

The influence of household division of work on wellbeing

An analysis of two-parent households with children in Europe

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Abstract

There are a multitude of different aspects that influence the wellbeing of individuals, one of them being the hours spent on paid and unpaid work. The underlying study investigates the influence of household division of paid and unpaid work in heterosexual couple-households with children in Europe on the wellbeing. We were not able to find significant results for the influence of work (either paid and/or unpaid) and the division of work on the wellbeing of the individuals. The influence of the share of total work on wellbeing was tested and provided significant results for both men and women, which however, pointed in opposite directions. While men's wellbeing is increased by a larger share of work, women's wellbeing is decreased. This may be caused by the fact that women carry out more unpaid work while men do more paid work, as shown in the descriptive data. An increase in the share of total work for women can therefore mostly be associated with an increase in the total burden of unpaid work. An increase in the share of total work for men on the other hand with paid work.

Keywords: wellbeing, division of work, paid work, unpaid work, gender, Europe

1 Introduction

In recent decades, significant changes in attitudes towards family models and the division of paid and unpaid work between men and women could be observed.¹ The declining relevance of traditional family models consisting of a male breadwinner and a female caregiver in favor of more egalitarian dual-income models (Gerhard 2015, p. 12 f.; Esping-Andersen 2016, p. 99 f.) has resulted in increased female labor force participation and a shift towards greater sharing of household and caregiving responsibilities by men and women in Europe (Mencarini & Sironi 2012, p. 203 f.). Irrespective of the positive and empowering effects this development has had on women (Mencarini & Sironi 2012, p. 203), it has also shed light on the multiple strains they are confronted with while juggling their professional life and unpaid work. While gender inequalities are decreasing, the distribution of paid and unpaid work is far from being equal. As illustrated by the ‘gender care gap’ (BMFSFJ 2019, online), unpaid work is still predominantly carried out by women (Ferrant et al. 2014, p. 2 ff.). Research suggests that this may have important implications for the wellbeing of individuals, families, and women in particular.

In consideration of the different levels of time men and women spend on paid and unpaid work in Europe, this study aims to explore the implications work and its division in households has on individual levels of wellbeing. The main interest of the present study is if and to what extent gender-based differences in wellbeing are influenced by the division of paid and unpaid work in two-parent households with children in Europe. Thus, this study explores the relationship between the extent² and the share³ of the work carried out by a person and his/her wellbeing as well as how the relationship between wellbeing and the amount of unpaid work changes when the share of unpaid work increases. Studies have found different levels of wellbeing among woman and men (Boye 2009). To take into account the different gender roles as well as to offer a glimpse on the differences in the perception of one's wellbeing when it comes to the extent

¹ Throughout the paper the term paid work will be used to refer to wage labor, while the term unpaid work functions as an umbrella term for concepts such as care work and domestic work. It thereby includes informally provided unpaid tasks such as childcare, care for the elderly, housework and homemaking. Other work, which typically does not involve payment but is also not related to the household sphere, such as volunteering, is not considered in this concept of unpaid work. The term total work refers to the sum of all paid and unpaid labor.

² Extent means the amount or hours of work

³ Share means individual or household part/portion of work

and the share of work men and women carry out, separate models for women and men have been employed. The underlying study's analysis is based on European Social Survey (ESS) data from Round 5 published in 2010.

2 The division of work, wellbeing, and gender

2.1 The Relationship between Work and Wellbeing

In accordance with macroeconomic labor supply theory, there is wide approval of the fact that work is a source of disutility or pain (as discussed in Spencer 2003, p. 235 ff.) and that disutility increases with hours of work (Bofinger 2020, p. 160 ff.). Although the concept originally focused on paid work as a source of disutility, more recent papers also point towards a connection between lower wellbeing and hours of unpaid work (Boye 2009, p. 522). Therefore, we suggest that paid as well as unpaid work can lower the wellbeing of individuals. While various factors with the power to influence wellbeing exist, we chose to explore the relevance of the absolute hours of work individuals carry out as our first hypothesis. The focus on hours of work as an impact for wellbeing in this study can be explained by the fact that they are not only easy to measure but also by its persistent actuality on inequality concerning the division of labor. The underlying assumption of our first hypothesis H1a is that the more time a person spends on paid and unpaid work combined, the more negatively one's individual wellbeing is perceived.

H1a: There is a negative linear relationship between the total amount of work carried out by a person and his/her wellbeing.

2.2 The Division of Work, Wellbeing and Gender

One cannot properly discuss the relationship between work and wellbeing without taking into account our societal structure and its development. The discussion about the private and social division of labor is a central issue in the field of gender equity. The origin of the socially lower rate of women performing paid work as well as the higher rate of women carrying out unpaid work is rooted in the traditional gender-specific division of labor. Consequently, women are confronted with various structural disadvantages (Goppel et al. 2016, p. 383). Gender gaps in labor force participation, job quality and wages also have their root in gender inequality resulting from the unequal division of unpaid work (Ferrant et al., 2014). Research on the division of paid and unpaid work in Europe has shown that despite some progress towards gender equality, women still perform a disproportionate amount of unpaid work in households with children. This unequal distribution of work has been linked to lower levels of wellbeing for women

(Mencarini & Sironi 2012, p. 216). Considering the ‘gender care gap’, not much has changed in recent years. On average, women in Germany still carry out about 50 per cent more unpaid work than men (BMFSFJ 2019, online). Research suggests that especially for women this may have important implications on individual’s wellbeing (Boye 2009, p. 522). The division of work and woman’s disproportionate share have also been shown to contribute to sex differences in depression (BMJ 2021). To explore the extent to which the partner’s share of work affects the wellbeing of individuals it is hypothesized that:

H1b: There is a negative linear relationship between the share of the total work carried out by a person in comparison to his/her partner and his/her wellbeing.

As mentioned above, separate models are analyzed for men and woman to evaluate the level of wellbeing on a gender basis.

2.3 Paid and Unpaid Work, the Division of Work, Wellbeing and Gender

Previous research has examined gender differences in wellbeing and has found a correlation between spending long hours on unpaid work within the family and experiencing lower levels of wellbeing (Boye 2009, p. 522). Since there has been a rise in women’s employment that has not fully been matched by an increase in the unpaid work carried out by men (Lewis, Campbell & Huerta 2008, p. 21), the distribution of work appears highly unequal and therefore unjust. The situation during the Covid-19 pandemic has further confirmed this inequality regarding the division of unpaid work among men and women (BMJ 2021). Taking these arguments into account, a distinct investigation of the relationship between paid and unpaid work for men and women appeared necessary. We assume that this burden of disproportionately more hours of unpaid work women face has an especially negative effect on the perceived wellbeing of women. Furthermore, we assume that this effect is enhanced the less egalitarian care work is divided between partners. Therefore, in the following it is hypothesized that the more unpaid work an individual does, the more negative his/her wellbeing is perceived.

H2: The extent of unpaid work carried out by a person negatively influences her or his wellbeing.

As discussed, the distribution of paid and unpaid work is still of significance when it comes to gender equity. Thus, a divergence in the wellbeing between women and men in relation to her or his extent and share of work is expected. In H3 it is hypothesized that the extent of the partner’s share also has an important impact on the perceived wellbeing of individuals.

H3: The negative relationship between the extent of unpaid work and wellbeing is intensified by a lower partner's share of unpaid work.

2.4 Literature review and significance

Individual wellbeing or happiness and the extent to which it is affected by gender equality is a topic of great interest in the scientific community. Studies have investigated the relationship between the extent and amount of paid and unpaid work carried out by the individual and the associated level of happiness, suggesting that gender systems are likely to have a significant impact on the wellbeing of individuals (Mencarini & Sironi 2012; Boye 2009). While the extent to which happiness, unpaid work and gender inequality play together has been of interest in various studies (Mencarini & Sironi 2012; Boye 2009), we know of no recent publications on the topic. In the light of the – after years of slow process – still apparent ‘gender care gap’, further investigation is needed in this field of study. The relevance of this article can thus partly be explained by a contribution to actuality within this field of study. Previous research has investigated the relationship of work and the level of wellbeing and happiness for example with focus on gender equality on the country level, exploring the extent to which gender equality at the country level can be made useful for understanding women's happiness at the individual level (Mencarini & Sironi 2012). Another study concentrated on the relevance of attitudes and social context when investigating the workload of the specific gender and its perceived impact on individual's levels of wellbeing (Boye 2009). The present study's research focus lies in the investigation of the impact of the relative division of labor between couples and its implications on the level of wellbeing.

3 Data, Method and Variables

3.1 Data and Method

The data used in the paper is retrieved from the European social survey (ESS) Round 5, which was first published in 2010. At present, this dataset is the most recent one available that is equipped with variables concerning the respondent's and his/her partner's time spent on housework, which are essential to our research. The data of 6,163 individuals, of whom 2,606 are female (42%) and 3,557 (58%) are male from 26 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine) is included in our analyses, Israel and Russia

were excluded due to the European focus of the underlying research. Austria had to be included into the dataset, as it was not part of the original one available on the website of the European Social Survey. The sample size varies between our regressions and ranges from 6,163 (f=2,606; m=3,557) in Model 3 to 4,414 (f=2,121; m=2,293) in Model 2. The variance in sample size can be attributed to missing values in certain independent variables and the method of index creation that was used, which only considered respondent's answers if they were available for all the variables included in the index.

The group at the center of our research are heterosexual two-parent households with children in Europe, thus the respondents included are cohabitating partners that are either employed or full-time homemakers aged 18-75 with children living at home. Therefore, non-working (paid and/or unpaid) respondents, such as students, pensioners and unemployed people were excluded as well as single-parents and childless households, since the challenges of reconciling paid and unpaid work in two-parent families with children are at the center of our examination.

We conducted several statistical analyses, all of which are OLS regressions with country fixed effects (country-dummies were used in all regression for all countries but Austria, which was used as the reference country). As the amount of paid and unpaid work differs greatly between men and women, all models are calculated separately for male and female respondents, to better account for potentially differing results between them.

3.2 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable (DV) "wellbeing", which is used in all our analyses is an unweighted additive index constructed of 3/5 of WHO-Five wellbeing-Index (I have felt cheerful and in good spirits, I have felt calm and relaxed, I have felt active and vigorous), an index developed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) that is widely used to measure psychological wellbeing. The index was expanded by two additional variables, "happy" and "stflife" that measure the level of happiness and general life satisfaction respectively. The newly constructed wellbeing index was remodeled to reflect the wellbeing of the respondents on an increasing scale from 0 to 5, where 0 translates to the lowest and 5 to the highest wellbeing. Cronbach's Alpha for the wellbeing-index in the present sample is 0.7698.

3.3 Independent Variables

The independent variable (IV) used for the analyses varies depending on the regression model. In total, four different independent variables, all of which are concerned with the extent or share of work of the respondent, will be used to measure the effect of household division of work on wellbeing. As the research is concerned with the household division of paid and unpaid work, it was necessary to create new variables in addition to the already existing ones concerned with this topic. The following sub-chapter will be dedicated to briefly introducing and explaining them.

Individual working hours (paid and unpaid) is a variable that was constructed by using two variables (wkhtot and hwwkhs) from the ESS dataset. The variable indicates the total number of hours that are spent on paid and unpaid work on a weekly basis. Answers exceeding 140 hours/week were excluded from the analysis, to prevent outliers from impacting the regression. The variable is used in the first regression (Model 1).

Individual share work (paid and unpaid), the variable used in the second regression (Model 2), presents the share of work in relation to the partner's share. The variable is calculated by using the respondent's share of total work and the total work carried out in the household. As we are dealing with percentage values here, the variable is scaled from 0 to 1, where one means that 100% of the total work carried out in the household is done by the respondent.

Hours of unpaid work is a variable that has been taken directly from the ESS dataset. The variable shows the extent of unpaid work carried out by the respondent and is employed in the third regression (Model 3).

Hours of unpaid work combined with the partner's household share of unpaid work. The fourth regression (Model 4) is being calculated by using an interaction term of the respondent's extent of unpaid work and his/her partner's share. The respondent's extent of unpaid work is directly taken from the ESS, the partner's share of unpaid work is constructed by using the total amount of unpaid work carried out in the household and the hours of unpaid work carried out by the partner.

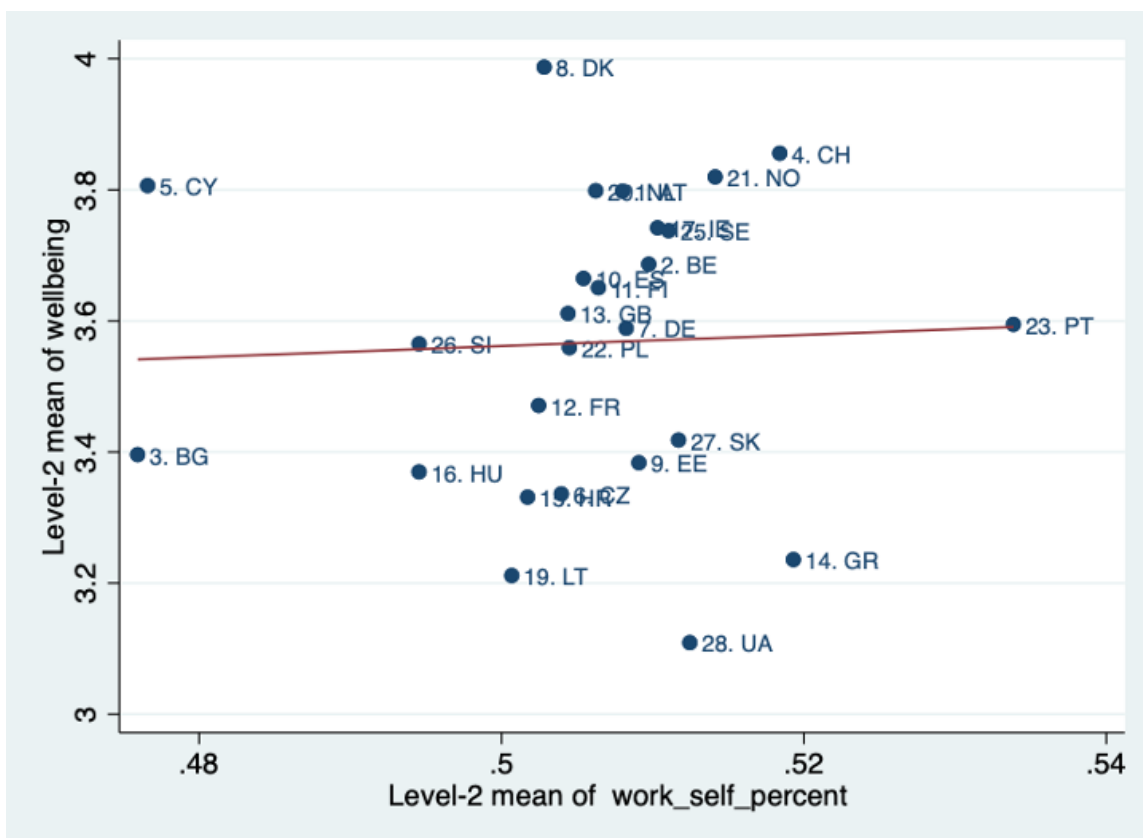
3.4 Confounding Variables

As we assume that the division of paid and unpaid work varies depending on whether the respondent is female or male, we are expecting different results in our regressions based on the

respondent's gender. To properly account for this, our OLS-regression models will be calculated separately for men and women.

Country dummies are included as control variables to account for the influence of geographic location on the wellbeing. Wellbeing is dispersed quite unevenly among European countries, ranging from the lowest mean in Ukraine to the highest average wellbeing in Denmark. With an overall mean of 3.569 and a slightly reduced value for female respondents. Austria is used as the reference country for the country dummies in all of the four regressions.

Table 1 Wellbeing and average share of work in different European countries



Education, represented by the highest level of education completed, is included as a controlling variable, as it is likely to impact the wellbeing as well as the working hours of an individual. Highest level of education is classified in 7 groups ranging from 1, less than lower secondary level to 7, higher tertiary education.

Similarly, subjective general health must be included, as a confounding factor, as it is likely that wellbeing decreases with lower subjective health. In addition to that, there is a possibility of subjective health impacting the working status and hours of individuals. The possibility of a positive correlation between working hours and subjective health is commonly known as the

“healthy worker effect” (Baillargeon 2001). To account for potential influences in one or the other side, it is vital to include the variable subjective health, which is scaled from -2 to 2, where the negative values indicate lower subjective health, and the positive values indicate higher subjective health.

To account for the influence of financial status on individual wellbeing, household income deciles are included as control variable in all of the OLS-models.

Age is included in our models as a control variable as it can be assumed that there is negative correlation of age and wellbeing.

Results and discussion

Prior to commenting on the regression analyses, the descriptive statistics presented in Table 2 will be briefly analyzed. It can be observed that the average wellbeing is quite similar among men and women with European women having a slightly lower wellbeing than men. In the sample, total working hours are also quite evenly distributed between men and women, with women performing one additional hour of work (paid/unpaid) per week on average. An interesting observation, that matches with literature dealing with the gender care gap (BMFSFJ 2019), is the uneven distribution of unpaid working hours among men and women. Female respondents spend more than double the hours of men per week for carrying out unpaid tasks. In comparison, men spend more time on paid work, however, women’s time spent on paid work is only about 10 hours less, which interestingly matches with the extra amount they spend on unpaid tasks. For all the confounding variables, including subjective health, age, income decile and education, the average for men and women is quite similar in this sample, no irregularities or peculiar observations can be made here.

For better readability, country-effects, although included through dummies in every regression, will not be displayed in the results section. The full regression output, including dummies for 25 of the 26 countries (Austria is used as the reference country), is available in the attachment section of the paper.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

Variables	min/max	Total	Female	Male
		Mean		
Wellbeing	0-5	3.569 (0.751)	3.533 (0.766)	3.596 (0.738)
Individual working hours (paid and unpaid)	0-140	53.884 (14.343)	54.480 (15.61592)	53.430 (13.27528)
Unpaid work (hours)	0-100	12.632 (10.530)	18.14014 (10.82451)	8.425943 (8.078522)
Paid work (hours)	0-130	41.383 (12.523)	36.52103 (12.14295)	45.04494 (11.5202)
Subjective health	-4	1.015 (0.769)	1.010193 (0.7685464)	1.018787 (0.7688616)
Age	19-75	42.995 (8.799)	42.05977 (8.365184)	43.70045 (9.049731)
Income decile	0-10	6.889 (2.314)	6.897179 (2.328445)	6.882416 (2.303791)
Education	1-7	4.297 (1.737)	4.438031 (1.719169)	4.19133 (1.742168)

To analyze the associations between wellbeing and the total amount of work carried out by a person, well-being is regressed for both genders on the respondent's share of total work in hours, controlling for subjective health, age, household income, level of education and country. The aim of this Model 1 is to test hypothesis H1a *“There is a negative linear relationship between the total amount of work carried out by a person and his/her wellbeing”*.

As seen in Table 3, Model 1, there is no significant relationship between wellbeing and the total amount of work carried out by a person. The total amount of work has neither negative nor positive effects on the wellbeing of both genders. Hypothesis H1a is therefore rejected and not confirmed. Nevertheless, a negative tendency between the amount of work carried out by a person and wellbeing can be assumed for women, but with a t-value of 12 per cent (not shown in the model), it no longer lies within a 90 percent confidence interval, so it may also be a coincidental correlation.

Table 3 Wellbeing and the total amount of work

Model 1

VARIABLES	wellbeing	
	female (N=2,520)	male (N=3,448)
Individual working hours (paid and unpaid)	-0.00159 (-0.00102)	0.000427 (-0.000889)
Subjective health	0.329*** (-0.0198)	0.296*** (-0.0157)
Age	-0.00146 (-0.00171)	-0.00280** (-0.0013)
Income decile	0.0320*** (-0.0068)	0.0407*** (-0.00584)
Education	-0.00258 (-0.00934)	-0.0304*** (-0.00732)
Constant	3.340*** (-0.14)	3.307*** (-0.108)
R ²	0.197	0.184

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4, Model 2 shows the result of regressing wellbeing on the share of the total work carried out by a person in comparison to his/her partner, controlling for subjective health, age, household income, level of education and country.

Model 2 tests H1b “*There is a negative linear relationship between the share of the total work carried out by a person in comparison to his/her partner and his/her wellbeing*”. This Model yields significant results for both men and women, for men within a 90 percent confidence

interval and at a higher level for women, where the results are significant within a 95 percent confidence interval. While wellbeing decreases for women as their share of the total work increases, wellbeing increases for men as their share of the total work increases. Thus, H1b is only confirmed with significance for women but rejected for men, since here, compared to women, there is a significant positive correlation between the share of the total work carried out by a person and wellbeing.

Table 4 Wellbeing and the share of the total work (in comparison to his/her partner)

Model 2

VARIABLES	wellbeing	
	female (N=2,121)	male (N=2,293)
Individual share of work (paid and unpaid)	-0.434** (-0.198)	0.345* (-0.176)
Subjective health	0.330*** (-0.0215)	0.293*** (-0.0186)
Age	0.000471 (-0.00189)	-0.00233 (0.00265)
Income decile	0.0219*** (-0.00752)	0.0336*** (0.00738)
Education	-0.00218 (.0072567)	-0.0226*** (-0.00855)
Constant	3.523*** (-0.17)	3.124*** (-0.158)
R ²	0.187	0.19

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

In Table 5, Model 3, the influence of the extent of unpaid work on the wellbeing of the respondents was analyzed to test Hypothesis 2 “*The extent of unpaid work carried out by a*

person negatively influences her or his wellbeing". Nevertheless, we were not able to find significant results pointing towards a negative correlation between the extent of unpaid work and wellbeing. The positive relationship of male unpaid work and the negative relationship of female unpaid work and wellbeing that can be observed in Model 3 could therefore also be attributable to the statistical sample. Consequently, there is no support for Hypothesis 2, that wellbeing is negatively influenced by the extent of unpaid work carried out by an individual.

Table 5 Wellbeing and hours of unpaid work

Model 3		
VARIABLES	wellbeing	
	female (N=2,606)	male (N=3,557)
Unpaid work	-0.00017 (-0.00135)	0.00192 (-0.00152)
Subjective health	0.323*** (-0.0195)	0.297*** (-0.0156)
Age	-0.00202 (-0.00169)	-0.00296** (-0.00129)
Income decile	0.0346*** (-0.00665)	0.0426*** (-0.00572)
Education	-0.000957 (-0.00922)	-0.0287*** (-0.00726)
Constant	3.266*** (-0.133)	3.292*** (-0.0987)
R ²	0.199	0.185

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 6, Model 4 shows the results of the regression of wellbeing and the interaction term of the respondent's hours of unpaid work and his/her partner's share of unpaid work. Although the relationship between wellbeing and the interaction term is only weekly significant ($p < 0,1$) for men and not significant for women, wellbeing has a tendency to increase with an increasing partner's share for both of the analyzed groups. However, for women it needs to be assumed that this effect could have also been caused by the statistical sample, as it is not significant. For men, our findings support Hypothesis 3 "*The negative relationship between the extent of unpaid work and wellbeing is intensified by a lower partner's share of unpaid work*" at $p < 0,1$, by showing that the partner's share of unpaid work impacts the perception of unpaid work and the wellbeing.

Table 6 Wellbeing, interaction term (unpaid work X partner's share of unpaid work)

VARIABLES	wellbeing	
	female	male
	(N=2,572)	(N=3,461)
Unpaid work	-0.00146 (-0.00237)	-0.00414 (-0.00478)
Partner's share of unpaid work	-0.108 (-0.133)	0.0432 (-0.0959)
IT: Unpaid work X Partner's share of unpaid work	0.00715 (-0.00731)	0.0149* (-0.00776)
Subjective health	0.329*** (-0.0196)	0.301*** (-0.0157)
Age	-0.00191 (-0.00171)	-0.00284** (-0.0013)
Income decile	0.0334*** (-0.00671)	0.0438*** (-0.00581)

Education	-0.000622	-0.0290***
	(-0.00931)	(-0.00733)
Constant	3.283***	3.209***
	(-0.141)	(-0.13)
R ²	0.2	0.187

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

4 Summary and conclusions

This study has investigated the influence of household division of work (paid, unpaid, total) on wellbeing. Explicitly, it has been investigated how wellbeing depends on the extent and the share of paid and unpaid work in two parent households with children in Europe.

The findings of this paper show, on the one hand, that women have a higher wellbeing the lower their share of total work in comparison to their partner is. On the other hand, this effect is reversed with a weaker correlation for men, who have a higher wellbeing the higher their share of total work in comparison to their partners is. This may be attributable to the fact women carry out more unpaid work while men do more paid work, as shown in the descriptive part of this study. Therefore, an increase in the share of total work for women can be associated with an increase in the total burden of unpaid work. An increase in the share of total work for men on the other hand with paid work. With regard to the research question of how the division of work in the household affects individual's wellbeing the results of the study show that neither for women nor for men there is a significant correlation between the total amount of work and the person's wellbeing. A correlation between hours of unpaid work and wellbeing could not be confirmed either. Only for men a weak correlation of the impact of the partner's share of unpaid work on wellbeing could be identified.

Since the country of residence appears to have a strong influence on wellbeing as well as on the independent variables within our models, country effects could be one of the reasons why so few significant results could be obtained. The differences between the countries of the sample can possibly be explained by country-specific labor law, the varying average of total working

time of an individual or similar socio-economic indicators which differ from country to country (OECD 2023). Another explanation for the strong country level effects could be found when looking at Mencarini and Sironi's study from 2010 in which they investigated women's differing levels of happiness across countries and the connection with inter-relationship gender inequality (Mencarini & Sironi 2012). Results of Mencarini and Sironi's study indicated that being engaged in unpaid work that "exceeds the median amount recorded in a specific country affects respondents' happiness in a negative way" (Mencarini & Sironi 2012, p. 216), meaning that women living in countries where unpaid work is usually distributed more equally feel worse if they have to carry out a disproportionate share in comparison to women in countries where women traditionally carry out a large share of unpaid work. When looking at gender inequality on a macro level, they also found that "more than 40 per cent of the variance across countries can be explained by gender inequality between men and women, considering not only the job market, but also the gender gap in education and political power" (Mencarini & Sironi 2012, p. 216).

The focus of the underlying study on how the division of work influences wellbeing naturally comes with limitations relating to the data that need to be discussed. For instance, the fact that wellbeing depends on many different factors and is not usually limited to the distribution of paid and unpaid work needs to be considered when interpreting the results. Several studies have discovered that attitudes play an important role in this context as well. For instance, heterosexual couples with egalitarian gender attitudes share housework more equally than people with traditional gender attitudes. The concept of attitudes was not included in our models due to data availability but is of great interest for further research. Furthermore, the hours spent on paid and unpaid work do not have the same meaning to everyone and the attitudes towards paid work and unpaid work of women and men can have an influence on how advantageous or disadvantageous it is to spend time on these activities as well as the social comparison of one's own working time with the number of hours others usually spend (Boye 2009). The role of grandparents and the extent to which formal childcare facilities are available in the country or region is also a non-negligible factor that potentially influences the distribution of paid and unpaid work within heterosexual couples and may differ depending on the welfare regime someone lives in (Lewis, Campbell & Huerta 2008).

For this reason, it would be beneficial for further research on this topic to include additional variables and explore the subject in further directions, if the necessary data is available. Furthermore, a breakdown of the sample into welfare regimes or other geographic or socio-economic indicators could presumably yield interesting results, as we were able to identify strong

country effects. Above all, however, our study is limited by the fact that there is no recent data available on the household division of work on a European level, therefore we had to rely on data from 2010. (European Social Survey 2018, online)

Due to the lack of significant correlations in this study, the possibilities of deriving direct policy implications are somewhat limited. Nevertheless, the descriptive analysis shows that there is an imbalance of unpaid and paid work hours between men and women, which is also in-line with literature and other studies on that matter. In the long term, this imbalance can and does lead to financial and structural disadvantages for women, which are exemplified by the gender pay gap and the gender pension gap (European Commission 2022; Eurostat 2021) It has also been shown in various other research studies that the division of work and women's disproportionate share have been shown to lower wellbeing and contribute to sex differences in depression. (BMJ 2021). Therefore, from a political perspective, it seems advisable to take measures that promote the structural protection of women and ensure a fairer distribution between unpaid and paid work.

In summary, it could only be shown that women have higher wellbeing the lower their share of total work in comparison to their partners is and an opposite effect for men, while the effect of total work on wellbeing, unpaid work on wellbeing and the influence of the partner's share of unpaid work on wellbeing, remained without significant correlations. Nonetheless, the country effects vary considerably within the sample and attitudinal effects should be considered in further research with more recent data.

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Appendix

Attachment 1

MODEL 1

VARIABLES	male (N=3,448)	female (N=2,250)
Individual working hours (paid and unpaid)	0.00043 (0.00089)	-0.00159 (0.00102)
Subjective health	0.29573*** (0.01571)	0.32850*** (0.01976)
Age	-0.00280** (0.00130)	-0.00146 (0.00171)
Net income	0.04067*** (0.00584)	0.03203*** (0.00680)
Education	-0.03044*** (0.00732)	-0.00258 (0.00934)
Belgium	0.04453 (0.08744)	-0.12587 (0.11152)
Bulgaria	-0.28775*** (0.10017)	-0.59437** (0.29326)
Switzerland	0.19378** (0.08617)	-0.09296 (0.12339)
Cyprus	0.01417	-0.01832

	(0.10255)	(0.13286)
Czech Republic	-0.30269***	-0.36773***
	(0.08633)	(0.11488)
Germany	-0.01796	-0.06697
	(0.08174)	(0.10927)
Denmark	0.22891**	0.05805
	(0.08886)	(0.11464)
Estonia	-0.15142*	-0.24724**
	(0.08925)	(0.11045)
Spain	0.12187	-0.09329
	(0.08310)	(0.11233)
Finland	-0.02376	-0.15107
	(0.08444)	(0.11007)
France	-0.15102*	-0.31065***
	(0.08744)	(0.10859)
Great Britain	-0.08275	-0.24717**
	(0.08657)	(0.10865)
Greece	-0.45652***	-0.54183***
	(0.09347)	(0.12022)
Croatia	-0.16565*	-0.51942***
	(0.09266)	(0.11925)
Hungary	-0.09339	-0.38317***
	(0.09174)	(0.12310)
Ireland	0.09524	-0.11008

	(0.09411)	(0.11985)
Lithuania	-0.33476***	-0.27409**
	(0.11774)	(0.13402)
Netherland	0.11741	-0.02447
	(0.09214)	(0.11891)
Norway	0.11484	0.05539
	(0.08517)	(0.11072)
Poland	-0.03858	-0.14615
	(0.08645)	(0.12244)
Sweden	-0.00220	-0.15149
	(0.08587)	(0.10904)
Slovenia	-0.01054	0.00124
	(0.09701)	(0.12814)
Slovakia	-0.19970**	-0.23446**
	(0.09530)	(0.11775)
Ukraine	-0.27235**	-0.42192***
	(0.10745)	(0.12480)
Constant	3.30737***	3.34032***
	(0.10824)	(0.14004)
Observations	3,448	2,520
R ²	0.18376	0.19729

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

MODEL 2

VARIABLES	male (N=2,293)	female (N=2,121)
Individual share of work (paid and unpaid)	0.3454* (0.1762)	-0.4341** (0.1982)
Subjective health	0.2925*** (0.0186)	0.3301*** (0.0215)
Age	-0.0023 (0.0017)	0.0005 (0.0019)
Net income	0.0336*** (0.0074)	0.0219*** (0.0075)
Education	-0.0226*** (0.0085)	-0.0022 (0.0100)
Belgium	0.0344 (0.1069)	-0.1654 (0.1185)
Bulgaria	-0.3270** (0.1284)	-0.6502** (0.2888)
Switzerland	0.2165** (0.1086)	-0.1248 (0.1294)
Cyprus	0.1300 (0.1267)	-0.0526 (0.1455)
Czech Republic	-0.2425**	-0.4685***

	(0.1087)	(0.1215)
Germany	0.0580	-0.1400
	(0.1021)	(0.1158)
Denmark	0.2708**	0.0045
	(0.1062)	(0.1208)
Estonia	-0.1041	-0.3287***
	(0.1163)	(0.1182)
Spain	0.1213	-0.1305
	(0.1082)	(0.1198)
Finland	0.0259	-0.2231*
	(0.1042)	(0.1165)
France	-0.1549	-0.3296***
	(0.1054)	(0.1155)
Great Britain	-0.0367	-0.2913**
	(0.1084)	(0.1143)
Greece	-0.4201***	-0.6148***
	(0.1229)	(0.1291)
Croatia	-0.0506	-0.4751***
	(0.1150)	(0.1274)
Hungary	-0.0505	-0.3405**
	(0.1130)	(0.1332)
Ireland	0.0987	-0.1120
	(0.1169)	(0.1287)
Lithuania	-0.2245	-0.3111**

	(0.1460)	(0.1424)
Netherland	0.1995*	-0.0981
	(0.1105)	(0.1243)
Norway	0.1098	0.0101
	(0.1034)	(0.1178)
Poland	-0.0360	-0.2021
	(0.1102)	(0.1314)
Sweden	0.0283	-0.2018*
	(0.1035)	(0.1149)
Slovenia	0.0716	-0.0489
	(0.1162)	(0.1360)
Slovakia	-0.1360	-0.5056***
	(0.1801)	(0.1792)
Ukraine	-0.2148	-0.4122***
	(0.1425)	(0.1411)
Constant	3.1239***	3.5232***
	(0.1585)	(0.1699)
Observations	2,293	2,121
R ²	0.1899	0.1865

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Attachment 3

MODEL 3

VARIABLES	male (N=3,557)	female (N=2,606)
Hours of unpaid work	0.0019 (0.0015)	-0.0002 (0.0013)
Subjective health	0.2973*** (0.0156)	0.3232*** (0.0195)
Age	-0.0030** (0.0013)	-0.0020 (0.0017)
Net income	0.0426*** (0.0057)	0.0346*** (0.0066)
Education	-0.0287*** (0.0073)	-0.0010 (0.0092)
Belgium	0.0438 (0.0863)	-0.1184 (0.1108)
Bulgaria	-0.3167*** (0.0977)	-0.8052*** (0.2743)
Switzerland	0.1960** (0.0849)	-0.0777 (0.1214)
Cyprus	0.0534 (0.1004)	-0.0537 (0.1273)
Czech Republic	-0.2981*** (0.0848)	-0.3916*** (0.1133)
Germany	-0.0154	-0.0663

	(0.0807)	(0.1087)
Denmark	0.2343***	0.0598
	(0.0881)	(0.1144)
Estonia	-0.1439	-0.2749**
	(0.0882)	(0.1096)
Spain	0.1337	-0.1061
	(0.0821)	(0.1115)
Finland	-0.0180	-0.1630
	(0.0835)	(0.1094)
France	-0.1404	-0.3078***
	(0.0866)	(0.1084)
Great Britain	-0.0856	-0.2283**
	(0.0854)	(0.1079)
Greece	-0.4297***	-0.5451***
	(0.0902)	(0.1162)
Croatia	-0.2034**	-0.5481***
	(0.0909)	(0.1172)
Hungary	-0.0833	-0.3971***
	(0.0907)	(0.1226)
Ireland	0.1013	-0.1051
	(0.0934)	(0.1196)
Lithuania	-0.3225***	-0.3363***
	(0.1107)	(0.1268)
Netherland	0.1283	-0.0053

	(0.0913)	(0.1177)
Norway	0.1215	0.0598
	(0.0843)	(0.1103)
Poland	-0.0447	-0.1862
	(0.0849)	(0.1209)
Sweden	-0.0033	-0.1586
	(0.0851)	(0.1086)
Slovenia	0.0125	-0.0191
	(0.0955)	(0.1259)
Slovakia	-0.2092**	-0.2344**
	(0.0936)	(0.1163)
Ukraine	-0.2479**	-0.4510***
	(0.1051)	(0.1233)
Constant	3.2925***	3.2661***
	(0.0987)	(0.1334)
Observations	3,557	2,606
R ²	0.1849	0.1987

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Attachment 4
MODEL 4

	male	female
VARIABLES	(N=3,461)	(N=2,575)

Hours of unpaid work	-0.0041 (0.0048)	-0.0015 (0.0024)
Partner's share of unpaid work	0.0432 (0.0959)	-0.1078 (0.1333)
IT (hours of unpaid work X partner's share of unpaid work)	0.0149* (0.0078)	0.0071 (0.0073)
Subjective health	0.3009*** (0.0157)	0.3294*** (0.0196)
Age	-0.0028** (0.0013)	-0.0019 (0.0017)
Net income	0.0438*** (0.0058)	0.0334*** (0.0067)
Education	-0.0290*** (0.0073)	-0.0006 (0.0093)
Belgium	0.0525 (0.0875)	-0.1174 (0.1106)
Bulgaria	-0.3139*** (0.1003)	-0.6170** (0.2932)
Switzerland	0.2032** (0.0862)	-0.0563 (0.1215)
Cyprus	0.0403 (0.1025)	-0.0541 (0.1307)
Czech Republic	-0.2755***	-0.4215***

	(0.0870)	(0.1140)
Germany	-0.0027	-0.0795
	(0.0818)	(0.1088)
Denmark	0.2540***	0.0608
	(0.0891)	(0.1141)
Estonia	-0.1437	-0.2754**
	(0.0894)	(0.1096)
Spain	0.1371*	-0.0992
	(0.0833)	(0.1114)
Finland	0.0026	-0.1585
	(0.0850)	(0.1092)
France	-0.1199	-0.3033***
	(0.0875)	(0.1082)
Great Britain	-0.0618	-0.2268**
	(0.0868)	(0.1077)
Greece	-0.4091***	-0.5497***
	(0.0923)	(0.1161)
Croatia	-0.1713*	-0.5478***
	(0.0920)	(0.1177)
Hungary	-0.0827	-0.3842***
	(0.0917)	(0.1227)
Ireland	0.1178	-0.1073
	(0.0941)	(0.1194)
Lithuania	-0.3125***	-0.3506***

	(0.1128)	(0.1274)
Netherland	0.1410	-0.0023
	(0.0925)	(0.1175)
Norway	0.1432*	0.0621
	(0.0857)	(0.1100)
Poland	-0.0356	-0.1885
	(0.0865)	(0.1207)
Sweden	0.0117	-0.1563
	(0.0866)	(0.1084)
Slovenia	0.0290	-0.0284
	(0.0961)	(0.1259)
Slovakia	-0.2008**	-0.2365**
	(0.0949)	(0.1166)
Ukraine	-0.2401**	-0.4362***
	(0.1071)	(0.1250)
Constant	3.2090***	3.2830***
	(0.1299)	(0.1408)
Observations	3,461	2,572
R ²	0.1870	0.1996

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1