



# The role of home-based work for return to employment after birth

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## PAST STUDIES



Women tend to use **HBW to combine paid work and care** (Sullivan and Lewis, 2001; Hilbrecht et al., 2008)

HBW as the **most preferred flexible work arrangement** (Mas and Pallais 2017)

### Why?

- **Saves time:** less commuting, multitasking (Hill et al., 2003, Bailey and Kurland, 2002)
- More **flexible time schedule** (Crosbie and Moore 2004; Chung and Van der Lippe, 2020 )
- Allows for **being more present** in children's lives (Callister and Singley, 2004)

# HBW and return to employment

## Scarce evidence so far:

Arntz et al. (2019): positive effects on parents' working hours and wages in Germany

Chung and Van der Horst (2018): no sign. effects in thr UK (but very small sample)

## **Our contribution:**

→ UK, larger sample

→ Accounting for timing of return

→ Role of work & family context

# Why **context** matters?

## **HBW particularly convenient if:**

- **More than one child** to care for and combine with work (Allen et al 2013)
- **Partner** not much engaged at home or strongly involved in paid work (Cha 2010, 2012)
- **Financial situation** of the HH requires her to return to work

# Data & Sample

## UK Household Longitudinal Survey

- waves 1 to 10, 2009 to 2019

## Sample:

- women aged 18-44
- with one or two children
- employed at birth
- living with a partner



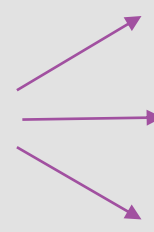
1,620 women  
18,457 woman-months

## Observation window:

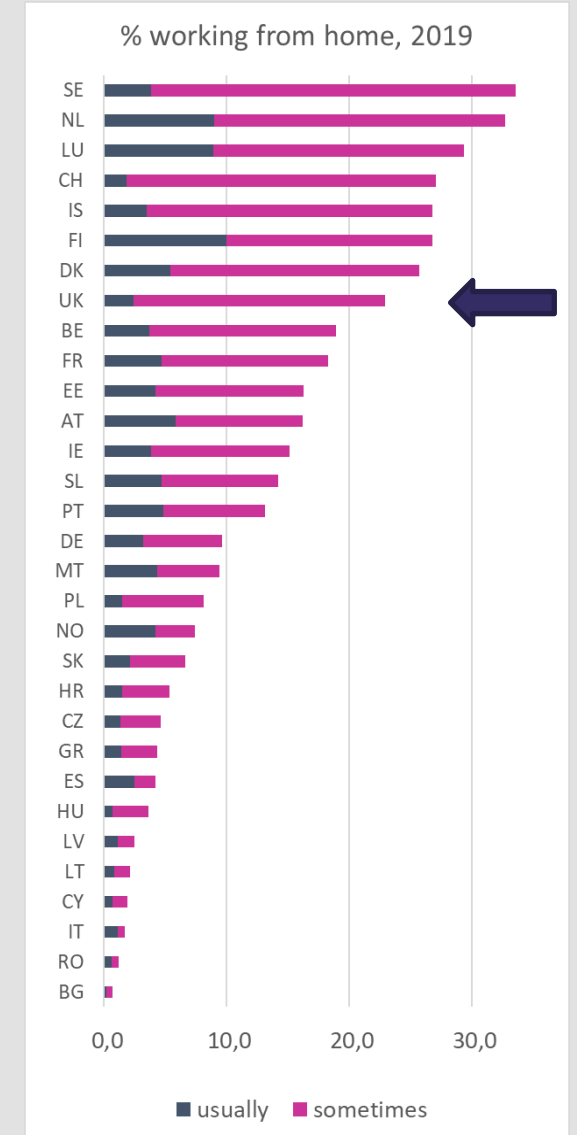


# UK context

- Parental leave:

12 months  6 weeks 90% paid  
33 weeks flat rate 152 £ per week  
remaining 15 weeks unpaid

- restricted childcare supply
- modernised male breadwinner: 1 + 0.5
- right to request flexible work (since 2003)



# Method

**Method:** Discrete time EHA (baseline: child's age squared)

**Events:** Re-entry to paid work

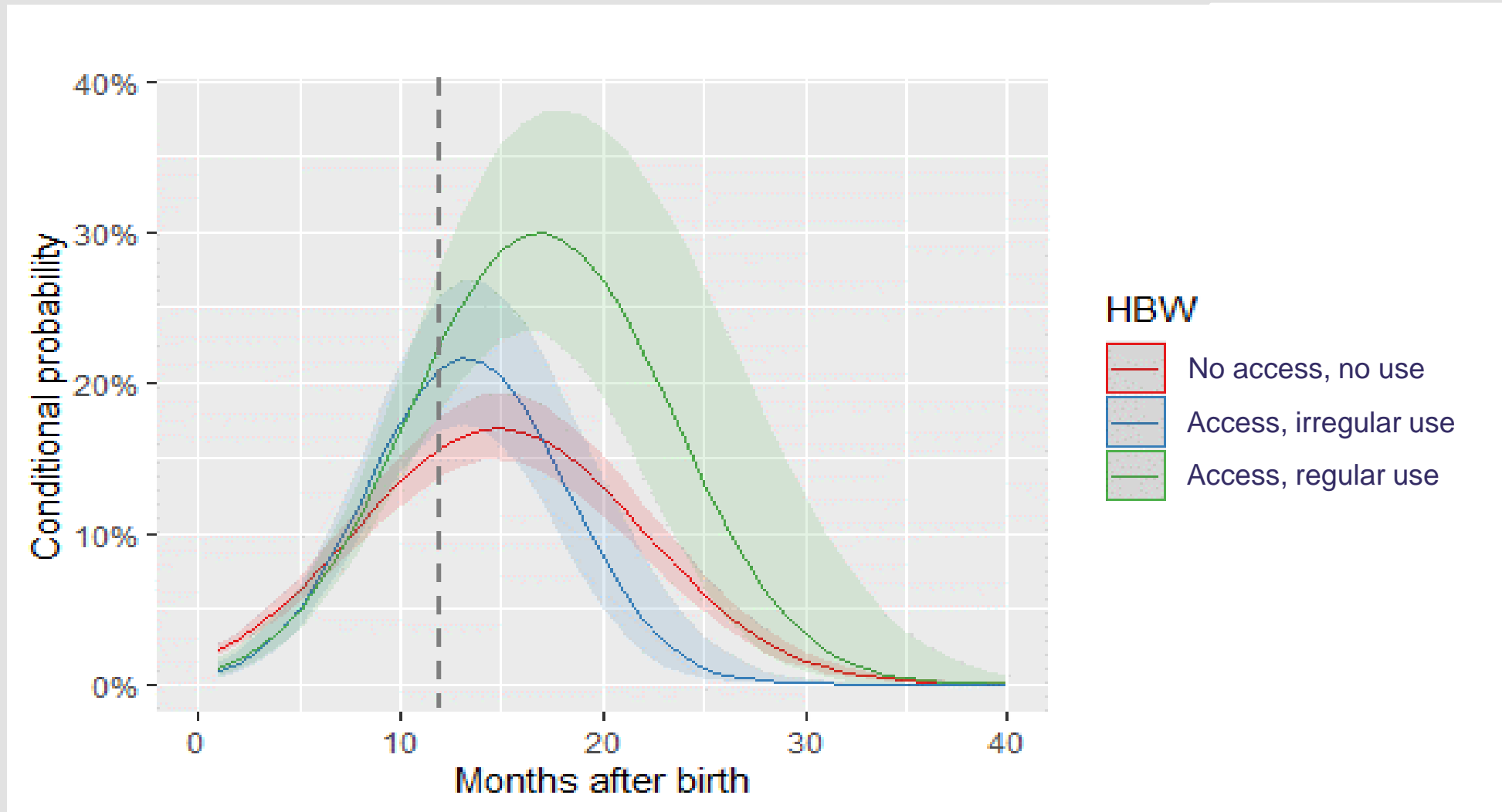
**Key explanatory:** HBW: 1 – no access, no use (85% of women)  
2 – access, no use or occasional use (8%)  
3 – access, regular use (7%)

**Moderators:**

- Family size (# children)
- Partner's work hours (relative to her)
- Partner's involvement in housework (relative to her)
- Subjective financial situation of the HH

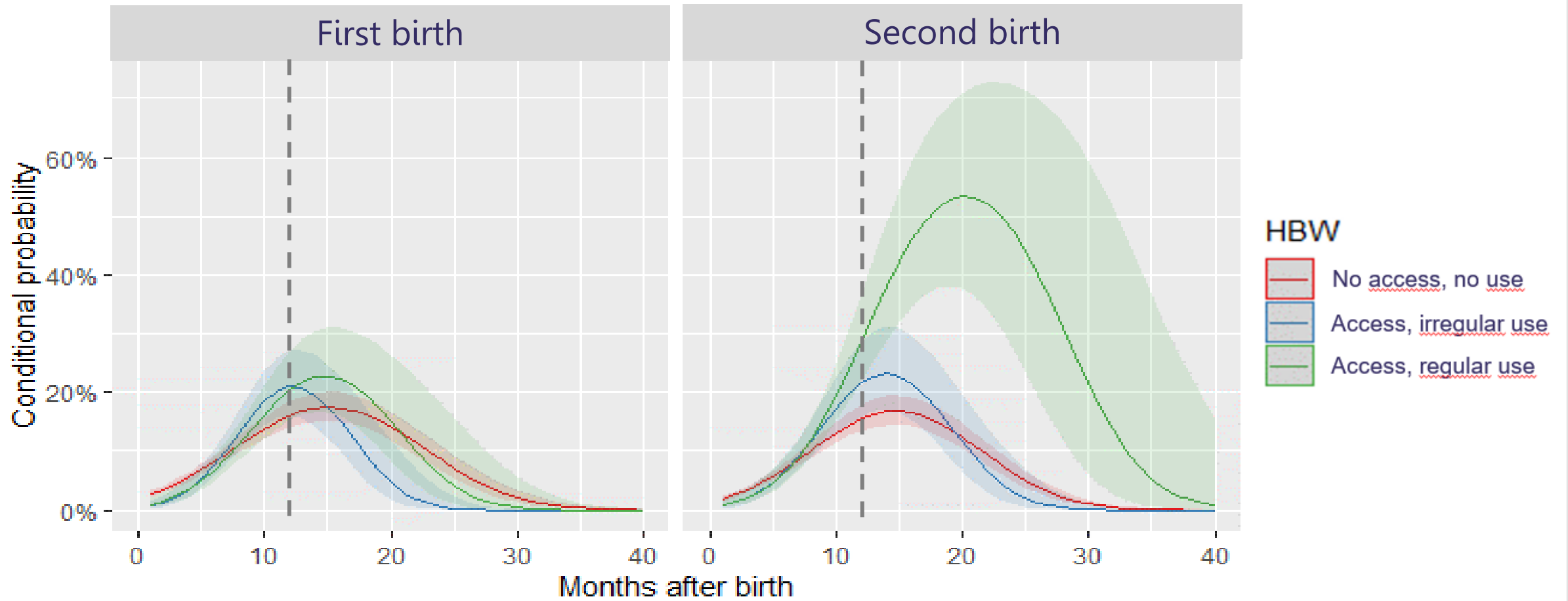
**Controls:** age, education, calendar year, ethnicity

# Return to paid work in time after birth

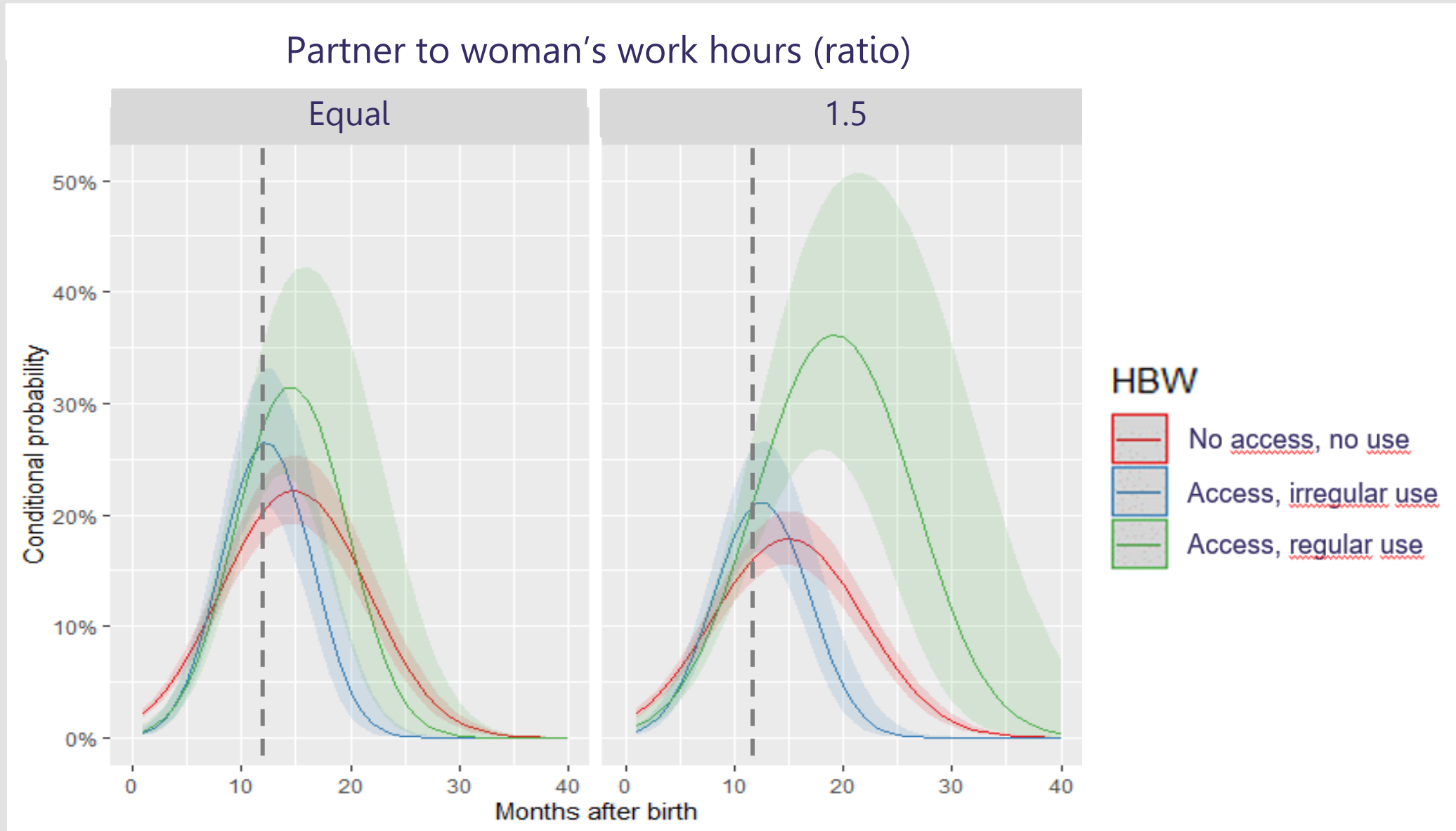




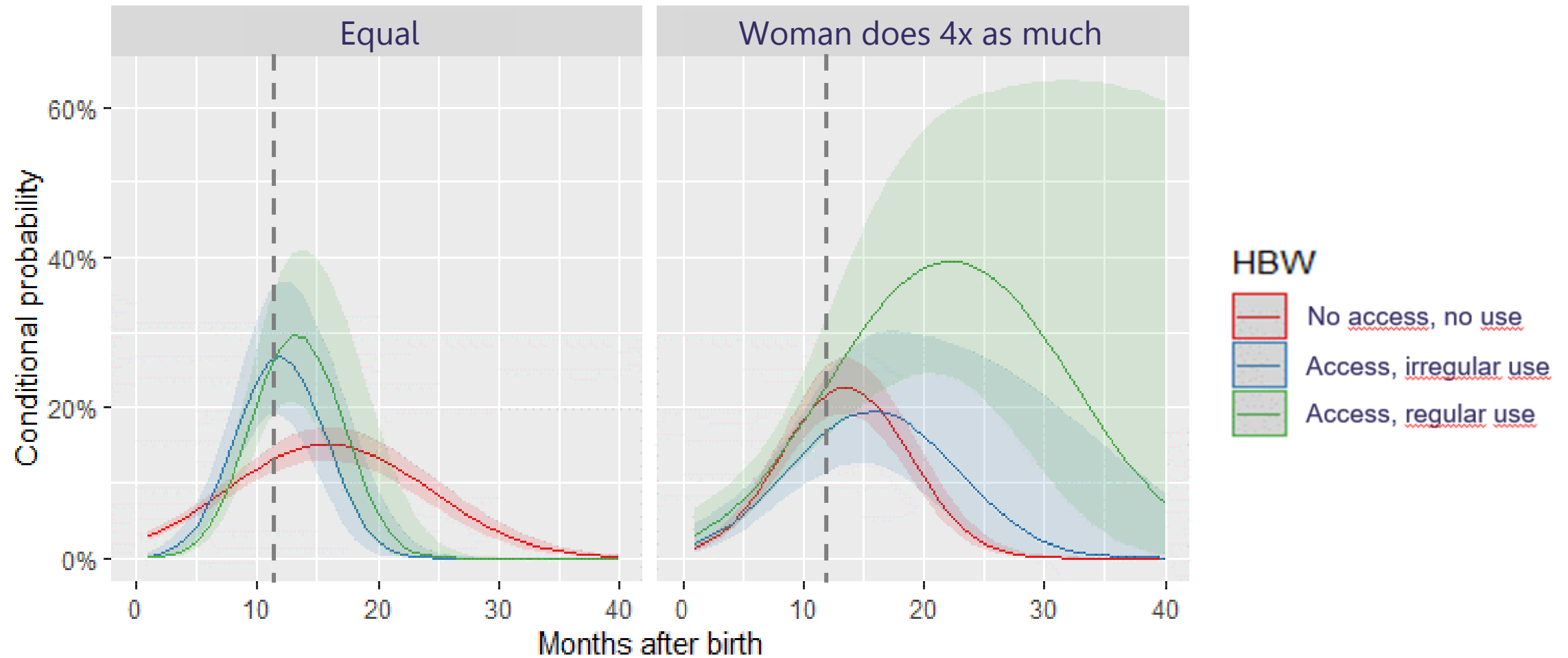
# ...by birth order



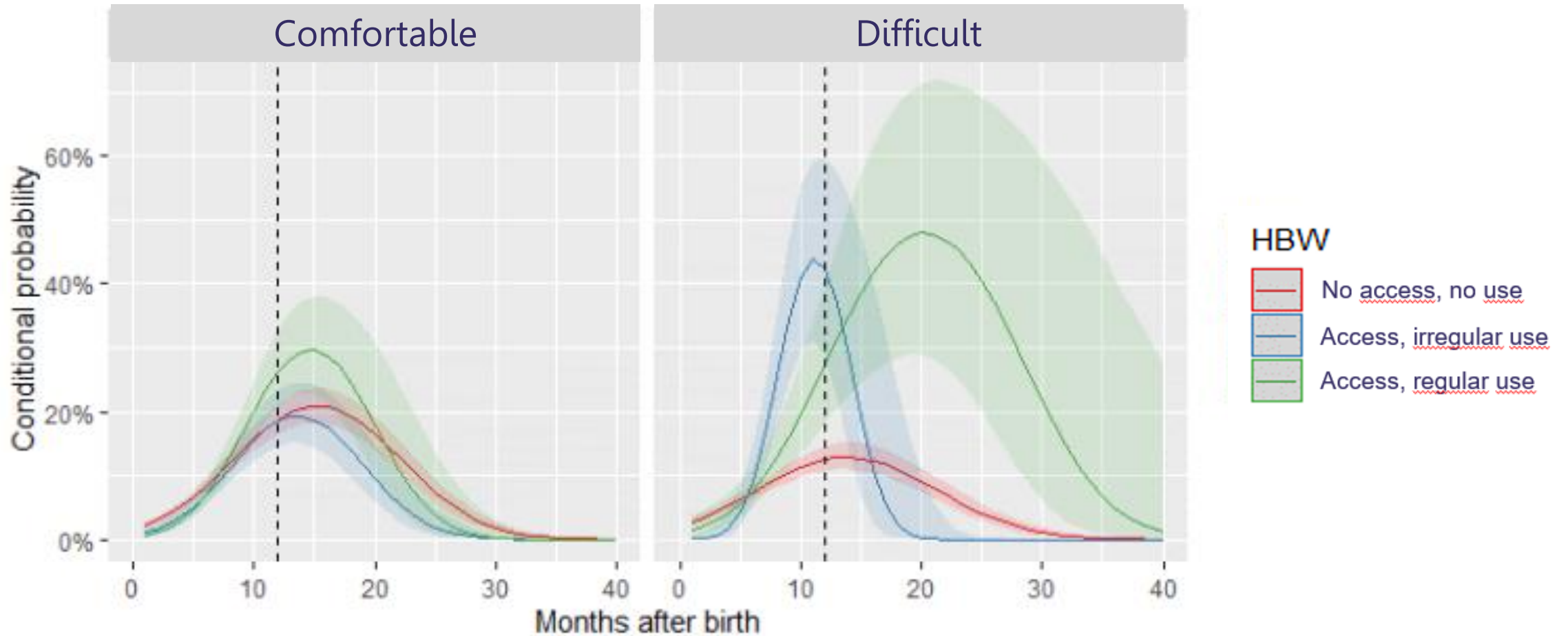
# ...by partner's relative involvement in paid work



# ...by division of housework



# ...by financial situation



# Conclusions

HBW is **positively related** to woman's **return to paid** work

**But mostly:**

- among those mothers who have not returned to work already in the first year after birth
- after the second birth
- her partner does not engage much in unpaid work at home
- if there is **financial pressure**

**Time  
constraints**

# THANK YOU



POLSKIE POWROTY  
POLISH RETURNS



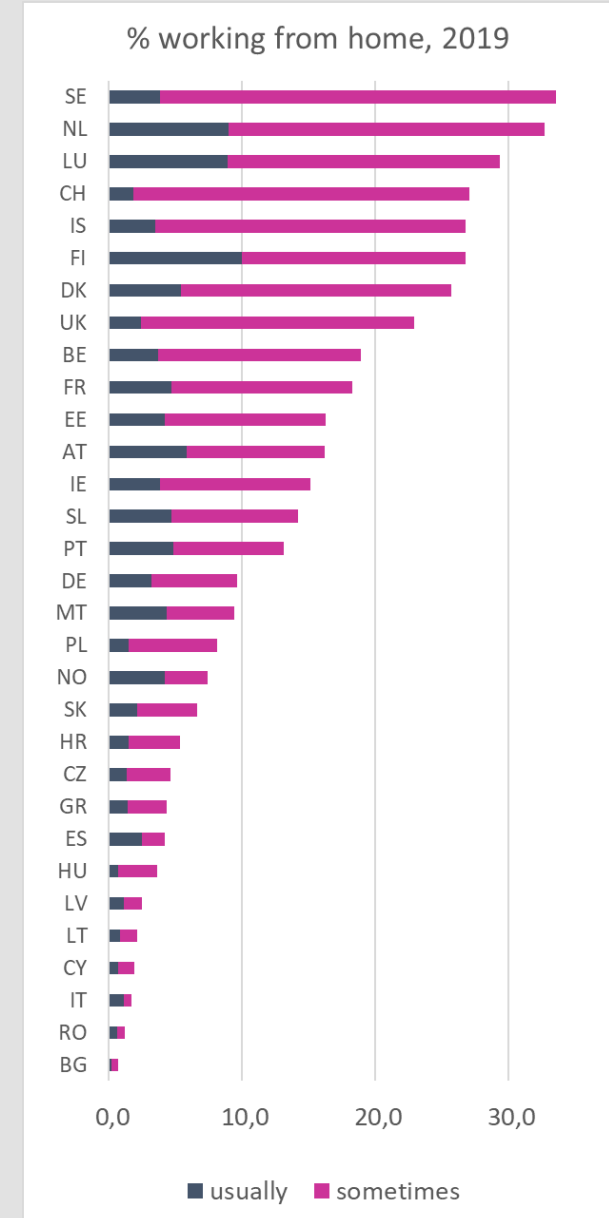
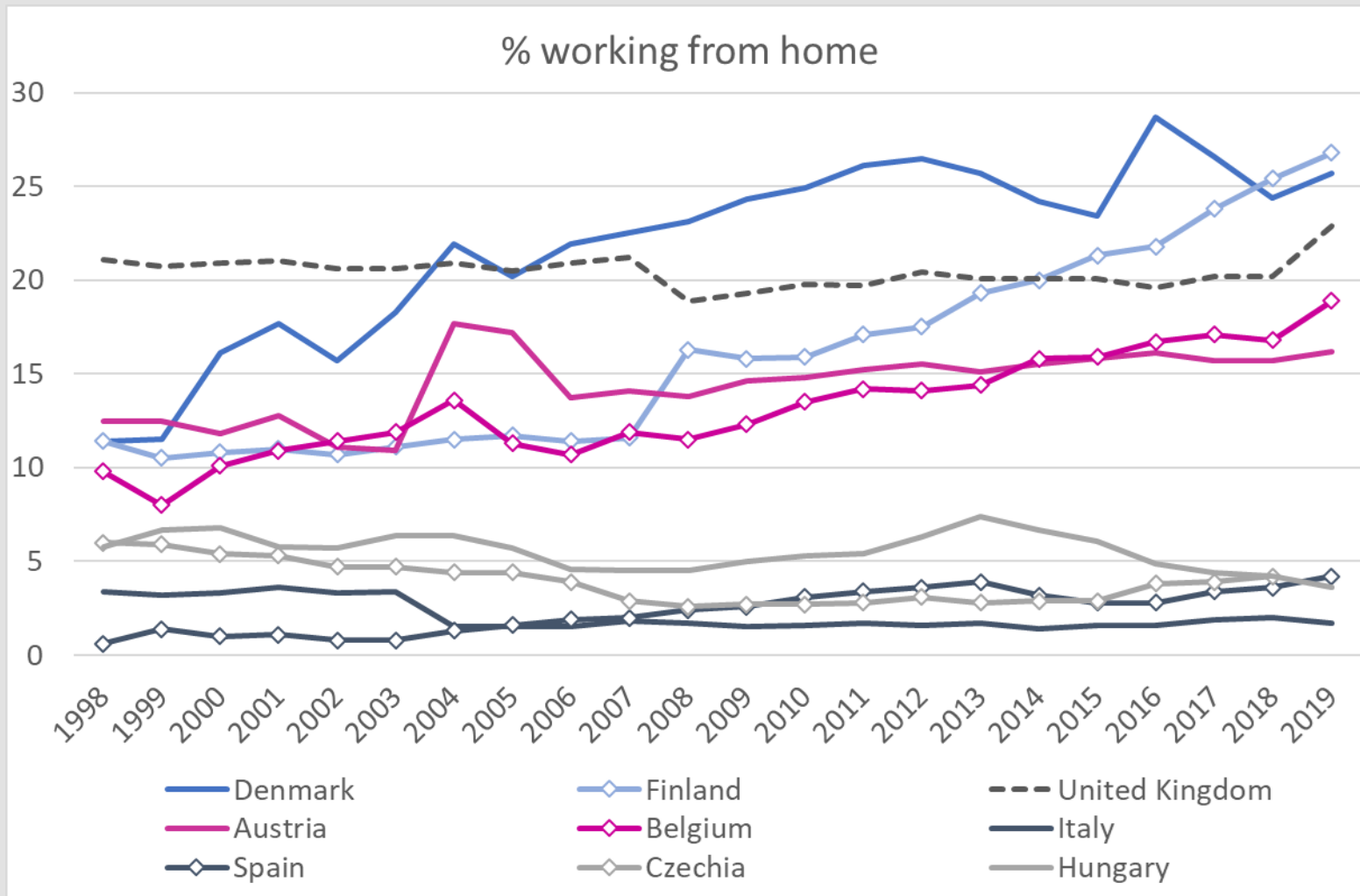
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# HBW has been gaining on importance...



Source: Eurostat