findings imply that couples typically use WFH not to reduce total labor time but to reorganize or expand it. Although high-intensity WFH substantially reduces commuting time, the saved time was generally reallocated to additional paid or unpaid work rather than to leisure.

The impact of WFH on paid work varied with intensity. Increases in paid work were most pronounced when one or both partners engaged in low to moderate WFH (less than 60% of their paid hours) (supporting H1a). The data do not reveal the timing of these hours, but the pattern suggests that lower-intensity WFH may allow paid work to spill over into evenings or weekends (Powell and Craig, 2015). Supplementary analyses (not shown) revealed that the effect was strongest when one or both partners worked from home less than 20% of their paid hours, indicating that very limited WFH is primarily used to extend on-site work rather than to replace it.

These results highlight important differences by WFH intensity. Low-intensity WFH may reflect responses to workplace pressures or the "flexibility stigma," with partners extending work hours to demonstrate commitment to their work (Chung, 2022). In this sense, short-hours WFH is as likely to be a response to high work demands as a voluntary strategy for managing work-life balance. By contrast, high-intensity WFH (more than 60% of paid hours) was associated with the largest increases

in unpaid work, supporting H1b. Couples in which one or both partners work primarily from home appear more likely to prioritize domestic responsibilities, suggesting selection effects where couples adjust work location according to home demands.

Taken together, the evidence reveals that at the couple level short-hours WFH facilitates maximizing paid work, while long-hours WFH facilitates maximizing unpaid work. Distinguishing between those who do most of their paid work from home and those who use limited WFH to “catch up” on work outside the office is prerequisite to designing effective, equitable WFH policies.

The distinction between different levels and frequency of WFH was also clearly pertinent to gendered divisions of labor (H2). Couples tended to exhibit more equal shares of paid labor when women were working short proportions of WFH, and less equal shares of paid labor if men were doing so, suggesting the arrangement upped the paid work of both sexes in similar ways. However, partners’ work location also significantly affected whether the upshot was more overall equality in relative shares of the couple’s time allocation. For example, as noted above, households in which both partners did shorter hours WFH the household amount of weekly total work was estimated to be (2.08 hours) higher. Our analyses of relative shares showed that nonetheless, the gender division of paid and unpaid labor in these households was not significantly different to that of households in which both partners worked on site. More gender equality in *shares* of labor time was only evident in households in which partners had contrasting WFH arrangements.

Moreover, there were gender contrasts in the direction of the effects on time allocation. We found *more* gender-equal shares of time devoted to paid and unpaid work if *men* worked over 60% of their hours at home (and their partners did not) and *less* gender equal shares of paid and unpaid work if *women* worked more than 60% of their hours at home. This supports prior research which has argued

that ‘family friendly’ workplace measures tend to deepen gender divisions of paid and unpaid work within households (Baxter et al 2024; Cass, 2024). Notably, in couples in which *both* partners worked more than 60% of their hours at home there was no significant difference in divisions of paid or of unpaid work. We cannot be sure of the exact work timing of each partner, but this chimes with prior research showing that male presence in the domestic sphere is insufficient to generate more relative equity if their partner is also there. Rather, male domestic presence *combined with* female domestic absence, is one of the few factors to reliably elicit higher shares of unpaid labor from men (Craig and Powell 2012; Lozano et al 2016; Grigoryeva 2017). For the most part, if a high proportion of paid work was done at home, men’s and women’s WFH had opposite effects on gendered divisions of labor.

We found conflicting evidence about WFH and subjective time stress, again revealing gender contrasts in both direct and cross-spousal effects. Our results suggest that women gain more time stress relief from WFH than men do. Short hours WFH was associated with higher subjective time stress for both men and women, but only women reported lower time stress when they did more than 60% of their paid work at home (partially supporting H3 and H3a). As expected, cross-spousal effects of WFH on time allocation and subjective time stress were stronger for women than men (H4). Men’s subjective time pressure was largely unaffected by their spouse’s WFH arrangements, consistent with prior research showing women are more sensitive to their male partner’s work conditions than vice versa (Doan, Leach and Strazdins 2025; Goldin, 2014; Offer and Schneider 2011). Our results suggest that levels of time stress for men are shaped by workplace demands, whereas women’s time stress is more closely linked to household demands.

## **5. Conclusion**

Over time, gender convergence in paid and unpaid work has largely been driven by women, with changes in male behaviour much more limited (England et al 2020). However, women cannot unilaterally shift couples and workplaces towards full equality, which makes it important to identify

domestic mechanisms and workplace policies that can also engender change among men. In this study, we investigated the potential of WFH to contribute to such change. Overall, our findings suggest that most couples engage in WFH for only a small proportion of their paid hours, and in these cases, WFH does not narrow gender gaps. Similarly, women working high proportions of their time at home tends to reinforce traditional labor shares. So, most WFH generally has neutral or even widening effects on gendered divisions of labor, suggesting that WFH alone is unlikely to “undo gender” by substantially increasing men’s contributions to domestic work within couples (Deutsch, 2007; Risman, 2009).

However, when *men* perform a high proportion of their paid work at home, couples experience modest gains in equality in unpaid labor, and women report reductions in subjective time pressure. Long-hours WFH is not a widespread arrangement among Australian couples, especially for men, and it likely reflects the choices of a select group who have greater autonomy over their work, such as the self-employed, senior employees, or those with highly flexible jobs. Even so, given the persistence of gendered labor patterns within couples (Alipour, 2025; Petts et al 2023), incremental changes in men’s behavior that promote even modest convergence are noteworthy, as they provide potential leverage points for policies and interventions aimed at fostering gender equity in couples’ labor allocation.

## References

- Acker, J. (2006). Inequality regimes: Gender, class, and race in organizations. *Gender & society*, 20(4), 441-464. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243206289499>
- Alipour, J. V. (2025). Does Remote Work Reinforce Gender Gaps in (Un) Paid Labor? CESifo Working Papers ISSN 2364-1428 <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5384074>
- Arwin, A., Ivone, I., Supriyanto, S., & Sari, R. A. (2021). The effect of work from home on work life balance and work stress on female workers. *Enrichment: Journal of Management*, 12(1), 317-320. <https://doi.org/10.35335/enrichment.v12i1.223>
- Baxter, J., Budinski, M., & Stevens, E. (2024). Take-up of parental leave pay and dad and partner pay among Australian parents. Australian Institute of Family Studies
- Brines, J. (1994). Economic dependency, gender, and the division of labor at home. *American Journal of sociology*, 100(3), 652-688. <https://doi.org/10.1086/230577>
- Cass, B. (2024). Rewards for women's work. In *Women, Social Science and Public Policy* (pp. 67-94). Routledge.
- Charlesworth, S., & Macdonald, F. (2015). Women, work and industrial relations in Australia in 2014. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 57(3), 366-382. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022185615571979>
- Chung, H. (2022). *The flexibility paradox: Why flexible working leads to (self-) exploitation*. Policy Press.
- Churchill, B., & Craig, L. (2022). Men's and women's changing attitudes towards fatherhood and working fathers in Australia. *Current Sociology*, 70(6), 943-963. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00113921211012737>

- Coltrane, S. (2000). Research on household labor: Modeling and measuring the social embeddedness of routine family work. *Journal of Marriage and family*, 62(4), 1208-1233. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.01208.x>
- Coron, C., & Garbe, E. (2023). Deviation from the ideal worker norm and lower career success expectations: A “men's issue” too? *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 144, 103892. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2023.103892>
- Craig, L. (2020). Coronavirus, domestic labour and care: Gendered roles locked down. *Journal of Sociology*, 56(4), 684-692. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783320942413>
- Craig, L., & Brown, J. E. (2017). Feeling rushed: Gendered time quality, work hours, nonstandard work schedules, and spousal crossover. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 79(1), 225-242. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12320>
- Craig, L. & Churchill, B. (2021a). “Working and Caring at Home: Gender Differences in the Effects of COVID-19 on Paid and Unpaid Labor in Australia.” *Feminist Economics* 27(1–2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2020.1831039>
- Craig, L., & Churchill, B. (2021b). Dual-earner parent couples’ work and care during COVID-19. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28, 66-79. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12497>
- Craig, L., & Powell, A. (2012). Dual-earner parents’ work-family time: the effects of atypical work patterns and non-parental childcare. *Journal of Population Research*, 29(3), 229-247. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12546-012-9086-5>
- Craig, L., Mooi-Reci, I., & Zilio, F. (2026) Working From Home and Gendered Labour Time: COVID-19’s Ongoing Impact. *Melbourne Institute Working Paper No. 12/26* <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.7274781>

Craig, L., Ravn, S., Churchill, B., & Valenzuela, M. R. (2024). A matter of time? Institutional timescapes and gendered inequalities in the transition from education to employment in Australia. *Journal of Sociology*, 60(1), 209-228. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14407833221135220>

Deutsch, F. M. (2007). Undoing gender. *Gender & society*, 21(1), 106-127. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243206293577>

Doan, T., Leach, L., & Strazdins, L. (2025). The Economic Costs of Men's Long Work Hours for Women: Evidence on the Gender Wage Earnings Gap from Australia and Germany. *Social Indicators Research*, 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-025-03647-1>

England, P., Levine, A., & Mishel, E. (2020). Progress toward gender equality in the United States has slowed or stalled. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 117(13), 6990-6997. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1918891117>

Fan W & Moen P (2023) 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(1): 152–171. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00221465221150283>

Fan, W., & Moen, P. (2025). The future (s) of work? Disparities around changing job conditions when remote/hybrid or returning to working at work. *Work and Occupations*, 52(1), 91-129. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07308884231203668>

Foley, M., Baird, M., Cooper, R., & Williamson, S. (2018). Is independence really an opportunity? The experience of entrepreneur-mothers. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 25(2), 313-329. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-10-2017-0306>

Goldin, C. (2014). A grand gender convergence: Its last chapter. *American economic review*, 104(4), 1091-1119. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1257/aer.104.4.1091>

Greenstein, T. N. (2000). Economic dependence, gender, and the division of labor in the home: A replication and extension. *Journal of Marriage and family*, 62(2), 322-335.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00322.x>

Grigoryeva, A. (2017). Own gender, sibling's gender, parent's gender: The division of elderly parent care among adult children. *American Sociological Review*, 82(1), 116-146.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416686521>

Haney, T. J., & Barber, K. (2022). 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(S1), 26-47. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cars.12391>

Hilbrecht, M., Shaw, S. M., Johnson, L. C., & Andrey, J. (2008). 'I'm home for the kids': contradictory implications for work-life balance of teleworking mothers. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 15(5), 454-476. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2008.00413.x>

Hook, J. L. (2010). Gender inequality in the welfare state: Sex segregation in housework, 1965–2003. *American journal of sociology*, 115(5), 1480-1523. <https://doi.org/10.1086/651384>

Kolovos, B. (2025) <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/aug/02/victoria-work-from-home-two-days-a-week-law-jacinta-allan-labor-party-state-conference>

Laß, I., & Wooden, M. (2023). Working from home and work-family conflict. *Work, Employment and Society*, 37(1), 176-195 <https://doi.org/10.1177/09500170221082474>

Laß, I., Vera-Toscano, E., & Wooden, M. (2025). Working from home, COVID-19, and job satisfaction. *ILR Review*, 78(2), 330-354. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00197939241301704>

Laß, I., & Wooden, M. (2025). Working From Home: The Australian Experience. *Australian Economic Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8462.70010>

Lee, D., & Craig, L. (2025). Australian Parental Leave Policy, Employers' Cognitive Bias, and Mothers' Wages: Penalty or Premium?. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 32(5), 1771-1785. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.13216>

- Lewis, J. (2009). Work–family balance, gender and policy. In *Work–Family Balance, Gender and Policy*. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781848447400>
- Lozano, M., Hamplová, D., & Le Bourdais, C. (2016). Non-standard work schedules, gender, and parental stress. *Demographic Research*, 34, 259-284.  
<https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2016.34.9>
- Meraviglia, C., & Dudka, A. (2021). The gendered division of unpaid labor during the Covid-19 crisis: did anything change? Evidence from Italy. *International Journal of Sociology*, 51(1), 64-75. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00207659.2020.1832346>
- Mooi-Reci, I. & Wooden, M. (2025). Working from Home and the Consequences for Labour Turnover and Career Progression. *Melbourne Institute Working Paper No. 01/25*.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5198934>
- National Australia Bank (NAB) (2025) NAB Australian Wellbeing Survey Q2-2025  
<https://news.nab.com.au/content/dam/nab-news/documents/economics/nab-australian-wellbeing-survey-q2-2025.pdf>
- Orešković, T., Milošević, M., Košir, B. K., Horvat, D., Glavaš, T., Sadarić, A., ... & Orešković, S. (2023). Associations of working from home with job satisfaction, work-life balance, and working-model preferences. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1258750.  
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1258750>
- Offer, S., & Schneider, B. (2011). Revisiting the gender gap in time-use patterns: Multitasking and well-being among mothers and fathers in dual-earner families. *American sociological review*, 76(6), 809-833. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122411425170>

Offer, S., & Kaplan, D. (2021). The “new father” between ideals and practices: New masculinity ideology, gender role attitudes, and fathers’ involvement in childcare. *Social problems*, 68(4), 986-1009 <https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spab015>

Parry, A. (2025). The flexibility paradox and spatial-temporal dimensions of COVID-19 remote work adaptation among dual-earner mothers and fathers. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 32(1), 15-36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.13130>

Petts, R. J., Carlson, D. L., & Pepin, J. R. (2021). A gendered pandemic: Childcare, homeschooling, and parents' employment during COVID-19. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28, 515-534. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12614>

Petts, R. J., André, S., Carlson, D. L., Chung, H., Milkie, M. A., Remery, C., ... & Yerkes, M. A. (2023). Fathers stepping up? A cross-national comparison of fathers’ domestic labor and parents’ satisfaction with the division of domestic labor during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Family Studies*, 29(6), 2650-2679.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2023.2181849>

Powell, A., & Craig, L. (2015). Gender differences in working at home and time use patterns: Evidence from Australia. *Work, employment and society*, 29(4), 571-589. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017014568140>

Risman, B. J. (2009). From doing to undoing: Gender as we know it. *Gender & society*, 23(1), 81-84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243208326874>

Steinmetz, S., Vandecasteele, L., Lebert, F., Voorpostel, M., & Lipps, O. (2022). The gendered consequences of the COVID-19 lockdown on unpaid work in Swiss dual earner couples with children. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 29(6), 2034-2051.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12875>

Stewart, M. (2022). *Tax and Government in the 21st Century*. Cambridge University Press.

Sullivan, C., & Lewis, S. (2001). Home-based telework, gender, and the synchronization of work and family: perspectives of teleworkers and their co-residents. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 8(2), 123-145. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0432.00125>

Sullivan, Oriel. "The gendered division of household labor." In *Handbook of the Sociology of Gender*, pp. 377-392. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-76333-0\\_27](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-76333-0_27)

Summerfield, M., Garrard, B., Kamath, R., Macalalad, N., Nesa, M. K., Watson, N., Wilkins, R., & Wooden, M. (2024). HILDA user manual – Release 23. Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, University of Melbourne. <https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/hilda/for-data-users/user-manuals>

Tanquerel, S., & Santistevan, D. (2022). Unravelling the work–life policies puzzle: How the ‘ideal worker’ norm shapes perceptions of policies legitimacy and use. *Relations industrielles/Industrial Relations*, 77(2). <https://doi.org/10.7202/1091590ar>

Tarrant, A., Ladlow, L., & Way, L. (2025). ‘Being there’ as providers and caregivers: caring masculinities in parenting and partnering among young fathers in the UK. In *Caring Fathers in the Global Context* (pp. 175-194). Policy Press.

<https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447372448.ch010>

Tai, T. O., & Baxter, J. (2018). Perceptions of fairness and housework disagreement: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Family Issues*, 39(8), 2461-2485.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X18758346>

- Thébaud, S., & Pedulla, D. S. (2022). When do work-family policies work? Unpacking the effects of stigma and financial costs for men and women. *Work and Occupations*, 49(2), 229-263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07308884211069914>
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (2009). Accounting for doing gender. *Gender & Society*, 23(1), 112-122. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243208326529>
- Williams, J. (2001). *Unbending gender: Why family and work conflict and what to do about it*. Oxford University Press.
- Williamson, S., Taylor, H., & Weeratunga, V. (2024). Working from home during COVID-19: What does this mean for the ideal worker norm? *Gender, Work & Organization*, 31(2), 456-471. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.13081>
- Wood, D., Griffiths, K., & Emslie, O. (2020). *Cheaper childcare: A practical plan to boost female workforce participation*. Grattan Institute.
- Wooden, M., Watson, N., & Butterworth, P. (2024). Data resource profile: Household, Income and Labor Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 53(2), dyae043. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ije/dyae043>

## Appendix

**Table A.1 Descriptive statistics. Socio-economic characteristics.**

| WFH intensity                          | Sex  |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|----------------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                                        | W    | M    | W    | M     | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    |
|                                        | No   | No   | No   | <60%  | No   | ≥60% | <60% | No   | <60% | <60% | <60% | ≥60% | ≥60% | No   | ≥60% | <60% | ≥60% | ≥60% |
|                                        | (1)  |      | (2)  |       | (3)  |      | (4)  |      | (5)  |      | (6)  |      | (7)  |      | (8)  |      | (9)  |      |
| Age                                    | 39.0 | 41.0 | 41.8 | 43.9  | 43.1 | 45.5 | 40.7 | 42.4 | 42.6 | 44.6 | 43.9 | 46.0 | 41.4 | 43.2 | 43.6 | 45.9 | 43.5 | 45.5 |
| Health (%)                             |      |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| No disability                          | .84  | .85  | .85  | .84   | .84  | .79  | .84  | .84  | .84  | .84  | .86  | .83  | .84  | .87  | .85  | .87  | .79  | .85  |
| Mild disability                        | .08  | .09  | 0.08 | .09   | .07  | .09  | .07  | .09  | .07  | .09  | .07  | .10  | .07  | .07  | .06  | .07  | .08  | .07  |
| Moderate disability                    | .08  | .07  | 0.08 | .08   | .08  | .12  | .08  | .07  | .08  | .07  | .07  | .07  | .09  | .06  | .09  | .07  | .13  | .08  |
| Severe disability                      | .00  | .00  | 0.00 | .00   | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .03  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  |
| Employment arrangement (%)             |      |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Permanent full-time                    | .39  | .69  | .34  | 0.537 | .34  | .38  | .49  | .68  | .46  | .56  | .48  | .40  | .23  | .64  | .16  | .32  | .32  | .48  |
| Permanent part-time                    | .29  | .04  | .32  | 0.017 | .33  | .03  | .18  | .05  | .18  | .02  | .17  | .03  | .17  | .05  | .16  | .02  | .17  | .03  |
| Fixed-Term                             | .09  | .07  | .10  | 0.073 | .10  | .05  | .11  | .07  | .12  | .08  | .10  | .06  | .06  | .06  | .05  | .04  | .08  | .05  |
| Casual employee                        | .20  | .11  | .17  | 0.022 | .17  | .02  | .07  | .09  | .06  | .02  | .08  | .04  | .08  | .07  | .05  | .02  | .05  | .02  |
| Other employee                         | .00  | .00  | .00  | 0.001 | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .00  |
| Self-Employed                          | .03  | .08  | .06  | 0.351 | .06  | .52  | .15  | .11  | .18  | .32  | .17  | .47  | .46  | .19  | .58  | .61  | .37  | .42  |
| Years with current employer            | 6.0  | 7.6  | 6.7  | 10.0  | 6.9  | 9.7  | 7.9  | 8.1  | 8.7  | 9.9  | 7.0  | 8.6  | 7.2  | 8.6  | 8.7  | 11.6 | 7.9  | 9.7  |
| Occupation (%)                         |      |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Managers                               | .08  | .14  | .08  | .30   | .08  | .29  | .20  | .18  | .20  | .33  | .22  | .26  | .14  | .20  | .18  | .37  | .21  | .40  |
| Professionals                          | .25  | .18  | .33  | .32   | .43  | .45  | .52  | .21  | .56  | .39  | .57  | .57  | .33  | .18  | .28  | .26  | .44  | .44  |
| Technicians and Trades Workers         | .05  | .24  | .05  | .18   | .05  | .14  | .02  | .23  | .02  | .12  | .04  | .08  | .04  | .24  | .04  | .20  | .03  | .05  |
| Community and Personal Service Workers | .18  | .08  | .16  | .04   | .15  | .03  | .07  | .08  | .05  | .03  | .04  | .02  | .14  | .07  | .07  | .02  | .04  | .03  |
| Clerical and Administrative Workers    | .25  | .08  | .26  | .04   | .20  | .05  | .14  | .08  | .12  | .04  | .12  | .04  | .29  | .07  | .41  | .02  | .24  | .05  |

(continue)

| WFH intensity                                          | Sex |     |     |      |     |      |      |     |       |      |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |      |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|------|-----|-------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|
|                                                        | W   | M   | W   | M    | W   | M    | W    | M   | W     | M    | W    | M    | W    | M   | W    | M    | W    | M    |
|                                                        | No  | No  | No  | <60% | No  | ≥60% | <60% | No  | <60%  | <60% | <60% | ≥60% | ≥60% | No  | ≥60% | <60% | ≥60% | ≥60% |
|                                                        | (1) |     | (2) |      | (3) |      | (4)  |     | (5)   |      | (6)  |      | (7)  |     | (8)  |      | (9)  |      |
| <i>Sales Workers</i>                                   | .10 | .04 | .07 | .04  | .06 | .03  | .04  | .04 | .04   | .04  | .02  | .02  | .04  | .03 | .02  | .02  | .03  | .03  |
| <i>Machinery Operators and Drivers</i>                 | .01 | .13 | .01 | .03  | .00 | .00  | .00  | .12 | .00   | .02  | .00  | .00  | .00  | .13 | .00  | .06  | .00  | .00  |
| <i>Labourers</i>                                       | .07 | .10 | .04 | .05  | .03 | .01  | .02  | .06 | .02   | .04  | .00  | .01  | .01  | .09 | .00  | .04  | .00  | .01  |
| <b>Industry (%)</b>                                    |     |     |     |      |     |      |      |     |       |      |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |      |
| <i>Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing</i>               | .01 | .02 | .00 | .03  | .01 | .09  | .01  | .02 | .02   | .03  | .01  | .06  | .03  | .02 | .07  | .08  | .07  | .08  |
| <i>Mining</i>                                          | .01 | .04 | .01 | .02  | .00 | .00  | .01  | .03 | .01   | .02  | .01  | .02  | .00  | .03 | .00  | .01  | .01  | .01  |
| <i>Manufacturing</i>                                   | .05 | .14 | .03 | .08  | .03 | .09  | .03  | .13 | .03   | .08  | .03  | .08  | .05  | .11 | .06  | .07  | .07  | .07  |
| <i>Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services</i>      | .00 | .02 | .00 | .01  | .00 | .01  | .00  | .02 | .00   | .01  | .00  | .01  | .01  | .01 | .00  | .00  | .01  | .01  |
| <i>Construction</i>                                    | .01 | .14 | .01 | .18  | .01 | .03  | .02  | .13 | .02   | .13  | .01  | .02  | .06  | .22 | .14  | .26  | .03  | .04  |
| <i>Wholesale Trade</i>                                 | .02 | .04 | .02 | .06  | .01 | .05  | .02  | .05 | .02   | .05  | .01  | .05  | .02  | .04 | .02  | .03  | .04  | .06  |
| <i>Retail Trade</i>                                    | .13 | .07 | .09 | .05  | .06 | .03  | .05  | .06 | .04   | .03  | .04  | .03  | .04  | .05 | .03  | .01  | .03  | .04  |
| <i>Accommodation and Food Services</i>                 | .06 | .03 | .04 | .02  | .03 | .01  | .02  | .02 | .03   | .02  | .01  | .00  | .01  | .02 | .02  | .01  | .02  | .02  |
| <i>Transport, Postal and Warehousing</i>               | .03 | .08 | .02 | .04  | .02 | .01  | .01  | .08 | .01   | .02  | .01  | .02  | .02  | .07 | .03  | .05  | .02  | .02  |
| <i>Information Media and Telecommunications</i>        | .02 | .01 | .02 | .03  | .01 | .05  | .02  | .01 | 0.023 | .02  | .02  | .05  | .01  | .01 | .02  | .02  | .03  | .05  |
| <i>Financial and Insurance Services</i>                | .04 | .03 | .05 | .04  | .02 | .08  | .04  | .03 | 0.052 | .05  | .04  | .07  | .09  | .03 | .05  | .05  | .09  | .13  |
| <i>Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services</i>         | .01 | .01 | .01 | .01  | .02 | .01  | .02  | .01 | .01   | .03  | .01  | .02  | .03  | .02 | .02  | .02  | .02  | .02  |
| <i>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</i> | .06 | .06 | .07 | .12  | .05 | .27  | .10  | .07 | .11   | .13  | .15  | .32  | .18  | .06 | .19  | .13  | 0.21 | .25  |

(continue)

| WFH intensity                              | Sex            |                |                |                  |                |                  |                  |                |                  |                   |                   |                   |                   |                 |                   |                   |                   |                   |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                                            | W<br>No<br>(1) | M<br>No<br>(2) | W<br>No<br>(3) | M<br><60%<br>(4) | W<br>No<br>(5) | M<br>≥60%<br>(6) | W<br><60%<br>(7) | M<br>No<br>(8) | W<br><60%<br>(9) | M<br><60%<br>(10) | W<br><60%<br>(11) | M<br>≥60%<br>(12) | W<br>≥60%<br>(13) | M<br>No<br>(14) | W<br>≥60%<br>(15) | M<br><60%<br>(16) | W<br>≥60%<br>(17) | M<br>≥60%<br>(18) |
| <i>Administrative and Support Services</i> | .03            | .02            | .04            | .04              | .03            | .01              | .03              | .03            | .03              | .03               | .02               | .02               | .07               | .04             | .04               | .03               | .03               | .03               |
| <i>Public Administration and Safety</i>    | .07            | .11            | .07            | .08              | .07            | .06              | .06              | .11            | .05              | .06               | .04               | .04               | .05               | .09             | .04               | .06               | .07               | .06               |
| <i>Education and Training</i>              | .11            | .04            | .17            | .12              | .20            | .05              | .35              | .07            | .37              | .19               | .35               | .08               | .10               | .04             | .10               | .06               | .11               | .06               |
| <i>Health Care and Social Assistance</i>   | .30            | .07            | .30            | .04              | .37            | .05              | .16              | .06            | .13              | .04               | .18               | .03               | .17               | .08             | .09               | .04               | .09               | .02               |
| <i>Arts and Recreation Services</i>        | .01            | .02            | .01            | .01              | .01            | .03              | .01              | .01            | .01              | .01               | .01               | .02               | .01               | .03             | .02               | .02               | .01               | .01               |
| <i>Other Services</i>                      | .03            | .04            | .03            | .03              | .03            | .08              | .03              | .04            | .03              | .03               | .04               | .05               | .06               | .04             | .07               | .03               | .05               | .03               |
| <b>Household Income (\$/year)</b>          | 144587         |                | 159058         |                  | 157185         |                  | 166170           |                | 190331           |                   | 179323            |                   | 155695            |                 | 178583            |                   | 186069            |                   |
| <b>Labour Earnings (\$/year)</b>           | 58530          | 97478          | 61767          | 116140           | 70422          | 99417            | 84471            | 106210         | 92616            | 128268            | 94896             | 108299            | 64218             | 109266          | 70208             | 118463            | 85611             | 130429            |
| <b>Adults in the household</b>             | 2.48           |                | 2.51           |                  | 2.50           |                  | 2.46             |                | 2.50             |                   | 2.44              |                   | 2.43              |                 | 2.48              |                   | 2.38              |                   |
| <b>Dependent Children</b>                  | 0.93           |                | 1.10           |                  | 1.01           |                  | 1.10             |                | 1.26             |                   | 1.14              |                   | 1.18              |                 | 1.30              |                   | 1.07              |                   |
| <b>Age Youngest Child</b>                  | 8.36           |                | 9.15           |                  | 9.25           |                  | 8.43             |                | 8.66             |                   | 8.89              |                   | 7.16              |                 | 7.69              |                   | 8.06              |                   |
| <b>Number of bedrooms</b>                  | 3.36           |                | 3.54           |                  | 3.55           |                  | 3.45             |                | 3.59             |                   | 3.66              |                   | 3.53              |                 | 3.76              |                   | 3.52              |                   |
| <b>Job-stress indicators</b>               |                |                |                |                  |                |                  |                  |                |                  |                   |                   |                   |                   |                 |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| <i>Stress at work</i>                      | 3.20           | 3.20           | 3.22           | 3.57             | 3.25           | 3.31             | 3.88             | 3.21           | 3.79             | 3.64              | 3.80              | 3.33              | 3.10              | 3.27            | 2.86              | 3.53              | 3.20              | 3.41              |

(continue)

| WFH intensity                                      | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    | W    | M    |
|----------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                                                    | No   | No   | No   | <60% | No   | ≥60% | <60% | No   | <60% | <60% | <60% | ≥60% | ≥60% | No   | ≥60% | <60% | ≥60% | ≥60% |
|                                                    | (1)  |      | (2)  |      | (3)  |      | (4)  |      | (5)  |      | (6)  |      | (7)  |      | (8)  |      | (9)  |      |
| <i>Fear of becoming ill because of work</i>        | 2.42 | 2.48 | 2.40 | 2.75 | 2.51 | 2.51 | 2.92 | 2.45 | 2.91 | 2.81 | 3.00 | 2.58 | 2.35 | 2.49 | 2.11 | 2.65 | 2.39 | 2.55 |
| <i>Job security</i>                                | 5.19 | 5.06 | 5.20 | 5.14 | 5.27 | 4.81 | 5.37 | 5.08 | 5.33 | 5.11 | 5.08 | 4.75 | 5.04 | 5.09 | 5.22 | 5.21 | 5.06 | 5.11 |
| <i>Confidence in the future of the company</i>     | 6.02 | 5.82 | 6.06 | 5.82 | 6.14 | 5.58 | 6.15 | 5.84 | 6.12 | 5.90 | 6.02 | 5.48 | 5.55 | 5.81 | 5.58 | 5.71 | 5.73 | 5.80 |
| <i>Worries for the future of the job</i>           | 2.77 | 3.05 | 2.73 | 3.03 | 2.75 | 3.21 | 2.83 | 2.99 | 2.85 | 3.12 | 2.88 | 3.20 | 2.89 | 2.99 | 2.64 | 2.90 | 2.87 | 2.98 |
| <i>Working fast</i>                                | 5.14 | 4.92 | 5.09 | 5.20 | 5.20 | 4.90 | 5.31 | 4.95 | 5.28 | 5.28 | 5.18 | 4.96 | 4.85 | 5.02 | 4.47 | 5.27 | 4.70 | 4.91 |
| <i>Work intensely</i>                              | 4.76 | 4.76 | 4.88 | 5.20 | 5.02 | 4.98 | 5.43 | 4.80 | 5.42 | 5.30 | 5.32 | 4.89 | 4.73 | 4.85 | 4.36 | 5.21 | 4.67 | 4.89 |
| <i>Not having enough time to do all the work</i>   | 4.09 | 4.03 | 4.20 | 4.64 | 4.23 | 4.29 | 5.04 | 4.12 | 5.09 | 4.81 | 5.04 | 4.46 | 4.02 | 4.05 | 3.65 | 4.53 | 4.06 | 4.34 |
| <b>Job-type indicators</b>                         |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| <i>Fair pay</i>                                    | 4.61 | 4.63 | 4.63 | 4.79 | 4.59 | 4.70 | 4.67 | 4.64 | 4.69 | 4.72 | 4.68 | 4.79 | 4.89 | 4.77 | 5.22 | 4.97 | 4.90 | 4.92 |
| <i>Complex job</i>                                 | 3.82 | 4.26 | 3.98 | 4.91 | 4.17 | 4.80 | 4.87 | 4.41 | 4.78 | 5.04 | 4.85 | 4.88 | 3.99 | 4.38 | 3.73 | 4.83 | 4.07 | 4.91 |
| <i>Job that requires new skills to learn</i>       | 4.59 | 4.65 | 4.62 | 5.04 | 4.74 | 4.97 | 5.31 | 4.67 | 5.23 | 5.14 | 5.24 | 5.01 | 4.62 | 4.58 | 4.29 | 4.88 | 4.54 | 4.93 |
| <i>Use of own skills</i>                           | 5.31 | 5.35 | 5.40 | 5.71 | 5.54 | 5.69 | 5.86 | 5.36 | 5.82 | 5.76 | 5.82 | 5.68 | 5.41 | 5.45 | 5.24 | 5.75 | 5.36 | 5.63 |
| <i>Freedom in how to work</i>                      | 4.29 | 4.62 | 4.39 | 5.48 | 4.44 | 5.73 | 5.15 | 4.74 | 5.18 | 5.50 | 5.22 | 5.74 | 5.54 | 4.77 | 5.87 | 5.72 | 5.56 | 5.72 |
| <i>Having a lot of say on what happens at work</i> | 3.90 | 4.35 | 3.98 | 5.32 | 4.01 | 5.45 | 4.79 | 4.46 | 4.82 | 5.32 | 4.72 | 5.37 | 5.10 | 4.51 | 5.41 | 5.73 | 5.07 | 5.39 |
| <i>Freedom in when to work</i>                     | 3.24 | 3.51 | 3.32 | 4.70 | 3.38 | 5.40 | 3.99 | 3.68 | 4.05 | 4.61 | 4.10 | 5.39 | 5.23 | 3.73 | 5.76 | 5.08 | 5.18 | 5.34 |
| <i>Choice of what to do at work</i>                | 3.32 | 3.71 | 3.43 | 4.79 | 3.43 | 5.03 | 4.25 | 3.86 | 4.30 | 4.73 | 4.28 | 5.04 | 4.70 | 3.93 | 5.07 | 5.16 | 4.76 | 5.01 |
| <i>Time flexibility</i>                            | 3.87 | 3.94 | 3.88 | 4.95 | 3.78 | 5.71 | 4.26 | 4.06 | 4.29 | 4.88 | 4.30 | 5.77 | 5.57 | 4.07 | 6.00 | 5.32 | 5.55 | 5.66 |
| <i>Freedom to take a break</i>                     | 4.29 | 4.75 | 4.41 | 5.51 | 4.41 | 6.05 | 4.62 | 4.95 | 4.68 | 5.46 | 4.94 | 6.03 | 5.79 | 4.90 | 6.19 | 5.79 | 5.91 | 6.02 |

| <b>WFH intensity</b>                          | <b>W</b><br>No | <b>M</b><br>No | <b>W</b><br>No | <b>M</b><br><60% | <b>W</b><br>No | <b>M</b><br>≥60% | <b>W</b><br><60% | <b>M</b><br>No | <b>W</b><br><60% | <b>M</b><br><60% | <b>W</b><br><60% | <b>M</b><br>≥60% | <b>W</b><br>≥60% | <b>M</b><br>No | <b>W</b><br>≥60% | <b>M</b><br><60% | <b>W</b><br>≥60% | <b>M</b><br>≥60% |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                               | (1)            |                | (2)            |                  | (3)            |                  | (4)              |                | (5)              |                  | (6)              |                  | (7)              |                | (8)              |                  | (9)              |                  |
| <i>Routinary job</i>                          | 4.88           | 4.64           | 4.68           | 4.21             | 4.51           | 4.11             | 4.22             | 4.49           | 4.01             | 4.11             | 3.94             | 3.92             | 4.68             | 4.52           | 4.60             | 4.13             | 4.29             | 4.10             |
| <i>Variety of things to do at work</i>        | 4.60           | 4.67           | 4.75           | 5.29             | 5.03           | 5.28             | 5.34             | 4.75           | 5.37             | 5.33             | 5.34             | 5.28             | 4.83             | 4.83           | 4.78             | 5.43             | 5.03             | 5.21             |
| <i>Requirement to take initiative at work</i> | 5.44           | 5.45           | 5.53           | 6.01             | 5.70           | 5.98             | 6.09             | 5.54           | 6.04             | 6.01             | 5.98             | 5.92             | 5.75             | 5.54           | 5.68             | 6.11             | 5.71             | 5.91             |

Notes: Household income is at 2023 prices. The job stress and job type indicators measure to which extent the respondent agrees to a series of statements regarding the job and the workplace. They are measured on a scale that ranges from 1 to 7 where 7 indicates full agreement

**Table A.2 Couple configurations of work from home and men's and women's individual time use.**

| Time Use (hrs/week)              |            | Paid Work<br>Women<br>(1)  | Paid Work<br>Men<br>(2)   | Unpaid Work<br>Women<br>(3) | Unpaid Work<br>Men<br>(4) | Commuting<br>Women<br>(5)  | Commuting<br>Men<br>(6)    |
|----------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Couple WFH configurations</b> |            |                            |                           |                             |                           |                            |                            |
| <b>Women</b>                     | <b>Men</b> |                            |                           |                             |                           |                            |                            |
| No                               | No         | -                          | -                         | -                           | -                         | -                          | -                          |
| No                               | <60%       | 0.29<br>(-0.06; 0.63)      | 0.80***<br>(0.45; 1.15)   | -0.10<br>(-0.75; 0.54)      | -0.13<br>(-0.56; 0.30)    | 0.02<br>(-0.11; 0.14)      | 0.32***<br>(0.16; 0.48)    |
| No                               | ≥60%       | -0.20<br>(-0.94; 0.54)     | -1.09**<br>(-1.96; -0.23) | 0.66<br>(-0.73; 2.06)       | 2.46***<br>(1.37; 3.55)   | -0.15<br>(-0.44; 0.14)     | -2.40***<br>(-2.76; -2.04) |
| <60%                             | No         | 1.30***<br>(0.91; 1.69)    | 0.01<br>(-0.36; 0.38)     | 0.21<br>(-0.48; 0.90)       | -0.14<br>(-0.62; 0.33)    | -0.02<br>(-0.16; 0.13)     | 0.18**<br>(0.03; 0.32)     |
| <60%                             | <60%       | 1.13***<br>(0.64; 1.62)    | 0.95***<br>(0.47; 1.44)   | 0.46<br>(-0.40; 1.31)       | 0.14<br>(-0.46; 0.75)     | -0.07<br>(-0.25; 0.11)     | 0.17*<br>(-0.03; 0.36)     |
| <60%                             | ≥60%       | 0.94*<br>(-0.14; 2.02)     | -1.22**<br>(-2.44; -0.00) | 1.50*<br>(-0.23; 3.24)      | 3.28***<br>(1.99; 4.57)   | -0.65***<br>(-0.99; -0.32) | -2.45***<br>(-2.90; -2.00) |
| ≥60%                             | No         | -0.26<br>(-1.05; 0.53)     | 0.23<br>(-0.37; 0.82)     | 3.74***<br>(2.53; 4.94)     | -0.46<br>(-1.24; 0.33)    | -2.28***<br>(-2.54; -2.02) | 0.19<br>(-0.04; 0.42)      |
| ≥60%                             | <60%       | -1.61***<br>(-2.47; -0.75) | 0.74*<br>(-0.02; 1.51)    | 4.14***<br>(2.63; 5.65)     | -0.03<br>(-0.93; 0.88)    | -2.01***<br>(-2.29; -1.73) | 0.05<br>(-0.25; 0.36)      |
| ≥60%                             | ≥60%       | -0.54<br>(-1.47; 0.40)     | -0.05<br>(-0.91; 0.81)    | 3.65***<br>(2.08; 5.22)     | 3.35***<br>(2.25; 4.46)   | -2.44***<br>(-2.75; -2.13) | -2.62***<br>(-3.00; -2.24) |
| Observations                     |            | 35,786                     | 35,786                    | 35,786                      | 35,786                    | 35,786                     | 35,786                     |

