

# **‘Work-life balance’, the family cycle and changes in satisfaction with leisure time**

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## **Introduction**

Sixty years ago, Alva Myrdal (1965) commented on the relatively greater ‘cumbersomeness’ of children in modern, market-based societies. This cumbersomeness might usefully be thought of as comprising three dimensions. First, children cost money, both directly and indirectly in terms of earnings foregone. While infants have probably always been a net cost to their parents, in subsistence economies at least some intergenerational transfer of wealth has been in the other direction, as older children become sources of labour for the household economy. In contemporary European societies however, parents expect little or no ‘return’ from children: on the contrary, the transfer of resources is very much the other way around. Second, they cost time. It is increasingly difficult to combine time devoted to childcare with other activities. Babies are rarely welcome to accompany their parents either to the workplace or to sites of leisure and consumption that do not have the entertainment of children as their specific aim. Children resent being dragged around the shops, up mountains or down the pub. Babies are often unwelcome in cinemas, theatres, clubs or restaurants. Public transport, if it involves stairs or escalators, is often awkward, and traffic is a constant danger. As economic progress raises the value of labour power it is likely that both the money and time costs of children increase. They need university degrees instead of school leaving certificates. A ‘good home’ may be imagined to comprise one where each child has its own living space. Markets develop in increasingly expensive and ‘educational’ toys and pastimes. The marketisation of leisure may mean that children’s activities are spatially more dispersed and require increased parental chauffeuring. These two costs, time and money, are multiplied by a third dimension, which is frequently unnoticed or underestimated: the *status specific* character of parenting. Children, especially infants,

benefit from stability in *who* cares for them. A succession of different, anonymous carers, no matter how well qualified or disposed, is insufficient (which incidentally accounts for the impossibility of ‘industrializing’ the family or reproduction of children). No matter how ‘child friendly’ state policy or various public organisations might be, parents must bear a good deal of the burden of cumbersomeness.

This points to how there are specific periods in individuals’ lives, especially those linked to family and professional transitions, which often bring about conflicting demands on time. Gershuny (2003) recently noted the importance of family stages on men’ and women’s pattern of time use and its potential long-run consequences. However, within the ‘work-life balance debate’ more attention has tended to be paid to the ‘work’ side of the equation, rather than the substantial falls in fertility levels and increase in the amount of time dedicated by families to childcare over recent decades. This analysis therefore uses respondents’ satisfaction with their amount of leisure time as a measure of the ‘time pressure’ in their lives, and takes advantage of the longitudinal nature of the ECHP to examine the impact of the family transition represented by the arrival of new children in a household upon such time pressure, comparing women and men in different household types, with different employment histories and other characteristics (age, level of education, income). Limitations of the data (no dependent variable!) unfortunately mean that the UK and Germany are excluded from the analysis, which was based on Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Austria, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal.

### **The model**

In the ECHP adult respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with their amount of leisure time in terms of a six point scale where six represented complete satisfaction and one represented absolute dissatisfaction (variable pk004). Respondents in most countries, most of the time, report high levels of satisfaction: the median level is five in a majority of countries in our dataset, and four in the remainder: Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal. In Belgium the median for women was five, but four for men.

Like any such variable it has a number of defects. First, it measures *satisfaction with* the amount of leisure time, and not the amount of leisure time itself. Different

respondents may report similar degrees of satisfaction with widely varying amounts of leisure time. However we also know that without doing a (time consuming) diary study, respondents' estimates of actual amounts of leisure time are likely to be prone to error (Fisher 2002). Second we do not know what comparator groups respondents may use to make this judgment (Major 1989; Sen 1990), how far they base their reports upon a comparison of their current situation with their previous experience across the life course and how far their expectations about leisure time and thus their degree of satisfaction with any particular amount of it might vary. Anecdotal experience, for example, suggests that full time students might have rather higher expectations about leisure time than parents or full time workers. Variation here is likely to translate directly into changes in the value of the variable pk004. Third, we cannot know how respondents chose to interpret 'leisure time', and what activities they thought of it as comprising. Defined broadly, leisure time might be seen as embracing almost everything beyond paid work. Defined strictly, it might comprise only such time as devoted to pleasurable or entertaining consumption. Fourth, we cannot be sure that there is simply a positive relationship between a respondents' amount of leisure time and their satisfaction with it. Some respondents (such as the unemployed, retired, long-term ill or inactive) may feel that they have *too much* time on their hands. Finally, like any variable measured in an annual panel study, we cannot be sure that respondents' answers reflect their general situation over the previous year or their current assessment of a state that might vary across much shorter time periods. Their answers might reflect their assessment of a particularly busy or relaxed day or week, for example.

Rather than look at absolute levels of satisfaction, we were primarily interested in the impact upon the likelihood of *changes* in such levels brought about by the event of the birth of a child, and comparing this with other states of being or events such as paid work situation, type of household, civil status and demographic variables by country. We therefore took as our dependent variable the 'risk' or chance of *a decrease of two or more points in respondents' reported level of satisfaction with their leisure time*. By taking a drop of two or more points we hoped to avoid counting random small changes, while examining decreases in satisfaction captured directly what we wanted to measure (time stress or work-life *imbalance*). Floor or ceiling effects were controlled for in the model. We expected country effects to represent different social

policy environments, such as parental leave, coverage of public or private childcare, school hours and fiscal transfers to parents. However country will clearly represent other unmeasured effects as well. We constructed different models for men and women given that, despite advances in sexual equality, there still exists a substantial sexual division of labour in unpaid and paid work, as well as significant differences in ideological and normative expectations about the abilities and obligations of men compared to women, particularly in parenting (as illustrated, for example, by attitude surveys continued insistence on asking respondents' views about working *mothers* but not working *fathers*). Our analysis is a dynamic one, in which we are interested in *changes in* leisure time satisfaction, rather than its absolute level, and their association with other events or states, using the longitudinal potential of all eight available waves of the ECHP. In order to do this we had to take account of cases where respondents did not answer the question in a given year, either because they preferred not to answer the question, did not know the answer or did not complete an interview in that year. It would have been wasteful and biased to drop all observations of a particular respondent only because information was missing for one or more waves, so such respondents were defined as at risk but not observed for waves where information was not present. Since we were interested *inter alia* in household composition and in the relationship of adult household members to new and existing children, considerable and rather extensive work had to be undertaken 'cleaning' the data in the relationship file and running consistency checks within it. Incidence of miscoding appeared to be positively related to size of household. Firstly we recovered information on the relationship between the same two members of a single household when such information was missing in some waves. We corrected for changes in the nature of the relationship between the same two members of a single household if this changed in impossible or highly unlikely ways (e.g. a son becomes a partner). We found that the likelihood of a miscoding in a single wave was higher, the higher the number of components in a household

In order to study the likelihood of reporting a relevant decrease in satisfaction with leisure time, and since we had discrete data, we made use of a discrete time hazard rate model (the complementary log log model) which corresponds to a continuous time proportional hazard model (Allison, 1982).

As pointed out in the introduction, we were interested in analyzing and comparing the consequences of certain circumstances such childbirth and childrearing on conflicting demands on time for individuals in differing circumstances (family status, activity, educational level, etc.), and coping through differing household strategies (single- or dual- breadwinner families for couples, single living persons, individuals living with their parents, etc.). To control for the family status we inserted a set of dummy variables (being in a couple - ref.), alone, and living with parents (under 39 years of age).

As an indicator of conflicting demands on time we considered the combination of both the respondents' and their partners' employment statuses, when a partner was present. This double focus on both partners activity status allowed us to explore the dependence of the allocation of responsibilities for care with respect to a respondent's contribution to household income (Major 1993; Major et al 1984), which might be taken as a rough proxy for 'power' in a relationship (Sen 1990; Lerner 1987; Thompson 1991 and 1993).

For this purpose we inserted in the model controls for the total household monthly wage and salary earnings (hi211m) corrected for outliers<sup>1</sup> coupled with an indicator of the respondent relative contribution to it (% ranging from 0, meaning no contribution, to 100 = single breadwinner) through personal monthly net income (pi211m)<sup>2</sup>. All income measures were adjusted according to the corresponding Purchasing Power Parity Ratios (PPPs) and Consumer Price Indexes (CPIs)<sup>3</sup> by year and country.

In order to account for the effect of activity status we furthermore distinguished among the following positions for women and men, respectively: being (i) in the educational system; (ii) unemployed; (iii) retired (This was only defined for women; given the scarce number of observations for other conditions of inactivity for men,

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<sup>1</sup> Ranging from 0 to 120. Having inserted this indicator as a metric variable, and in order to avoid a few outlying values distorting the estimation, the few most extreme cases in the distribution were "smoothed" towards the value of the subsequent higher cases. After an exploration of the distributions, the decision was taken to set a ceiling of 120, and readjusting the values of 118 observations out of the total amount of year-records for women (414180), and 123 out of the total amount of year-records for men (378397).

<sup>2</sup> This rate was calculated before any correction on the total household income from work was computed.

<sup>3</sup> As available at: <http://laborsta.ilo.org> .

this category was grouped into a more generally defined category of “inactivity” within which the condition of being retired was by far the most common.) (iv) housework (only for women again) (v) inactive (comprising for men retirement, homemaking, and other conditions of inactivity such as military service or inability); and (vi) working. Among those working, several categories were further specified: (vi-i) employed (which includes those working with an employer in paid employment, those working with an employer under a paid apprenticeship scheme and those working with an employer in training under special schemes related to employment); (vi-ii) self-employed, and (vi-iii) doing unpaid work in a family enterprise<sup>4</sup>.

Since people employed on a full-time basis earn higher incomes and have less time left over from work than those employed part-time, they can be considered to be more exposed to conflicts regarding the balance between work and life. For this reason we also distinguished, among those individuals working, between (i) full-time (working more than 35 hours per week), (ii) high part-timers (working between 25 and 34 hours per week), and (iii) low part-timers (working 24 or less weekly)<sup>5</sup>.

With regard to employment insecurity, among the individuals working an additional distinction was considered: those working (i) with a permanent contract; (ii) with a fixed-term training contract or with other forms of fixed-term contracts (such as consultants or collaborators); and (iii) without a contract. This classification provided a hierarchy in terms of employment security, going from a maximum for those with a permanent contract to a minimum for those with no contract at all. We hypothesized that workers with greater security could more readily resist pressure to work long hours to improve the chances of contract renewal or extension. The same variables relating to working status, with the exception of the type of contract, was also used to define a partner’s activity status and working time, if the respondent was living with a partner.

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<sup>4</sup> This category has been distinguished only for women, while for men it was pooled together with self-employment since it concerned far less than 1% of the observations.

<sup>5</sup> On the ground of scarcity of observation for men working part-time and since their time-schedule tended to concentrate more around long part-time hours, this distinction was reduced to two single categories only: full-time or part-time (less than 35 hours).

The logic behind the specification of variables used to operationalise the conditions (which might have brought about pressure and constraints on leisure time at the individual level while taking into account the household structure) required a series of interaction effects whose structure is described in Table 1.

The process of interest was studied using an event history approach, with the event of a *decreasing* satisfaction framed in a competing risk setting with the event of experiencing an *increase*. However, given our theoretical interest about conflicts in time allocation, we focus here on the transition to *decreasing* levels of satisfaction with leisure time. The key questions therefore were: is the risk of experiencing time pressure evenly distributed, or are those in more burdensome employment and family situations more exposed? How much does a ‘traditional’ allocation of responsibilities for either the reproductive work within the family or paid employment outside it “protect” respondents (including both partners where relevant) from experiencing such a decrease?

The analyses also included indicators about the recent birth of a child in the household. This dummy variable (“Birth of a child”) was coded as one *only for those individuals who were the parents of that newborn child on the year in which the birth took place*. All other family members who might have been interviewed that year remain unaffected by the definition of this variable. The same was true for the variables controlling for the number of children (a set of three dummies distinguishing the absence of children in the household or the presence of 1, 2 or 3 and more children) and the age of the youngest one (categorized in school-age intervals). The variables detecting the effect of performing childcare and/or elderly care were instead defined for *any* respondent who declared undertaking those activities within the household. Finally the variable detecting whether the household paid for purchasing childcare (hl003) was defined at the household level so that all members in such a household were coded in the same way.

In addition to the indicators of activity status and “care load” in the family, other variables were included in the analyses, some only for control reasons. Respondents’ educational level and previous level of satisfaction with leisure time belong to this

latter group. The previous level of satisfaction was included through a linear and a quadratic term in order to account for the “ceiling effect” implied in the scale nature of the variable. Finally all the analyses were stratified by gender.

Our main hypothesis was that the chosen dependent variable might be treated as a good general indicator of respondents’ perception of general time pressure, which in turn is central to debates about work life balance, and about how household members may distribute time between paid work and domestic and childcare obligations across the life course. We know that the constraints within which they do this have been changing rapidly for four reasons. First, the onward march of normative gender egalitarianism, together with increasingly equal formal opportunities in education and employment and the crumbling of the male breadwinner system have strengthened norms of gender equality in the distribution of both paid and unpaid work and the distribution of rewards from it, and weakened sex-typing of tasks. It is no longer expected that men are employed while women rear children and keep house. This although a load of research on time use has documented the still persistent gender segregation in care-giving work, despite women’s participation to the labor market and little affected by this (Hochschild 1989; Finch and Groves 1983; Leira 1990). While material changes in the sexual division of labour have lagged behind ideological change, they have still been dramatic. Even in the short period where children under three are present in the household, most mothers as well as fathers are employed. Second, most states have recently assumed a rising share of childcare activity by increasing the provision of public nurseries to pre-school children of younger ages, and increasing fiscal transfers to parents, money which, amongst other things, may be used to purchase labour or time saving commodities (ready prepared food, private childcare, videos etc.) (Ungerson 1995). Third, paid working hours have been in decline, albeit more slowly than in the past, while the number of children being born and cared for has everywhere declined substantially since the ‘boom’ years of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Within this decline, the variety of work schedules, weekly hours of work and types of contract have all increased, alongside a general uncertainty about future prospects (Blossfeld and Mills 2003). Fourth, there have been considerable demographic changes in the distribution of paid work and childcare. Men and women spend longer periods in full time education and training, and enter the labour market at later ages, on average. They also become parents at



much later ages than before, or ‘postpone’ this indefinitely, and are likely to concentrate the spacing of births (should they have more than one child) into a shorter period of time than before. Older men, and also women, are more likely to either reduce hours of work or leave the labour market altogether at earlier ages than before. Finally both men and women do this across a life course that is steadily growing longer, and during which they are likely to stay healthy and active until more advanced ages than in the past. As we shall see, while ‘extended families’ of three generations living in the same household are common only in the ‘South’ of Europe, the chances of children having not only both parents but at least one grandparent or great-grandparent alive have increased substantially in the second half of the twentieth century, despite the fact that the average age of parents (and grandparents) at their birth has been rising fast. Comparing household characteristics (presence, age and number of children; labour market situation of each of the parents; their relative contribution to the family income; and whether childcare is purchased) allows us to examine the effect of the rise in women’s employment and the nature of any move away from the ‘male breadwinner’ division of responsibilities between career and family.

### **Our hypotheses**

We expected the birth of children to have a negative effect on satisfaction with leisure time (= *increase* in risk of reporting decline in satisfaction) for both men and women. We expected this effect to be smaller in countries where the socialization of parenting costs is greater (through substantial paid parental leave, pre-school public childcare provision and fiscal transfers to parents). We expected that it would be at least as large as, or greater than other effects, and that the effect might be greater for second children than first children (on the grounds that in their early years, two children are more than twice as much work, and children in contemporary Europe tend to be closely spaced). Conversely we expected third children to have less impact (on grounds of selection: couples may more often proceed to have a third child when previous parenting has proved on balance to be a positive experience). We expected the age of the youngest child to have an effect, with impact on time satisfaction greatest in those aged below three, given that childcare for three year olds and upwards has become more widespread in Europe in the years covered by the Panel waves.

We expected income and contribution to household income to be negatively related to satisfaction with leisure time, on the grounds (Linder 1970, Becker 1965) that the increased value of time will make it scarcer, while the positive association between income and working hours ought to directly decrease its amount. We also expected that increased education, by broadening respondents awareness of alternative life courses and activities might increase demand for leisure time and thus decrease satisfaction with any given amount of it. Education often has a particular influence on the labour market activity of women, and so we expected that the effect might be greater for them. We expected that those who reported that they paid for childcare to be less satisfied, after controlling for income, as the market might be seen as less attractive than state provision or kin care, and thus used more by those with the greater time pressure. We expected the self employed and those on non-permanent contracts to be less satisfied, while those working part time, inactive, keeping house or retired to be less dissatisfied, especially if they were working 'short-part time' (which we defined as less than twenty-four hours per week.) However this might be qualified by selection effects for men working part time given that such work is rarely available, especially in the 'Southern' countries and might represent other factors unmeasured by the model such as long term limiting illness. We were unsure of the effect of unemployment: it might free time but this might not be experienced as, or used for, leisure. We also expected partners' activity status to have an effect with dual earners the most at risk of suffering from time pressure, and thus incurring in decreasing satisfaction. The women exposing more frequently their leisure time to cuts than their working partners (Saraceno 1993). While men with inactive partners might be 'served' by their wives (Major 1993; Major et al 1987), this might be at the cost of their need to spend increasingly longer hours in paid work. Given Bell and Mckie's (1985, 1986) findings (now some twenty years old) we expected that women would not secure any time advantage from their partner's unemployment and that it might worsen things. Conversely we expected that men whose partners were unemployed might actually benefit.

We expected age to have a non-linear effect such that satisfaction initially decreased as respondents accumulated path-dependent obligations restraints and commitments, which might become more relaxed as growing older freed them from such

responsibilities to others, increased choice and perhaps relaxed dependency on the labour market.

We expected living with parents or in a couple to increase satisfaction with leisure time, because of household economies of scale, although there might be a countervailing effect of greater obligations to other household members, and greater opportunities for leisure (couples can do some things together, while they may still, as individuals, do everything singles can). We also expected this effect to be larger for men, given that they tend to benefit from the household sexual division of labour

Finally we expected those who reported that they looked daily after children, or after elders to be more likely to report falls in satisfaction, but had no clear ideas about what the relative magnitude of such effects might be.

### **The results**

Tables 2 to 4 show the main results as estimated coefficients and their associated significance levels (\*\* = 1%; \* = 5%), while table 2 converts the coefficients associated with various birth parities for men and women into the percentage change in risk of reporting a decline of two or more points in satisfaction with leisure time.

#### *Births and presence of children*

The results presented in table two show the impact of the arrival of a child (compared to those not experiencing a birth) in the first row, and of having no children, two compared to having one (second and third rows) or three children compared to having two (forth row), and of having the youngest child aged 0 to 2 years as compared to having the youngest aged 13 to 18 (fifth row). Summing the corresponding significant effects for these conditions, gives us the effect of a birth by parity under various respondent circumstances. The second part of the table converts these coefficients into percentage change in risk of reporting a fall in satisfaction with amount of leisure time. Tables three and four report all the estimated coefficients in the two models computed for men and women.

Several key findings stand out from the table. First, new births seem to have a significant and negative impact on women's free time in all countries except Portugal.

The experience of a birth more than doubles the risk of a reporting a decrease in satisfaction among women in Spain, Italy, Greece, Austria and Finland. By contrast, the effect for men fails to reach significance in any parity except for Italy and Spain (where it barely rises the risk of around a 50%), and scores significant for only a birth parity in Ireland, Belgium and the Netherlands. Second we can distinguish how the effect of a birth varies both between countries and across parities for women. Third, in some countries the effect increases in a roughly linear fashion with number of children, but elsewhere it does not take this form (comprehensively disconfirming our hypothesis about the impact of second children). Only in Portugal however, does either the arrival or presence of children appear to have little effect. Fourth, although the effects found here are less dramatic than expected for higher order parities where they reach significance, the difference between having and not having children is always of the expected sign. This might suggest that people *adapt* to having children. *Number* of children has less impact than *the age of the youngest* child, except in Ireland and Portugal. It is having a child under three (for whom childcare provision is much less extensive across Europe) that has the greatest impact on changes in satisfaction with leisure time, except in Italy (Table 3). Here the effect extends to older ages too. One possible explanation of this is the short school hours for older children in this country. For men, however, there are few effects, which reach significance, except in Spain. It appears that very young children are especially ‘cumbersome’.

Similarly while women who report caring for a child in their household (whether or not it is their own – they may be siblings or other relatives for example) have a higher risk of falls in leisure time satisfaction (except in Ireland Denmark and Finland), the *reverse* is true for men in the few countries where this relationship is significant (The Netherlands, Italy and Spain). Is this evidence that while women continue to be *obliged* to do childcare, men may be able to *choose* its more pleasurable, leisurely aspects, or indeed do it when they have more free time available anyway to spend in this way? *Paying* for childcare has significant and substantial positive effects on the risk of reporting falls in satisfaction with leisure time almost everywhere for both men and women. We interpret this as suggesting that rather than a device, which allows parents and others to ‘buy’ time when they can afford it, the market may be seen as a last resort, when time pressure is greatest and other alternatives (public or kin care)

are unavailable. Finally caring for older persons within the household almost always has an even greater negative effect than caring for children. This does not mean that the absolute burden of such care is higher (its incidence is lower than that of childcare, involving 7% compared to 32% of women, and 2.5% versus 15% of men) but does probably mean that it is seen as more onerous. Children entertain as well as exasperate, caring for the infirm elderly may carry fewer psychological rewards or be experienced as duty rather than attachment. The results also suggest, that at least for women, some countries are more child friendly than others to be in, but that the profile of such countries does not correspond directly to existing typologies of welfare gender or reproduction regimes.

### **Paid work: self and partner**

For men, household income had the kind of effect anticipated by Linder and Becker, but for women the effect was less clear. Contribution to household income also had a substantial effect for men everywhere: the greater their responsibility for providing the household's economic resources, the greater their time pressure. Being self-employed, and for women being either self employed or an unpaid family worker increased time pressure almost everywhere, probably because of the longer hours of work involved. Similarly, for both men and women, temporary or other non-permanent contracts have a substantial effect. However, while unemployment had an ambiguous effect for men, it invariably lessened the risk of falls in leisure time satisfaction for women. For both men and women part time work (and even more so for women 'short' part time work of less than twenty four hours per week) seemed to lessen time pressure. Everywhere except Finland, being a housewife lessened the risk of experiencing a fall in satisfaction with the amount of leisure time, thus pointing to a better capability of inactive women to adapt to changing demands on time allocation. Where it reached significance, *having* a housewife also lessened such a risk for men, thus suggesting that, especially under a traditional division of roles, women tend to absorb men's conflicts with time allocation (Saraceno 1993; Finch and Groves 1983; Hochschild 1989).

Most of these results are straightforward. What is perhaps more noteworthy are our results concerning the effects of *partners'* work situation on respondents' reports of leisure time satisfaction. Where it reached significance the effect on women of men's

unemployment was to increase the risk of falls in leisure time satisfaction. By contrast, women's unemployment, inactivity or retirement had little or no effect on men. Although working part-time protects oneself from dissatisfaction with leisure time, partners' reduced working hours does not display the same effect. Men whose partners work part time as opposed to full time do not appear to experience less time pressure, and the same is true for women.

### **Family and demographic variables**

Contrary to our hypothesis, a quadratic specification did not prove significant when modeling age effects (not shown): for both men and women, leisure time satisfaction simply linearly increases with age. Education had no clear effect, and will require further investigation. Being single had little effect for men, but was clearly beneficial for women, especially in the South. Living with parents appeared to reduce time pressure, except for women in the South, who we might expect to be obliged to take on more of the burden of domestic labour.

### **Conclusions**

Because of the considerable effort which had to be devoted to checking and cleaning data in the *ECHP* relationship file, we had less time than we anticipated to run alternative models so that our results here are best regarded as provisional and further work remains to be done in refining the models further. However there are a few conclusions, which we believe we can draw with reasonable confidence so far.

First, it appears that the leisure time variable (pk004) is a useful measure of time stress. It threw up few, if any, perverse or inexplicable results, and allowed us to enter respondents' work and family situation in the same analysis.

Second, the analysis confirms the importance of *children* as a determinant of times stress, as measured by our dependent variable of decreasing satisfaction with amount of leisure time.

Third, the analysis suggests that more important than the number of children is the age of youngest child, and that it is the presence in a household of children below the

age of 3 that most influences time stress. Work life balance policies that do not concentrate on parents in this group may be less effective.

Fourth, type of paid work is important as well as hours of work. These results suggest that many of the self-employed exploit themselves working intensely or for long hours, while those on non-permanent contracts do the same.

Finally our results suggest that despite the forward march of women's employment and the development of greater sensitivity to 'work life balance' as a public issue, at least for the period of the eight waves of the ECHP we have examined here, the legacy of the male breadwinner system lives on in the way in which children affect the lives of women and men in significantly different ways.

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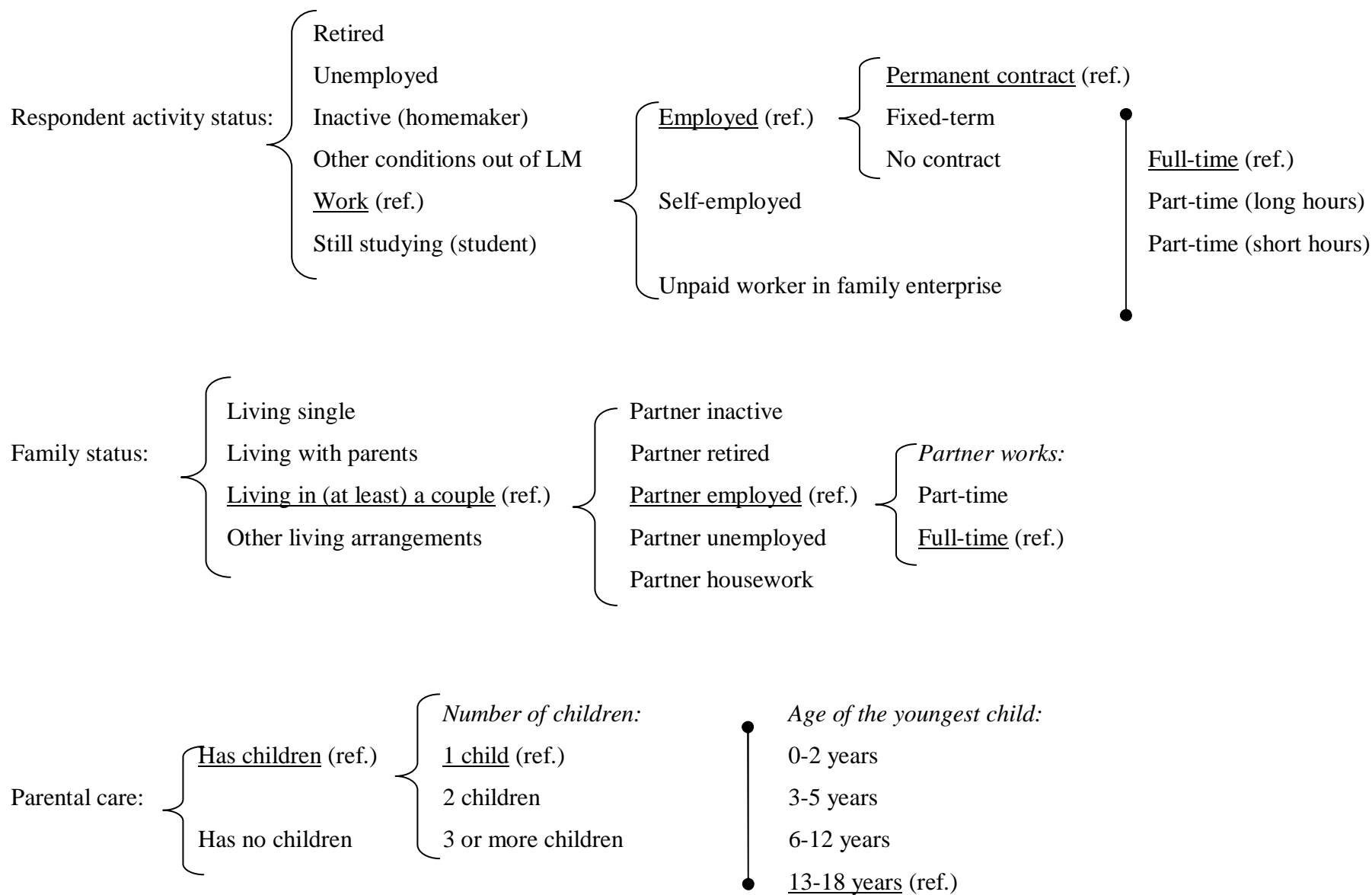
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**Table 1.** Variables used to operationalise household circumstances.



**Table 2: Risk of reporting a fall in leisure time satisfaction by sex and birth parity**

Women: coefficients

|                                | Denmark | The Netherlands | Belgium  | France  | Ireland  | Italy   | Greece  | Spain    | Portugal | Austria | Finland |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|---------|
| Birth                          |         |                 |          | 0,53 ** | 0,37 **  | 0,31 ** | 0,57 ** | 0,36 **  |          | 0,28 *  | 0,51 ** |
| No children (to 1)             | -0,24 * |                 | -0,26 ** |         | -0,28 ** |         |         | -0,24 ** |          |         |         |
| 2 children (to 1)              |         | 0,35 **         |          | 0,16 ** | 0,21 *   |         |         | 0,13 **  |          | 0,24 ** | 0,23 ** |
| 3 children (to 2) <sup>6</sup> | 0,24 *  |                 |          | 0,27 ** | 0,29 **  | 0,26 ** |         |          |          | 0,41 ** |         |
| Youngest aged 0-2              | 0,37 *  | 0,56 **         | 0,25 *   |         |          | 0,57 ** | 0,34 ** | 0,35 **  |          | 0,35 ** | 0,70 ** |

Women: Percentage **increase** in the risk of reporting a fall in leisure time satisfaction around the birth of a child by **parity**

|               |      |       |      |       |      |       |       |       |  |       |       |
|---------------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|--|-------|-------|
| First parity  | 84 % | 75 %  | 66 % | 69 %  | 92 % | 140 % | 148 % | 158 % |  | 88 %  | 235 % |
| Second parity | 44 % | 148 % | 28 % | 99 %  | 80 % | 140 % | 148 % | 133 % |  | 139 % | 324 % |
| Third parity  | 83 % | 75 %  | 28 % | 122 % | 95 % | 211 % | 148 % | 103 % |  | 182 % | 235 % |

Men: coefficients

|                                |  |          |         |  |          |         |  |         |         |  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|----------|---------|--|----------|---------|--|---------|---------|--|--|
| Birth                          |  |          |         |  |          |         |  |         |         |  |  |
| No children (to 1)             |  | -0,51 ** |         |  | -0,29 ** | -0,13 * |  |         | -0,10 * |  |  |
| 2 children (to 1)              |  |          |         |  |          |         |  |         |         |  |  |
| 3 children (to 2) <sup>6</sup> |  | 0,21 *   | 0,37 ** |  |          |         |  |         |         |  |  |
| Youngest aged 0-2              |  |          |         |  |          | 0,35 ** |  | 0,35 ** |         |  |  |

Men: Percentage **increase** in the risk of reporting a fall in leisure time satisfaction around the birth of a child by **parity**

|               |  |      |      |  |      |      |  |      |  |  |  |
|---------------|--|------|------|--|------|------|--|------|--|--|--|
| First parity  |  | 67 % |      |  | 33 % | 61 % |  | 57 % |  |  |  |
| Second parity |  |      |      |  |      | 41 % |  | 42 % |  |  |  |
| Third parity  |  | 23 % | 44 % |  |      | 41 % |  | 42 % |  |  |  |

Source: tables 3 and 4.

<sup>6</sup> These coefficients refer to a third or higher order parity. They do not correspond to those shown in Tables 3 and 4, where the reference category for this set of dummies is 1 child.

**Table 3: Hazard rate of decreasing satisfaction with leisure time, Women** (complementary log-log model)

|   | Denmark  | The Netherlands | Belgium  | France   | Ireland  | Italy    | Greece    | Spain    | Portugal | Austria  | Finland  |
|---|----------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Constant  | -9.4 **  | -8.70 **        | -8.52 ** | -6.38 ** | -7,88 ** | -9,69 ** | -10,58 ** | -9,04 ** | -9,30 ** | -8,03 ** | -9,14 ** |
| Age (years, 16 above)                             | -0.02 ** | -0.01 **        | -0.01 ** | 0.00     | -0,01 ** | 0,00 **  | 0,00 +    | 0,00     | 0,00     | 0,00     | -0,02 ** |
| <i>Education (ref. Education - Primary)</i>       |          |                 |          |          |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |
| Education - Secondary                             | 0.01     | -0.02           | 0.01     | 0.08     | 0,05     | 0,16 **  | 0,07      | 0,14 **  | 0,25 *   | -0,01    | -0,15 *  |
| Education - Tertiary                              | -0.03    | 0.10            | -0.14 *  | 0.12 **  | 0,05     | 0,26 **  | 0,10 +    | 0,07 +   | 0,02     | 0,01     | -0,21 ** |
| % contribution to household income                | 0.25 +   | 0.22            | 0.05     | -0.04    | 0,14     | -0,02    | 0,02      | -0,10    | 0,13     | 0,26 *   | 0,07     |
| Household income                                  | 0.01     | -0.00           | -0.01    | -0.01 ** | 0,00     | -0,01 ** | 0,00      | 0,00     | 0,00     | -0,01    | 0,01 *   |
| <i>Activity status (ref.: Works)</i>              |          |                 |          |          |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |
| Student   | 0.19     | -0.04           | 0.12     | -0.04    | 0,07     | -0,43 ** | -0,44 **  | -0,35 ** | -0,22    | 0,35 **  | 0,29 +   |
| Unemployed  | -0.56 ** | -0.58 **        | -0.40 ** | -0.64 ** | 0,21     | -0,54 ** | -1,06 **  | -0,59 ** | 0,18     | -0,64 ** | -0,57 ** |
| Retired   | -1.23 ** | -0.9 **         | -0.62 ** | -0.97 ** | -0,47 *  | -0,60 ** | -0,75 **  | -0,64 ** | -0,33 ** | -1,15 ** | -0,60 ** |
| Housework   | -0.61 ** | -0.94 **        | -0.60 ** | -0.76 ** | -0,37 ** | -0,42 ** | -0,68 **  | -0,59 ** | -0,43 ** | -0,81 ** | -0,03    |
| Other inactive                                    | -0.18    | -0.39 **        | -0.34 +  | -0.12    | -0,37    | -0,12    | -0,74 **  | -0,35 ** | -0,04    | -0,66 +  | 0,07     |
| <i>Type of job (ref.: Employed)</i>               |          |                 |          |          |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |
| Self-employed                                     | 0.39 *   | 0.45 **         | 0.15     | 0.41 **  | 0,42 **  | 0,23 **  | 0,33 **   | 0,57 **  | 0,58 **  | 0,44 **  | 0,68 **  |
| Unpaid work in family enterprise                  | 1.61 *   | 0.83 **         | 0.16     | -0.09    | 0,43 +   | 0,20     | 0,27 *    | 0,29 +   | 0,41 *   | 0,62 **  | -0,57 ** |
| <i>Working contract (ref.: Permanent)</i>         |          |                 |          |          |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |
| Fixed-term  | 0.69 **  | 0.75 **         | 0.33 **  | 0.43 **  | 0,38 **  | 0,31 **  | 0,44 **   | 0,59 **  | 0,55 **  | 0,30 *   | 0,35 **  |
| No contract                                       | 0.58 **  | 0.48 **         | 0.41 **  | -        | 0,46 **  | 0,55 **  | 0,46 **   | 0,47 **  | 0,40 **  | -0,70 ** | 0,74 **  |
| <i>Working time (ref.: Full-time, 35 + hours)</i> |          |                 |          |          |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |
| High part-time (25-34 hours/week)                 | -0.65 ** | -0.43 **        | -0.27 ** | -0.44 ** | -0,35 ** | -0,24 ** | -0,50 **  | -0,49 ** | -0,60 ** | -0,42 ** | -0,25 *  |
| Low part-time (less than 24 hours)                | -0.98 ** | -0.65 **        | -0.63 ** | -0.70 ** | -0,51 ** | -0,46 ** | -0,28 **  | -0,41 ** | 0,11     | -0,26 ** | -0,31 ** |
| <i>Partners' activity (ref.: Employed)</i>        |          |                 |          |          |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |
| Unemployed  | -0.26    | 0.33 **         | -0.05    | 0.24 **  | 0,22 *   | 0,19 *   | -0,01     | 0,18 **  | 0,37 *   | 0,21     | -0,09    |
| Inactive  | 0.09     | 0.06            | 0.00     | -0.10    | 0,19 *   | 0,03     | 0,03      | 0,04     | 0,11     | 0,23 *   | 0,15     |
| <i>Partners' working hours (ref.: Fulltime)</i>   |          |                 |          |          |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |
| Part-time   | -0.06    | 0.05            | 0.04     | 0.15     | 0,19 +   | 0,04     | -0,05     | 0,10     | 0,19     | 0,17     | -0,06    |
| <i>Family circumstances (ref.: Couple)</i>        |          |                 |          |          |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |
| Living with parents (<39 years)                   | -0.49 ** | -0.42 **        | -0.12    | -0.25 ** | -0,27 *  | -0,01    | 0,03      | -0,06    | 0,16     | -0,04    | -0,56 ** |
| Living single                                     | 0.30 **  | 0.09            | -0.04    | -0.17 *  | 0,08     | -0,22 ** | -0,23 **  | -0,30 ** | 0,03     | -0,33 ** | 0,28 **  |
| Other family arrangements (with others)           | 0.20     | 0.31 **         | 0.11     | 0.15 *   | 0,19 *   | 0,05     | -0,29 **  | -0,08    | 0,17 *   | 0,07     | 0,26 *   |

|  |           |           |           |            |           |            |            |            |           |           |           |  |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|
| Birth of a child (own parents)                   | -0.20     | 0.12      | -0.12     | 0.53 **    | 0,37 **   | 0,31 **    | 0,57 **    | 0,36 **    | -0,03     | 0,28 *    | 0,51 **   |  |
| <i>Number of children (ref.: 1 child)</i>        |           |           |           |            |           |            |            |            |           |           |           |  |
| No children                                      | -0.24 *   | -0.08     | -0.26 **  | -0.08      | -0,28 **  | -0,06      | -0,11 +    | -0,24 **   | -0,10     | -0,18 +   | 0,09      |  |
| 2 children                                       | -0.04     | 0.35 **   | 0.15 +    | 0.16 **    | 0,21 *    | 0,04       | 0,06       | 0,13 **    | 0,04      | 0,24 **   | 0,23 **   |  |
| 3 or more children                               | 0.20 +    | 0.39 **   | 0.22 *    | 0.43 **    | 0,50 **   | 0,30 **    | 0,08       | 0,22 **    | 0,01      | 0,65 **   | 0,25 *    |  |
| <i>Age of youngest child (ref.: 13-18 years)</i> |           |           |           |            |           |            |            |            |           |           |           |  |
| 0-2 years of age                                 | 0.37 **   | 0.56 **   | 0.25 *    | 0.19 *     | 0,09      | 0,57 **    | 0,34 **    | 0,35 **    | 0,10      | 0,35 **   | 0,70 **   |  |
| 3-5 years of age                                 | -0.14     | -0.01     | -0.22 +   | 0.11       | 0,07      | 0,28 **    | 0,07       | 0,15 *     | -0,01     | 0,10      | -0,03     |  |
| 6-12 years of age                                | -0.30 **  | -0.09     | -0.08     | -0.00      | -0,09     | 0,17 **    | -0,06      | 0,04       | 0,01      | 0,03      | 0,08      |  |
| Cares for children in the household              | -0.06     | 0.16 *    | 0.23 **   | 0.12 **    | 0,02      | 0,14 **    | 0,47 **    | 0,14 **    | 0,19 **   | 0,19 *    | 0,11      |  |
| Pays for childcare                               | 0.59 **   | 0.33 **   | 0.24 *    | 0.37 **    | 0,54 **   | 0,18 **    | 0,48 **    | 0,19 **    | 0,37 **   | 0,08      | 0,05      |  |
| Cares for elderly in the household               | 0.41 **   | 0.58 **   | 0.53 **   | 0.52 **    | 0,47 **   | 0,33 **    | 0,48 **    | 0,56 **    | 0,78 **   | 0,79 **   | 0,33 **   |  |
| Lives in an extended family                      | 1.16 **   | -0.02     | 0.18      | 0.12       | -0,04     | 0,15 **    | 0,01       | 0,11 **    | -0,05     | -0,08     | -0,21     |  |
| Previous level of satisfaction                   | 2.27 **   | 2.12 **   | 2.36 **   | 1.13 **    | 1,93 **   | 2,61 **    | 2,91 **    | 2,60 **    | 1,52 **   | 1,84 **   | 2,22 **   |  |
| (Previous level of satisfaction) <sup>2</sup>    | -0.15 **  | -0.14 **  | -0.18 **  | -0.05 **   | -0,14 **  | -0,20 **   | -0,20 **   | -0,20 **   | -0,04     | -0,14 **  | -0,16 **  |  |
| <i>Events</i>                                    | 1419      | 2645      | 2038      | 3565       | 2034      | 6955       | 4850       | 8222       | 2174      | 1613      | 1470      |  |
| <i>Log-likelihood</i>                            | (-5024,5) | (-9611,5) | (-6898,1) | (-12798,3) | (-6986,1) | (-22206,9) | (-15310,2) | (-23821,2) | (-8838,1) | (-5897,8) | (-5244,9) |  |
|  | -4308,9   | -8621,1   | -6178,2   | -11697,4   | -6319,2   | -18668,0   | -12026,3   | -19594,8   | -7512,9   | -5336,2   | -4625,2   |  |

\* : below 5% significance

\*\* : below 1% significance level

Table 4: Hazard rate of **decreasing** satisfaction with leisure time, **Men** (complementary log-log model)

|   | Denmark  | The Netherlands | Belgium  | France   | Ireland  | Italy     | Greece    | Spain    | Portugal | Austria  | Finland  |
|---|----------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Constant  | -8,91 ** | -8,78 **        | -8,85 ** | -6,62 ** | -8,39 ** | -10,23 ** | -11,97 ** | -9,45 ** | -8,92 ** | -7,75 ** | -9,17 ** |
| Age (years, 16 above)                             | -0,03 ** | -0,02 **        | -0,02 ** | -0,01 ** | -0,02 ** | 0,00 **   | -0,01 **  | -0,01 ** | 0,00     | -0,01 ** | -0,02 ** |
| <i>Education (ref. Education - Primary)</i>       |          |                 |          |          |          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Education - Secondary                             | 0,14     | -0,07           | 0,20 **  | -0,03    | 0,27 **  | 0,03      | -0,06     | 0,01     | -0,11    | -0,08    | 0,14     |
| Education - Tertiary                              | 0,03     | 0,07            | 0,04     | 0,04     | 0,24 **  | 0,07      | -0,04     | 0,03     | -0,34 ** | -0,12    | 0,05     |
| % contribution to household income                | 0,35 **  | 0,37 **         | 0,28 **  | 0,41 **  | 0,32 **  | 0,46 **   | 0,84 **   | 0,55 **  | 0,45 **  | 0,88 **  | 0,52 **  |
| Household income                                  | 0,02 **  | 0,00            | 0,01 **  | 0,00 *   | 0,01 **  | 0,00      | 0,02 **   | 0,01 **  | 0,00     | 0,01 *   | 0,01 *   |
| <i>Activity status (ref.: Works)</i>              |          |                 |          |          |          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Student   | 0,29 *   | 0,01            | -0,20    | 0,19     | -0,15    | -0,11     | 0,20      | 0,07     | 0,05     | 0,44 **  | 0,45 **  |
| Unemployed  | 0,19     | 0,35 **         | -0,03    | 0,22 *   | 0,30 **  | -0,04     | -0,38 **  | 0,08     | 0,86 **  | 0,14     | -0,11    |
| Inactive  | 0,66 **  | -0,19           | 0,33 *   | 0,87 **  | 0,41 **  | 0,61 **   | 0,21 *    | 0,08     | 0,41 **  | 1,34 **  | 1,75 **  |
| <i>Type of job (ref.: Employed)</i>               |          |                 |          |          |          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Self-employed                                     | 1,24 **  | 0,65 **         | 0,78 **  | 1,15 **  | 0,72 **  | 0,94 **   | 1,36 **   | 1,18 **  | 0,78 **  | 1,45 **  | 1,07 **  |
| <i>Working contract (ref.: Permanent)</i>         |          |                 |          |          |          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Fixed-term  | 0,57 **  | 0,34 *          | 0,34 **  | 0,46 **  | 0,46 **  | 0,63 **   | 0,57 **   | 0,78 **  | 0,55 **  | 0,01     | 0,57 **  |
| No contract                                       | 0,46 **  | 0,49 **         | 0,35     | **       | 0,51 **  | 0,52 **   | 0,63 **   | 0,86 **  | 0,59 **  | -0,16    | 0,57 **  |
| <i>Working time (ref.: Full-time, 35 + hours)</i> |          |                 |          |          |          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Part-time (less than 24 hours)                    | -0,25    | -0,32 **        | -0,61 ** | -0,44 ** | -0,25 ** | -0,39 **  | -0,44 **  | -0,56 ** | -0,41 ** | -0,23    | -0,14    |
| <i>Partners' activity (ref.: Employed)</i>        |          |                 |          |          |          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Unpaid work in family enterprise                  | 0,03     | 0,44            | -0,14    | -0,26    | -0,07    | 0,04      | 0,06      | 0,02     | 0,23     | 0,48 *   | -0,76    |
| Unemployed  | -0,12    | -0,16           | 0,15     | 0,00     | 0,07     | 0,03      | -0,07     | -0,07    | 0,18     | -0,28    | -0,34 *  |
| Retired   | -0,27    | -0,74           | -0,14    | -0,21 *  | -0,29    | -0,13 *   | 0,01      | -0,13    | -0,08    | -0,41 ** | -0,13    |
| Housework   | -0,03    | -0,38 **        | -0,09    | -0,08    | -0,04    | -0,12 **  | -0,15 **  | -0,20 ** | -0,41 ** | -0,27 ** | -0,19    |
| Inactive  | 0,32     | 0,35 *          | -0,54 *  | 0,16     | 0,16     | -0,02     | 0,18      | -0,03    | -0,21    | 0,40     | 0,52 **  |
| <i>Partners' working hours (ref.: Fulltime)</i>   |          |                 |          |          |          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| High part-time (25-34 hours/week)                 | -0,11    | -0,01           | -0,12    | -0,04    | 0,02     | -0,17     | -0,11     | -0,08    | 0,03     | -0,02    | 0,05     |
| Low part-time (less than 24 hours)                | 0,20     | -0,21 *         | -0,16    | -0,11    | -0,04    | -0,31 **  | -0,18     | -0,01    | -0,23    | -0,10    | 0,10     |
| <i>Family circumstances (ref.: Couple)</i>        |          |                 |          |          |          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Living with parents (<39 years)                   | -0,62 ** | -0,22 *         | -0,20    | -0,40 ** | -0,12    | -0,10     | -0,09     | -0,12 *  | -0,09    | -0,09    | -0,40 ** |
| Living single                                     | 0,17     | 0,01            | -0,07    | -0,09    | 0,27 *   | -0,09     | -0,17     | -0,31 ** | -0,07    | -0,38 ** | 0,18     |

|  |           |           |           |            |           |            |            |            |           |           |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Other family arrangements (with others)              | 0,27      | -0,03     | -0,04     | -0,19      | 0,04      | 0,01       | -0,03      | -0,08      | -0,23     | -0,21     | -0,16     |
| Birth of a child (own parents)                       | 0,10      | -0,06     | -0,05     | 0,06       | 0,16      | -0,15      | 0,15       | -0,17      | -0,18     | 0,01      | 0,29      |
| <i>Number of children (ref.: 1 child)</i>            |           |           |           |            |           | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| No children  | -0,04     | -0,51 **  | -0,10     | -0,04      | -0,29 **  | -0,13 *    | -0,11      | -0,10 *    | -0,10     | -0,15     | -0,06     |
| 2 children   | -0,12     | 0,02      | -0,05     | 0,04       | 0,16      | -0,02      | 0,07       | -0,01      | 0,04      | 0,00      | 0,16      |
| 3 or more children                                   | 0,07      | 0,23 *    | 0,32 **   | 0,13       | 0,24 *    | 0,03       | 0,05       | 0,09       | 0,07      | 0,00      | 0,13      |
| <i>Age of the youngest child (ref.: 13-18 years)</i> |           |           |           |            |           | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| 0-2 years of age                                     | 0,15      | 0,21      | 0,14      | 0,19       | -0,16     | 0,35 **    | 0,12       | 0,35 **    | 0,01      | 0,04      | 0,33      |
| 3-5 years of age                                     | 0,07      | 0,10      | -0,01     | 0,18       | 0,01      | 0,13       | -0,08      | 0,16 *     | -0,11     | -0,04     | -0,16     |
| 6-12 years of age                                    | 0,08      | -0,18     | -0,04     | 0,05       | 0,05      | 0,13       | -0,04      | 0,16 **    | -0,11     | -0,01     | 0,02      |
| Cares for children in the household                  | -0,07     | -0,27 **  | 0,01      | -0,11      | -0,08     | -0,23 **   | 0,05       | -0,16 **   | 0,17      | -0,08     | 0,02      |
| Pays for childcare                                   | 0,34 **   | 0,10      | 0,37 **   | 0,44 **    | 0,41 **   | 0,30 **    | 0,51 **    | 0,30 **    | 0,28 *    | 0,16      | 0,13      |
| Cares for elderly in the household                   | 0,24      | 0,44 **   | 0,23      | 0,22 *     | 0,34 **   | 0,08       | -0,06      | 0,33 **    | 0,15      | 0,48 **   | 0,15      |
| Lives in an extended family                          | 0,72      | 0,46      | 0,07      | 0,26       | -0,27 *   | 0,04       | 0,04       | 0,02       | 0,00      | 0,04      | -0,27     |
| Previous level of satisfaction                       | 2,15 **   | 2,27 **   | 2,38 **   | 1,20 **    | 2,02 **   | 2,79 **    | 3,21 **    | 2,56 **    | 1,49 **   | 1,67 **   | 2,16 **   |
| (Previous level of satisfaction) <sup>2</sup>        | -0,15 **  | -0,16 **  | -0,18 **  | -0,06 **   | -0,15 **  | -0,21 **   | -0,23 **   | -0,19 **   | -0,04     | -0,12 **  | -0,15 **  |
| <i>Events</i>  | 1287      | 2218      | 1552      | 3175       | 1693      | 6177       | 3899       | 7187       | 1876      | 1483      | 1268      |
| <i>Log-likelihood</i>                                | (-4615,5) | (-8191,9) | (-5488,0) | (-11471,7) | (-5921,0) | (-20198,4) | (-12747,6) | (-21237,1) | (-7720,1) | (-5433,6) | (-4571,5) |
|  | -4132,6   | -7369,2   | -4929,4   | -10512,8   | -5350,0   | -17116,2   | -10018,8   | -17514,8   | -6636,7   | -4973,4   | -4039,7   |

\* : below 5% significance

\*\* : below 1% significance level