

ICT driven home-based work: do men and women exploit it in the same way?

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THE AIM AND SCOPE OF THE PAPER

- We examine **gender differences in the engagement in home-based work that is enabled by ICT (HBTW)** for a number of European countries
- Our goal is to document **gender differences** in the engagement in HBTW and its intensity

MOTIVATION AND BACKGROUND

Existing research on the gender gap in home-based work induced by ICT **is scarce and inconclusive:**

- According to 2015 LFS data: 13.2% of men and 12.7% of women worked from home
- ILO–Eurofound (2017) report: among teleworkers the percentage of workers that work from home is higher among women than among men.
- López-Igual & Rodríguez-Modroño (2020) argue that women are in the majority among home-based teleworkers, but their estimation results obtained from binary and multinomial logit regressions do not confirm this statement.

MOTIVATION AND BACKGROUND

Why would there be a gender gap in HBTW?

- Men and women use HBTW for different reasons (Chung & van der Lippe, 2020).
- HBTW provides different opportunities and carries different consequences for men and women because of their various engagements in the domestic / housework sphere and paid work.

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1. The possibility of combining paid work with domestic and care duties

Women ↑ HBTW, especially mothers, who continue to do do more childcare and housework than their male partners (Baxter & Tai, 2016; Coltrane, 2000).

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3. The positive effect of HBTW on work-life balance

Both men and women ↑ HBTW, mostly parents (Hilbrecht et al., 2008; Mokhtarian et al., 1998; Sullivan & Lewis, 2001; ILO–Eurofound, 2017).

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4. Negative implications of HBTW for career prospects & flexibility stigma

Both men and women ↓ HBTW but the effect may be more severe among mothers than among fathers and among childless men than among fathers (Munsch, 2016; Cooper & Kurland, 2002, Demerouti et al., 2014)

DATA AND METHODS

- 2015 EWCS for 30 European countries (EU27+ UK, CH, NO)
- Sample of employees working on-site and at home (excluding employees working in other locations such as public spaces, clients' premises, outside site) = 16,348 (54% women)

DATA AND METHODS

Dependent variable = work from home (WFH):

- **Incidence of WFH: a dummy variable** (=1) if an employee reports working from home (during the last 12 months) – no matter the intensity
- **Intensity of WFH: a categorical variable** with 3 levels to measure the intensity of work from home: (1) never, (2) less often than several times a month & several times a month, (3) several times a week + daily.

DATA AND METHODS

To identify the gender gap in home-based work induced by ICT we estimate the following models:

$$WFH_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1(female * ICT) + \alpha X_i + \varepsilon_i$$

A dummy variable (=1) if female

ICT = a dummy variable (=1) if an employee works around ¾ of the time or more with the use of computers, laptops, smartphones etc.

Control variables:

- Age
- Education
- Presence of a partner
- Partner's work hours
- Number of children <6 yo
- Number of children >=6 yo
- Number of other HH members
- Supervisory position (=1)
- Part-time job (=1)
- Sector of work
- Occupation (8 groups – 1 digit ISCO codes)
- Available flexibility given by an employer = working time arrangements

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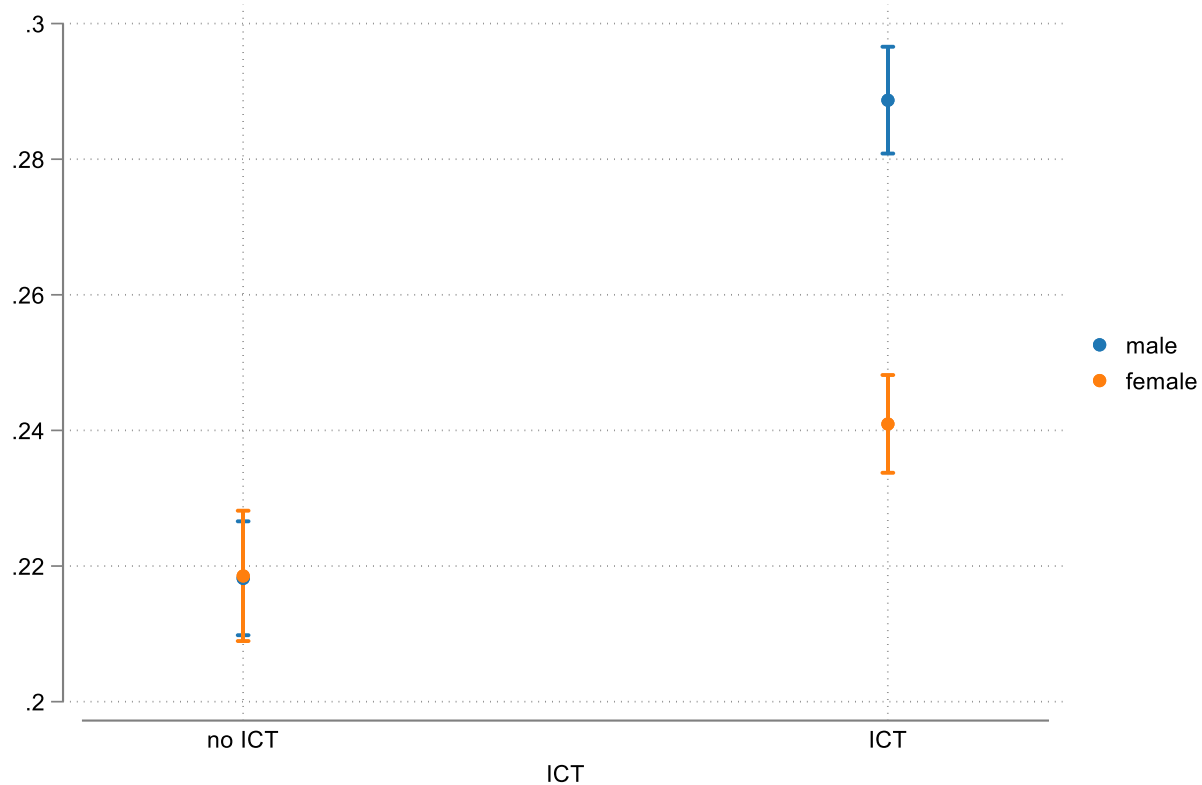
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Probit and multinomial logit models with cluster SE

RESULTS

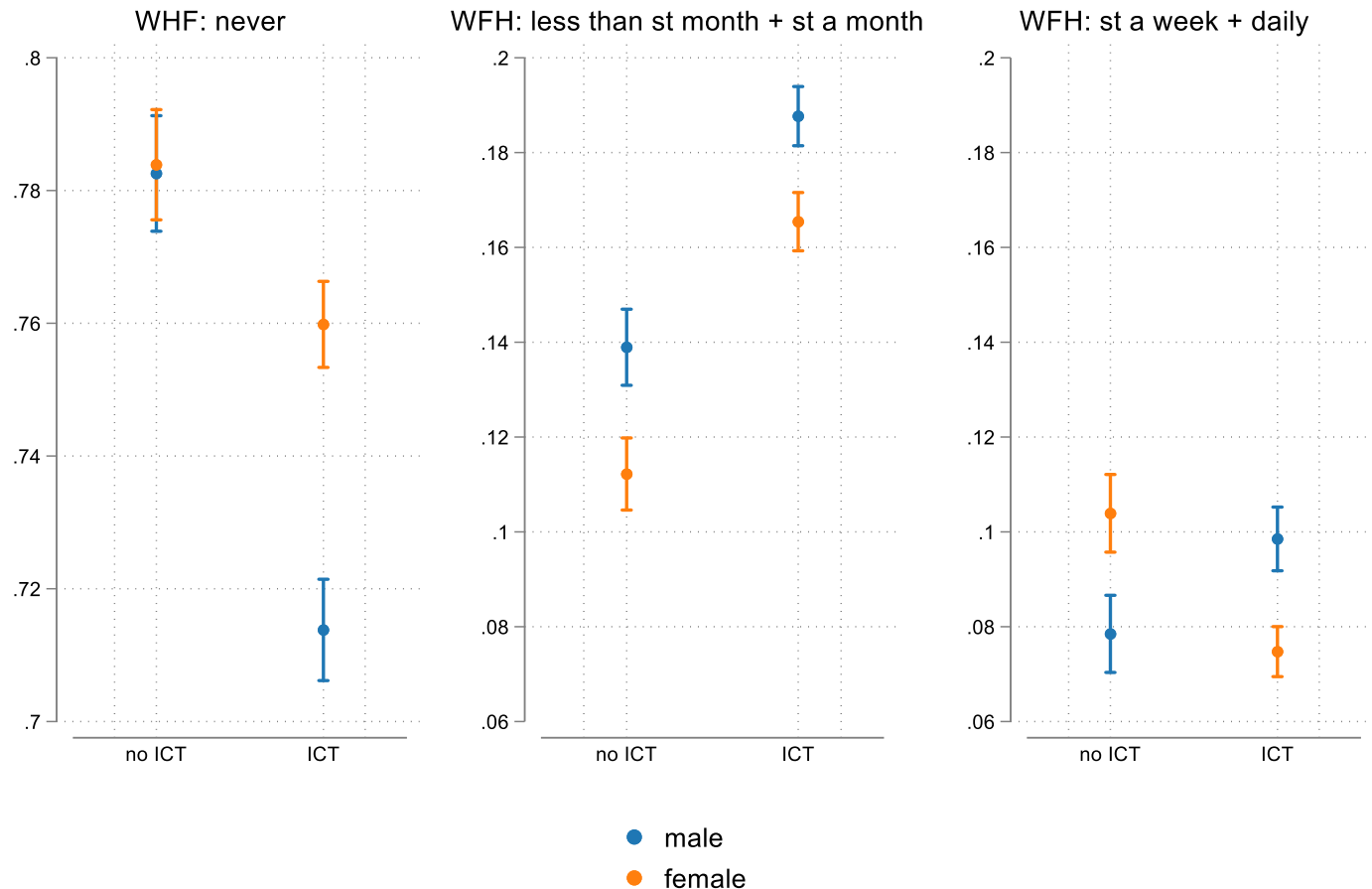
Predicted probability of working from home by gender and the ICT use at work: probit model



Women are by 4.7 percentage points less likely to HBTW compared to men.

RESULTS

Predicted probability of working from home by gender and the ICT use at work: multinomial logit model



Women are significantly less likely to HBTW compared to men

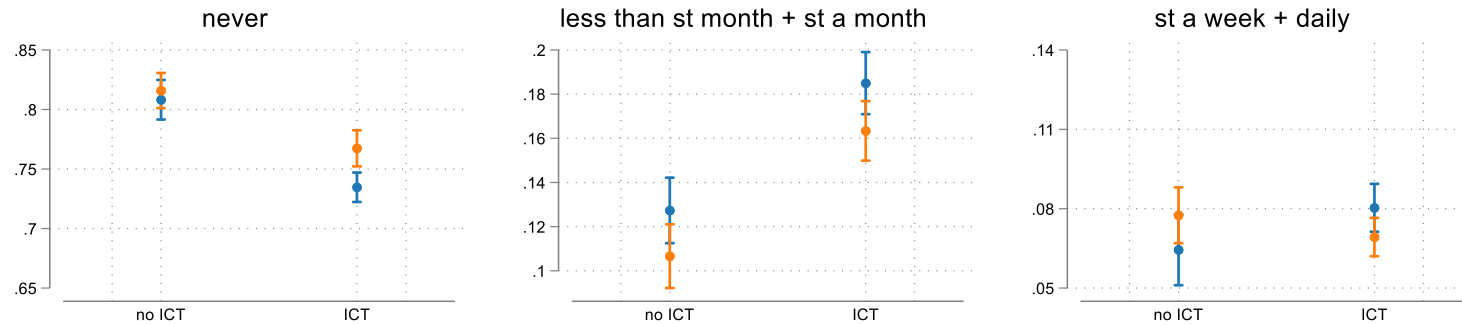
Women and men differently exploit the flexplace that is possible thanks to ICT:

- men tend to increase their WFH when working with ICT, both **sporadically and intensively**.
- women tend to increase their sporadic WFH when working with ICT but working **with ICT makes them less likely to WFH in an intensive manner**.

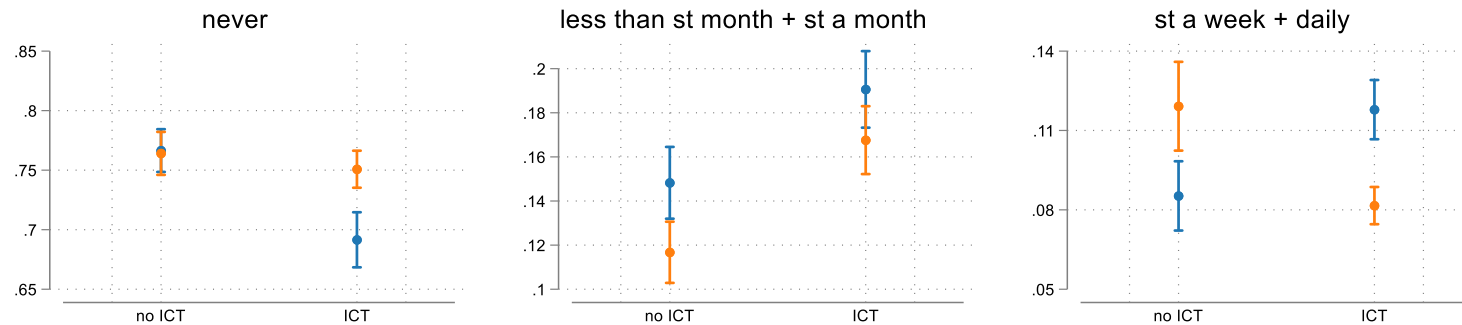
RESULTS

THE PATTERNS ARE STRONGER AMONG PARENTS THAN AMONG CHILDLESS INDIVIDUALS

Childless



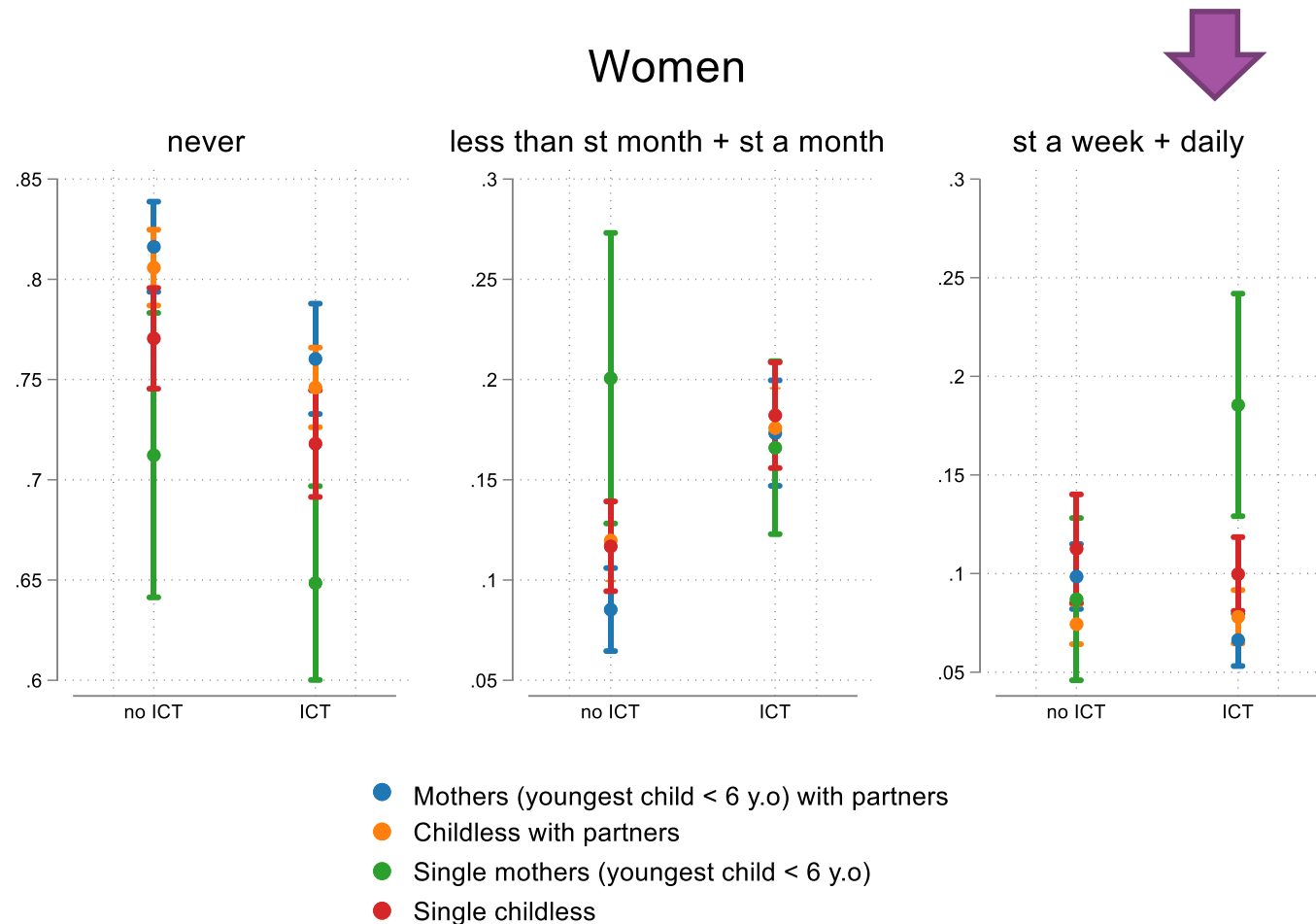
Parents



● male
● female

RESULTS

The group of single mothers of young children (<6 y.o) is the only group of women for which we observe an increased intensive WFH while working with ICT.



For single mothers it is especially difficult to combine work with care so they intensively use the flexibility in terms of location of work offered by ICT.

CONCLUSIONS

➤ **Women HBTW ↓ than men**

This is because of gender differences in the intensity of HBTW:

Men working with ICT ↑ WFH - both sporadically and intensively.

Women working with ICT ↑ sporadic WFH but ↓ WFH in an intensive manner.

This is true for women no matter the motherhood status, **except for single mothers**



For single mothers, the pros of HBTW (combining work with care, saving time) outweigh the negatives.

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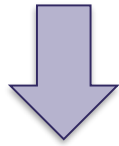
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Mothers may be afraid of using HBTW because of the possible negative consequences for their work careers or because they become even more responsible for domestic duties.



For single mothers, the pros of HBTW (combining work with care, saving time) outweigh the negatives.

Thank you!



POLSKIE POWROTY
POLISH RETURNS



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RESULTS

Single mothers by the age of the youngest child

