

# Does Working from Home Hinder Career Prospects? The gender and family perspectives.

**Agnieszka Kasperska**

PhD Candidate & Research assistant

Interdisciplinary Research Center for Labour Market and Family Dynamics (LabFam)

University of Warsaw

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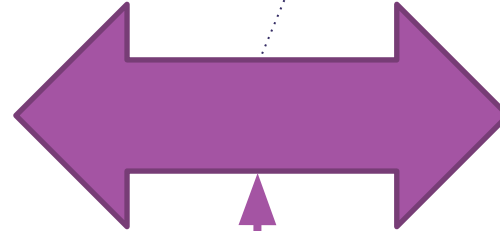


# Research objectives

## WORKING FROM HOME (WFH)



COUNTRY  
CONTEXT



## CAREER PROSPECTS



GENDER &  
PARENTHOOD STATUS

# Background

Existing research exploring the effects of WFH on career development is inconclusive.

- Leslie et al. (2012) point out a **financial penalty** that comes with telework.
- Golden and Eddleston (2020) argue that teleworkers experience **lower salary growth**, with more frequent users of telework being most punished but they do not receive fewer promotions.
- Experimental evidence suggests the **negative** impact of WFH on promotion (Bloom, 2015; Fernandez-Lozano et al., 2020).

# Impact of WFH on career development

WFH can have **positive effect**, through:

- Fewer workplace distractions (Nardi & Whittaker, 2002)
- Fewer interruptions (Konradt et al, 2003)
- Increased job satisfaction (Golden & Veiga, 2005; Fonner & Roloff, 2010)
- Higher perceived autonomy (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007)

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WFH can have **negative affect**, through:

- Diminished informal learning, mentoring and networking (Cooper & Kurland, 2002)
- Diminished job visibility (Bourdeau et al., 2019)
- Less training and development (Martinez and Gomez, 2013)

# Gender differences

→ Varying **reasons to engage in WFH** (Chung & van der Lippe, 2020)

- **The flexibility stigma**

(the belief that workers who use flexible working arrangements are less productive and less committed to the workplace)

- **The ideal worker concept**

(an employee who is highly devoted to work and unimpeded by other obligations)



# Data & Methodology



The 2015 **European Working Conditions Surveys** (EWCS) by Eurofound

- Cross-sectional data with unique information on working conditions in Europe

Sample: **employees** (N=27,655)



**35 European countries**

(EU27 + Albania + FYROM + Montenegro + Norway + UK + Serbia + Switzerland + Turkey)

Countries grouped into **(1) High prevalence of WFH** - predominantly Northern and Western Europe  
**(2) Low prevalence of WFH** - predominantly Southern and Eastern Europe



**Multinomial logistic regression**

(separate models for each of the outcome variables)

The **outcome variables** include self-reported:

**(1) Promotion opportunities**

*'My job offers good prospects for career advancement'*

**(2) Job visibility (recognition and consultation)**

**Rec:** *'I receive the recognition I deserve for my work'*

**Con:** *'You are consulted before objectives are set for your work'*

**(3) Rapport with the supervisor (development support)**

*'Your immediate boss... Encourages and supports you development'*

Grouped answers: agree / neither / disagree



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The **explanatory variable** is:

**(1) WFH frequency**

*'...how often you have worked in each location [during the last 12 months in your main paid job / since you started your main paid job]... Your own home'*

Grouped answers: (0) none; (1) sporadically = less than several times a week and several times a month; (2) often = daily and several times a week

The **moderators** are:

**(1) Gender** (men / women)

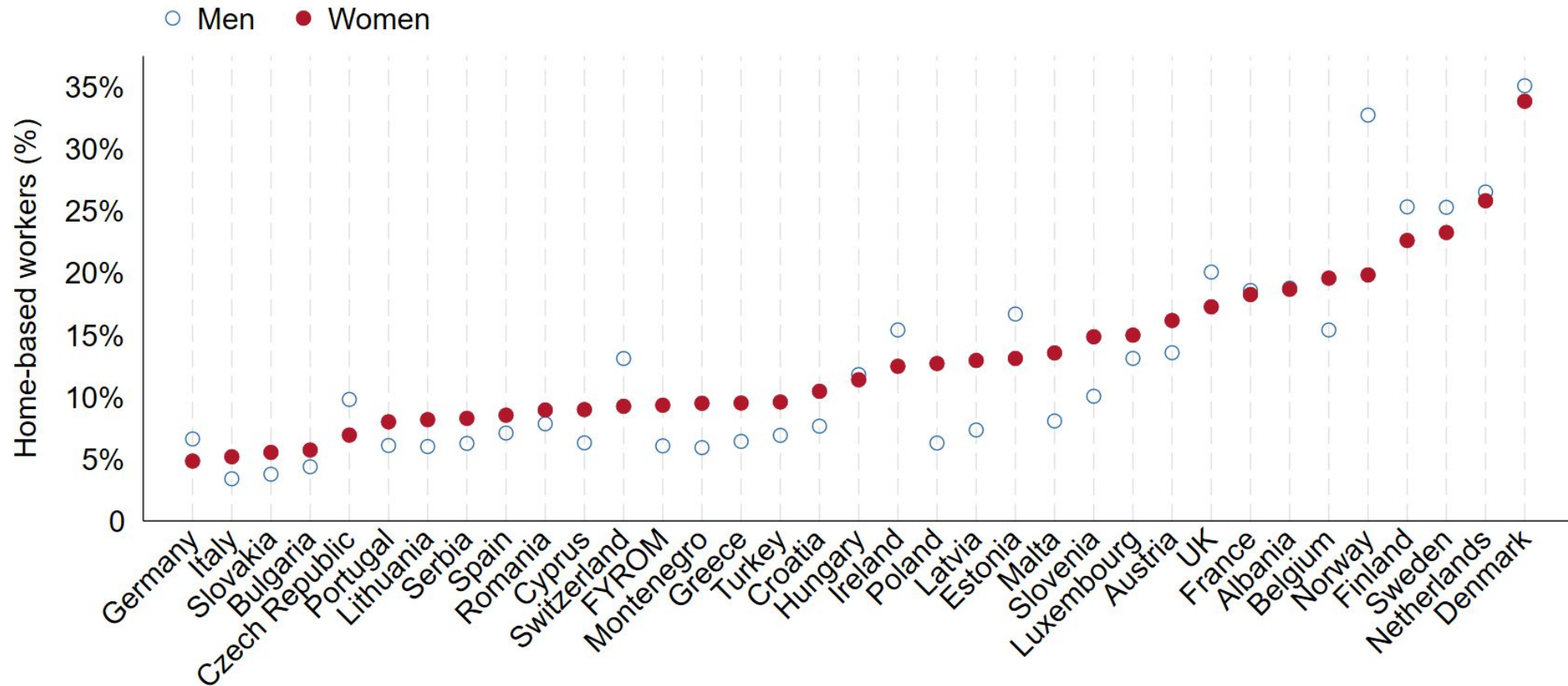
**(2) Parenthood status** (children / no children)

The **control variables** are:

occupation, highest educational qualification, age, type of employment contract, part-time work, and firm size

# Prevalence of WFH in Europe

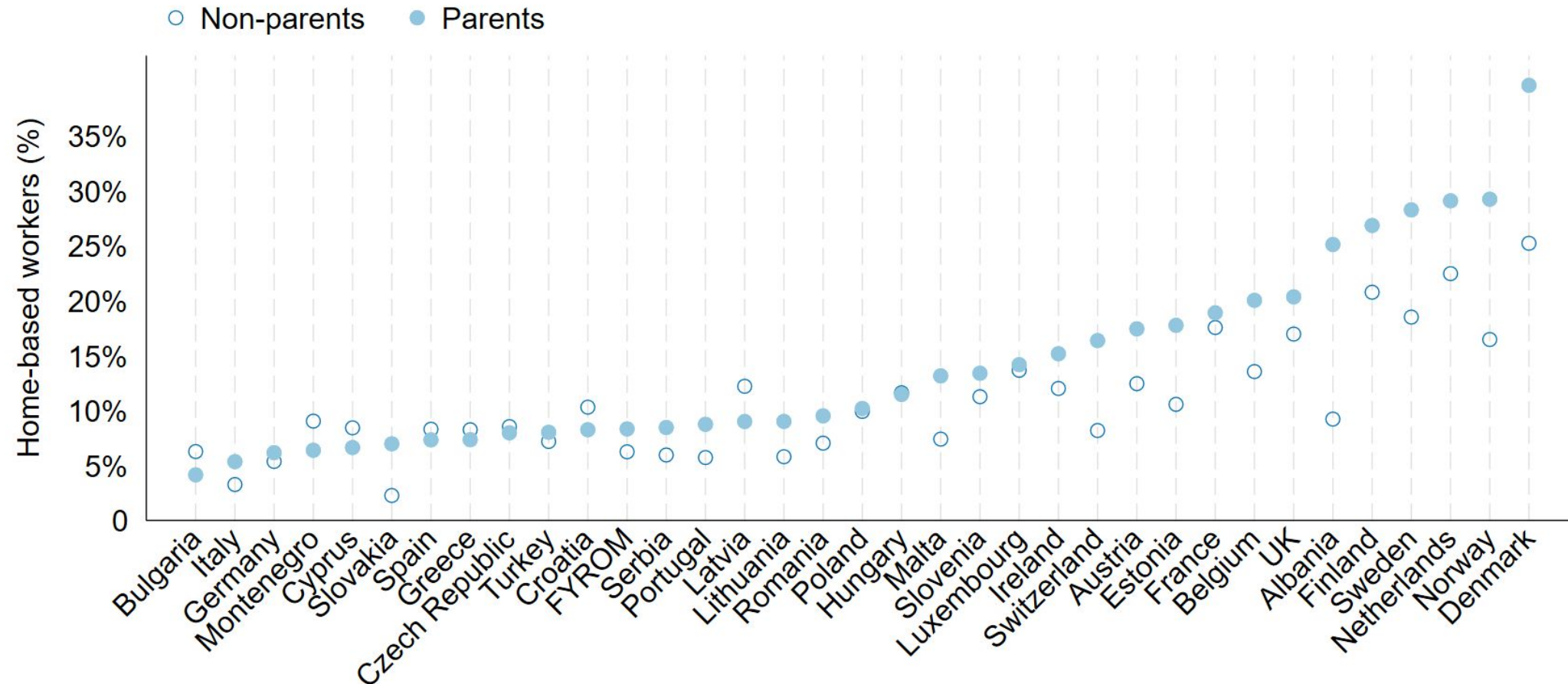
Percentage of employees working from home (at least several times a month) by gender in 35 European countries.



**Note:** sample of employees 24-55 years old; own calculations based on EWCS 2015 dataset

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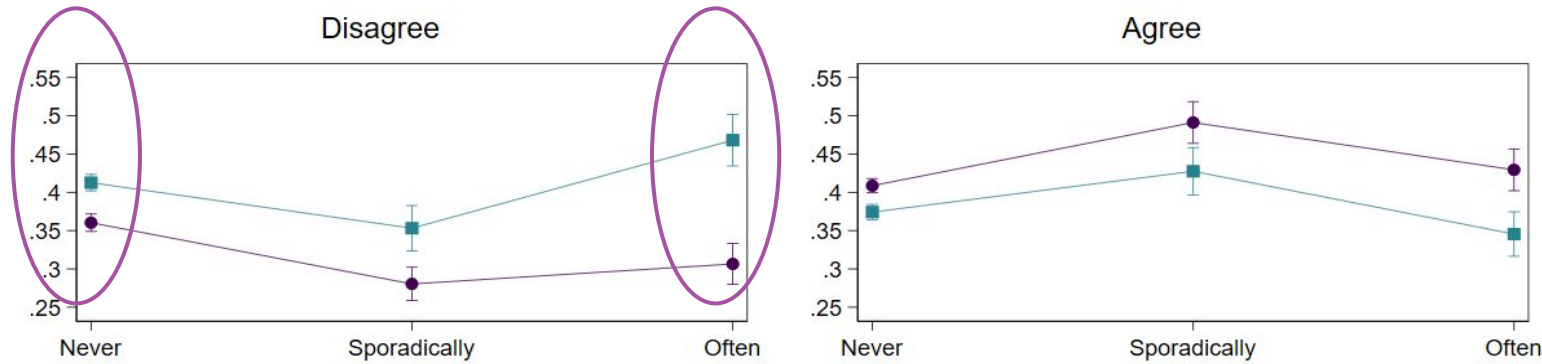


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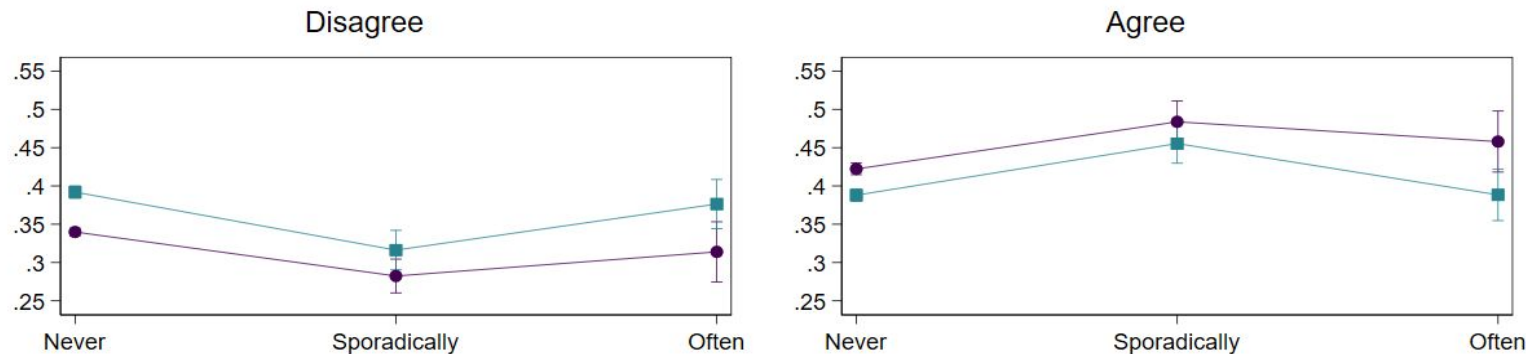
# Regression results

Predicted probabilities of promotion prospects by WFH and gender for the subsamples of parents and non-parents: multinomial logit models (CI 83%).

## Parents



## Non-parents



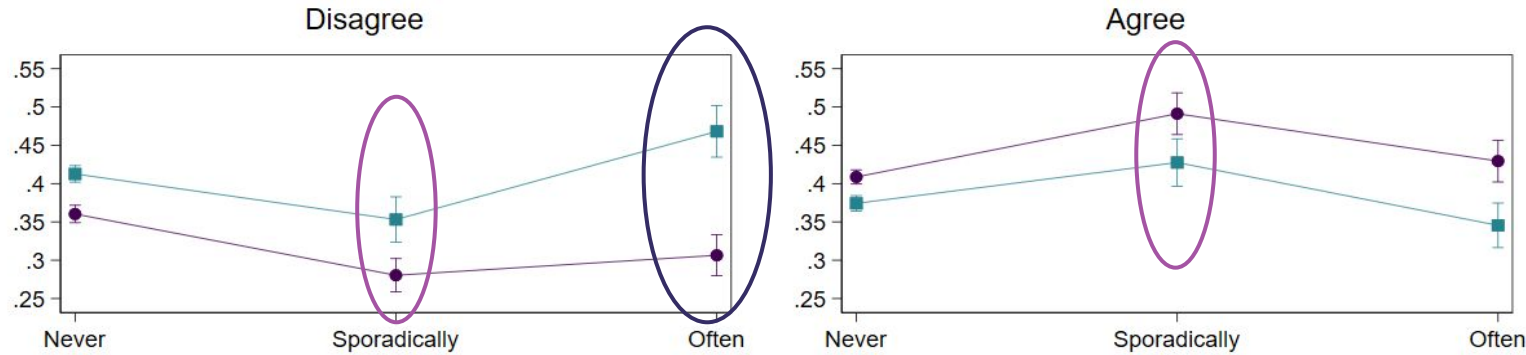
● Men ■ Women

- **Mothers** WFH often report **worse career prospects** than those who never WFH.
- **Fathers** WFH report **good career prospects** than those who never WFH (no matter the frequency of WFH).
- **Gender gap** in promotion prospects **increases** from 5 pp to 16 pp.

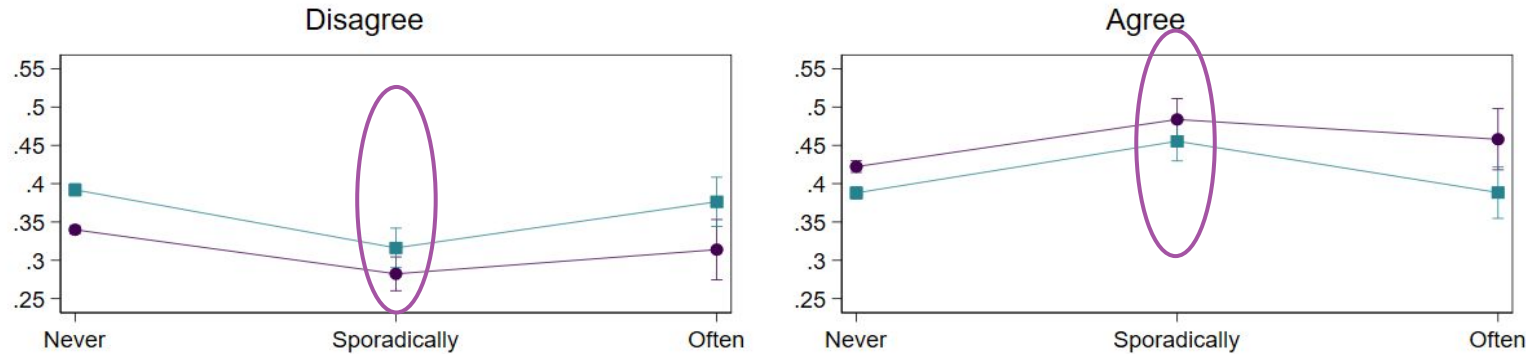
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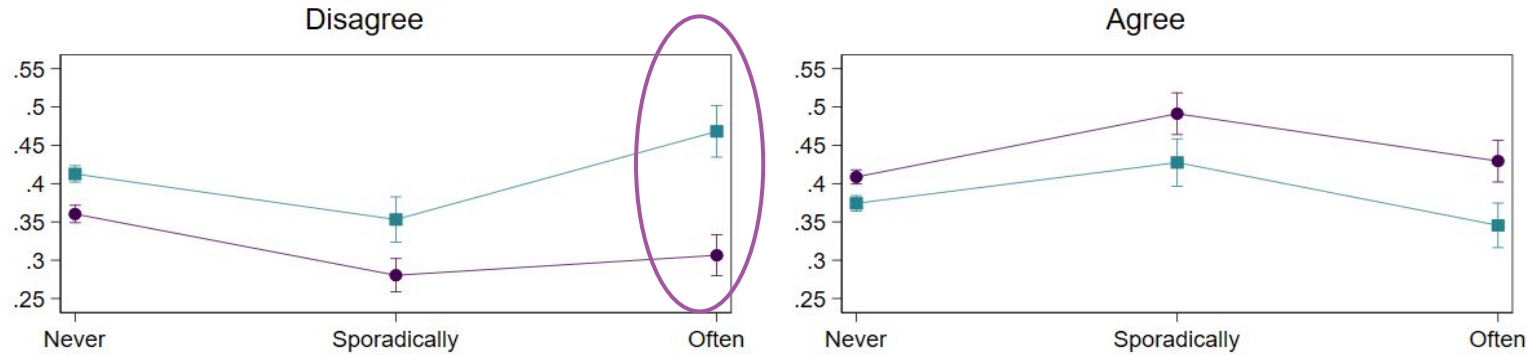
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- **Sporadic use** of WFH is associated with **good career prospects** for both men and women / parents and non-parents.
- **Frequent use** of WFH is associated with **worse career prospects** only for mothers.



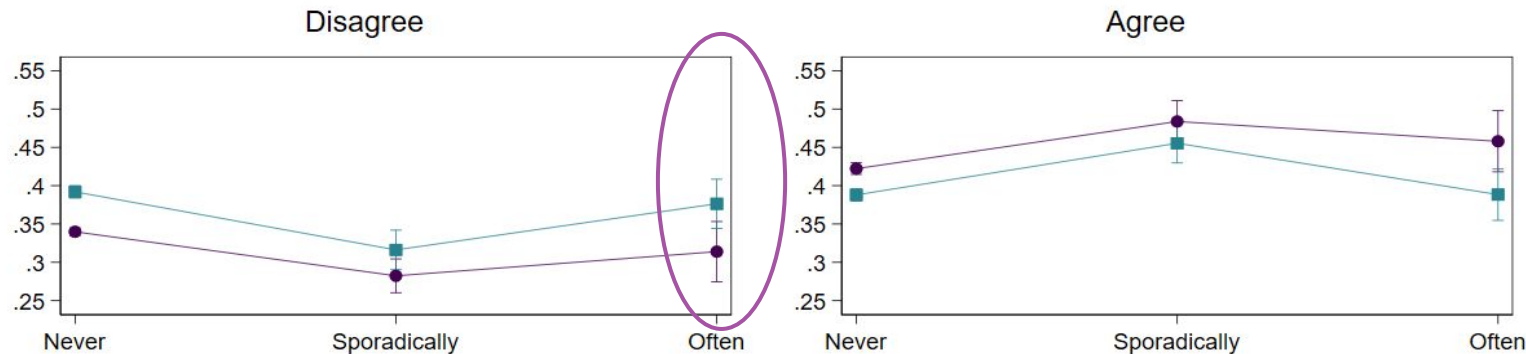
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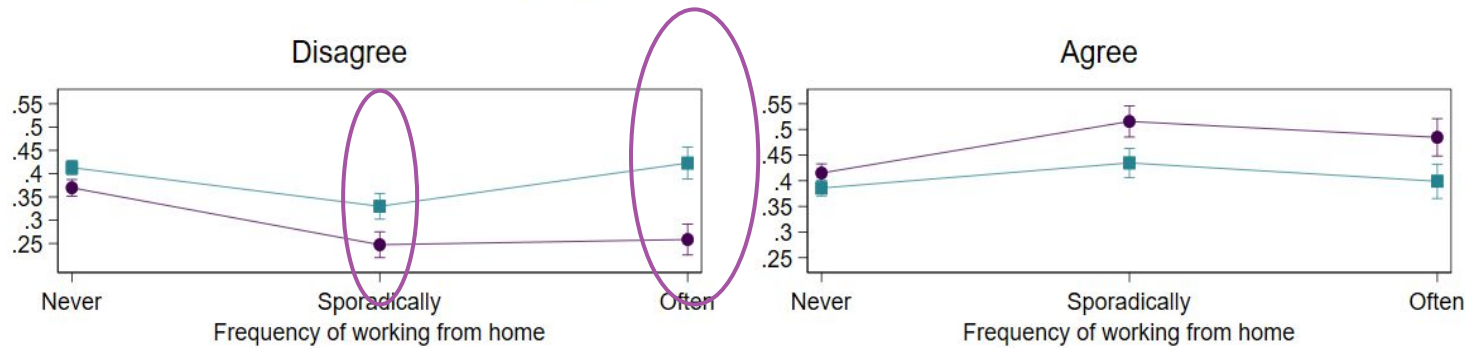


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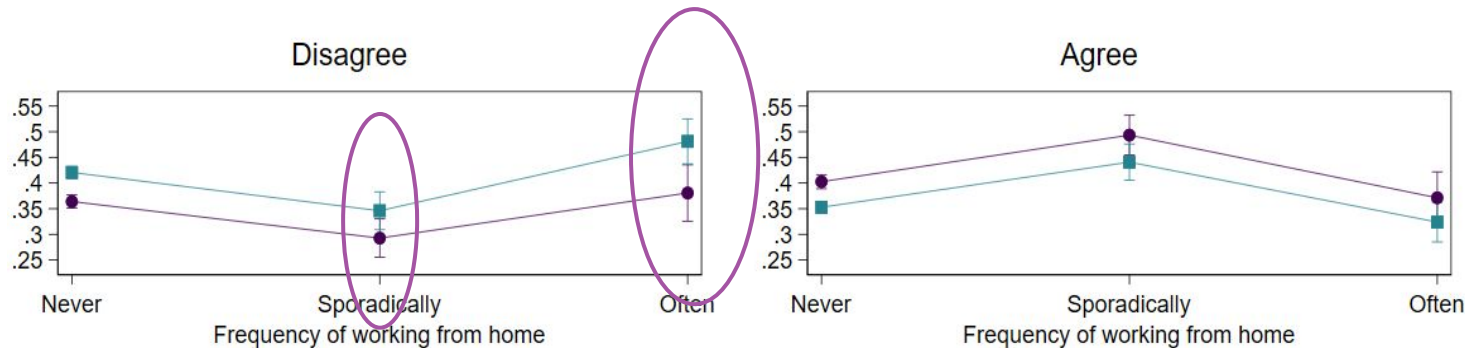
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- Sporadic use of WFH is associated with good career prospects for both men and women / parents and non-parents.
- Frequent use of WFH is associated with worse career prospects only for mothers.
- **No association** between frequent use of WFH and **worse career prospects** for **non-mothers** (only for mothers).

Predicted probabilities of promotion prospects by WFH and gender for the subsample of parents and country (prevalence of WFH): multinomial logit models (CI 83%).

### High prevalence of WFH



### Low prevalence of WFH



Men Women

- In countries **where WFH is less prevalent**, mothers WFH often are more likely to report **worse career prospects** than those who never WFH.
- There is **no such association** in countries **where WFH is more prevalent**.
- **Less frequent use of WFH** is associated with **better career prospects** in both groups of countries, and for both genders.



# Conclusions

- **Men WFH:** **good** career prospects (both fathers and non-fathers).
- **Women WFH:** **worse** career prospects (especially for **mothers**).
- **Sporadic WFH** = **good** career prospects.
- **Frequent WFH** = **worse** career prospects BUT only for mothers.
- In countries with a **lower prevalence of WFH**, mothers engaging in this mode of work in a frequent manner report **worse career prospects**.

# Thank you!



am.kasperska@uw.edu.pl

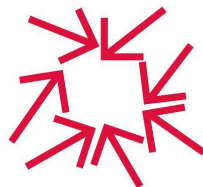


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