

## Male breadwinning revisited:

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**Male breadwinning revisited: how specialisation, gender role attitudes and work characteristics affect overwork and underwork in Europe.**

**Shireen Kanji and Robin Samuel. Published in Sociology**

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We examine how male breadwinning and fatherhood relate to men's overwork and underwork in western Europe. Male breadwinners should be less likely to experience overwork than other men, particularly when they have children, if specialising in paid work suits them. However, multinomial logistic regression analysis of the European Social Survey data from 2010 (n=4662) challenges this position: male breadwinners, with and without children, want to work fewer than their actual hours, making visible one of the downsides of specialisation. Male breadwinners wanting to work fewer hours is specifically related to the job interfering with family life, as revealed by a comparison of the average marginal effects of variables across models. Work-life interference has an effect over and beyond the separate effects of work characteristics and family structure, showing the salience of the way work and life articulate.

***Keywords:*** *working hours, hours constraints, hours mismatch, male breadwinners, work-life conflict, overwork, underwork, fatherhood*

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## INTRODUCTION

More an ideal than reality, the male breadwinner model still profoundly impacts how gender organises societies. Male breadwinning forms the bedrock of systems of separate spheres in which men engage in paid work and women in unpaid work. Dramatic increases in women's paid employment and a weakening in men's position in work have caused significant changes to the ways that heterosexual couples in Europe organise, a situation that Oppenheimer (1994) previously drew attention to in the USA. Against this backdrop, it is hardly surprising that research has focused on the emergence of dual and equal-earning relationships. These relationships signify a shift towards greater equality, although we are far from the equality Fraser (1994) envisaged in her universal caregiver model. That kind of equality accords equal value to paid and unpaid work and requires redistribution between men and women, the state and the market. A sign of the persistence of gender inequality is the endurance of the male breadwinner model, which Crompton (1999) and others have argued has been reconstituted in a modified form encompassing women's part-time work. One of the most consequential but overlooked aspects of the change in women's work participation is the change to what male breadwinning means (see Nadim, 2015 for Norway), the issue we examine in this article.

In workplaces the ideal of male breadwinning (Warren, 2007) persists in underpinning a system of rewards, exemplified by a male breadwinning wage premium in the USA (Chun and Lee, 2001; Killewald and Gough, 2013). There is no current evidence on whether this wage premium to male breadwinning is also present in European countries but there is ample evidence of hegemonic masculine cultures which disadvantage women in workplaces (Cahusac and Kanji, 2014). At the centre of such exclusionary practices are long hours which serve to 'keep women out' (Simpson, 1998). Men are more able than women to sustain long hours because women are more likely to adapt to a male partner's work (Milkie and Peltola, 1999). However, little is known about whether men actually want to work long hours,

particularly the male breadwinners who are theoretically able to work the hours they wish unconstrained by domestic demands. We pursue this issue by examining how male breadwinning affects the likelihood of men expressing a desire to work more or fewer than their actual hours, a subjective assessment of well-being (Merz, 2002). The subjectivity of this assessment means that self-reported preferred hours incorporate feelings about work, social expectations, gender stereotypes and even a sense of resignation (Bielenski et al., 2002; Campbell and Van Wanrooy, 2013). This desire to work longer or shorter hours is about how male breadwinners experience time.

The contributions of this study are threefold. Firstly, we gain insight into how well the male breadwinner model is working in Europe for the men who conform to it. In their seminal work on the dynamics of married living Blood and Wolfe (1960) argued that being a breadwinner confers power in household decision-making. This article explores a potential downside: when people are unable to work their preferred hours, they are known to suffer negative health and well-being effects (Wooden, Warren and Drago, 2009). Moreover they tend to act or adapt to this situation: by changing their job or their preferences (Reynolds and Aletraris, 2006), which has serious consequences for organisations in terms of turnover and job satisfaction.

Secondly, the article contributes to understanding the potential for men's behaviour change to promote gender inequality. As Connell (2005) notes, "whether they [men] are willing to open the gates for major reforms is an important strategic question." Little is known about whether men simply enjoy the positive aspects of long hours, symbolised by higher wage rates (Cha and Weeden, 2014), or if they *want* to adapt their paid work hours, particularly when they have a partner or children. Men are increasingly saying that they want equal partnerships (Hook, 2006; Risman and Johnson Summerford, 1998) and recent evidence shows that equal relationships are not a barrier to relationship stability (Kanji and Schober, 2014). The question

is whether men actually would change their hours to achieve these equal partnerships or to be more involved fathers if they did not face the structural constraints to adapting hours, which are well documented (Coleman and Pencavel, 1993; Stewart and Swaffield, 1997).

Thirdly, it is increasingly recognised that work and family are linked systems, so that forms of work and partnership not only reciprocally affect each other but are enmeshed. We investigate whether it is the inequalities manifest in contemporary forms of work that drive particular groups of men to feel overworked or underworked and not just their relationship status. Stratification results in those in more privileged parts of the labour market wanting to work fewer hours (overwork) and those in tenuous and low paid work wanting to work more than their actual hours (underwork), what Jacobs and Gerson (2004) term the ‘time divide’ (also see Stier and Lewin Epstein, 2001).

## **EXISTING THEORIES AND PREVIOUS EMPIRICAL FINDINGS**

### **Specialisation and hours’ preferences**

Long hours at work are easier for men to sustain when a female partner is clearly responsible for domestic work, that is when couples specialise. Becker (1991, 1993) argued that specialisation between men and women in couples was efficient for biological reasons and as a result of discrimination against women in the labour market. This efficiency is socially constructed through rewards, such as higher male wages, promotions and organisational cultures that are run by men for men (Acker, 1990; Kanter, 1977). In some couples men’s long hours are the mechanism that brings about the male-breadwinning arrangement by prompting women’s workplace exit (Cha, 2010). The societal endorsement of the breadwinner model for parents is reflected in a more marked fatherhood wage premium where couples specialise (Killewald and Gough, 2013), reinforced by the motherhood wage penalty (Hodges

and Budig, 2012). The male breadwinner advantage is further reflected in the longer working hours of fathers who are male breadwinners than equal earners or whose female partner is the main earner, at least in the UK (Kanji, 2013).

Most studies of working hours do not distinguish between men on the basis of whether they are breadwinners, equal earners or if their partner is the breadwinner. Studies do find that working hours are tied to partnership. In one of the relatively few studies of working hours, Ahituv and Lerman (2007) found that entry into marriage triggered a large increase in working hours, heralding a further increase when men became fathers. The longer working hours of fathers would not necessarily place them at higher risk of wanting to work fewer hours as some fathers find the breadwinner role salient to being a father. In accordance Golden (2007) found that men with children were less likely to want to work fewer hours. Indeed, children often institute the traditional breadwinning arrangement (Schober, 2013). Reynolds and Johnson's (2012) longitudinal analysis shows that it may be necessary to distinguish between the birth order of children in that the arrival of a first child triggers overwork. A rather different finding is that men reduced their hours in anticipation of becoming fathers (Astone et al. 2010; Smith Koslowski, 2010), which we can speculate would make them less likely to experience overwork. One potential reason that these findings conflict is that the way that men feel about their hours is likely to vary substantially by relationship type. Male breadwinners may be less likely to feel time squeezed because they do not face the issues that a couple's combined hours present (Clarkberg and Moen, 2001; Jacobs and Gornick, 2002). Equality may demand men to participate equally in unpaid work (Goldscheider and Waite, 1991; Risman and Johnson-Sumerford, 1998) which makes them more likely to feel overworked.

Weighing up these conflicting strands of evidence and the persistence of male breadwinning, we test the expectation that male breadwinning is less likely to result in a feeling of overwork than being an equal-earner or a single man.

H1a: Male breadwinners are at a lower risk of overwork than other men because specialisation is an efficient solution that suits them.

If fathers self-identify as breadwinners but struggle in this role then they would not want to reduce but to increase their hours (Milkie and Peltola, 1999) particularly if their earnings are low. Men who find it hard to achieve the breadwinner role may be in this position because of their weak labour market status, a tendency driving equal earning in relationships (Oppenheimer, 1994; Kanji, 2013). Weak labour market status as denoted by being in a low-skilled job increasingly goes together with short hours (Coleman and Pencavel, 1993; Jacobs and Gerson, 2004). Thus we might expect male breadwinners who are in a weak labour market position to want to strengthen their work position by working longer hours. The societal reward structure is such that lower paid men are excluded from the fatherhood wage premium, actually experiencing a small wage penalty (Cooke, 2014).

H1b: Male breadwinners are at higher risk of underwork than equal-earning men because they want to fulfill their perceived role under specialisation. This is challenging because of constraints to the number of hours workplaces will offer them.

Financial position clearly affects how male breadwinners, and potentially other men, feel about their hours. MacInnes' (2005) study illustrates that many more men express a feeling of overwork when they do not have to take into account their earnings, but, particularly fathers, are less likely to say they want to work fewer hours when the question takes into account that they would earn less. Thus, we might expect that men with higher household income and who feel more financially secure have more room to express a feeling of being overworked.



H2: Only men who feel or who are financially secure experience overwork while those who are financially insecure experience underwork. Thus financial position mediates whether men express overwork or underwork.

An alternative explanation for male breadwinners having a lesser likelihood of overwork could stem from their attitudes. A wide range of studies find that men's attitudes vary by their partnership type, for example equal-earning men have more egalitarian attitudes (Cha and Thébaud, 2009; Hook, 2006). Desai, Chugh and Brief (2014) found that men select themselves into a traditional relationship in line with their attitudes towards women in the workplace. Traditional men (those married to a woman who was not working) disfavoured women at work. In order to understand the role of attitudes, which may be associated with breadwinner status, we explore whether conservative attitudes towards women make feelings of overwork less likely or make underwork more likely because men want to prove their masculinity through working longer hours.

H3: Controlling for conservative gender role attitudes makes it more likely that male breadwinners are at risk of overwork and less likely that they are at risk of underwork

If male breadwinners experience overwork for family reasons, then we would expect feelings that relate to the work-life interface to diminish the effect of male breadwinning on overwork. Work-family time-based conflict arises when the time devoted to one role such as being an active father or equal partner impedes giving time to the other role such as working (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985).

H4: Work-life factors mediate effects of male breadwinning on overwork.

## **Work characteristics as drivers of overwork – an alternative view?**

Changes in couples' ways of organising paid work and care are bound to fundamental changes in modes of production post-Fordism (McDowell, 1991). Effects that we find for family and partnership on hours of work may not actually emanate from family and partnership but from work characteristics (Merz, 2002; Echtelt, Glebbeek and Lindenberg, 2006) which are closely related to being a male breadwinner. Job characteristics could be responsible for overwork rather than being a male breadwinner per se.

Previous studies have found that schedule control (Schieman et al. 2009), greater permeability between work and family (Schieman and Young 2010), having greater autonomy (Echtelt et al., 2006) and other high-performance work characteristics impact on work-life conflict and hours mismatches in counter-intuitive ways. Schedule control and autonomy should facilitate the reconciling of work and family life, but paradoxically lead to overwork because higher status jobs carry these characteristics (Echtelt et al., 2006; Schieman et al. 2009).

Firms' ways of organising could pressure men to work longer than they want without any pressure from home. Effort-based promotion schemes push workers to longer hours than they would prefer (Bell and Freeman, 2001), while employers benefit from long hours because they reduce the fixed costs of employing workers (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). Finally long hours are a means of screening high-productivity workers (Landers, Rebitzer and Taylor, 1996).

Consistent with the view that contingent jobs are bad jobs (Kalleberg, Reskin and Hudson, 2000), we would expect those on contracts and in more insecure work to want to work more.

In summary, managers, those with responsibility for others and professionals are more likely to have a high degree of control over different aspects of their work which may be associated

with overwork. We expect those who are on incentive pay to accept working longer hours than they want. Men with low work control, such as those working in elementary occupations, should have a higher probability of wanting to work longer hours because they need more income. Those working on contracts or non-standard hours on weekends or in the evenings may be among those with the most precarious positions who need to work longer hours to increase their earnings.

H5: Work characteristics determine overwork and underwork and are responsible for effects that seem to be about couple specialisation.

## **DATA**

To test these hypotheses, we analyse data from Round Five of the European Social Survey (ESS 5) which includes a rotating module on Work, Family, and Well-Being. The survey was conducted in 2010. We restricted the analysis sample to working men in the age range of 25-60 from twelve western European countries viewing hours constraints as a phenomenon that cross national boundaries, as have previous studies (Otterbach 2010; Sousa-Poza and Henneberger 2000). The included countries were Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Finland, Great Britain, Spain, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and France. We excluded eastern European countries, where the numbers of hours worked differ considerably from western European countries. The empirical validity of pooling the twelve selected countries was tested from two perspectives. First, we calculated the intraclass correlation, which is 0.03 meaning that only 3% of the variance is on the country level. This finding accords with previous research which has found very weak, if any, significant effects for contextual variables such as the proportion of women in the labour market at a national level or the degree of labour market flexibility (Cha and Thébaud, 2009; Hook, 2006). Second, by

conducting hierarchical agglomerative clustering in which we measured the likelihood distance by combining continuous (using the normal density function) and categorical variables (using the multinomial probability mass function), the group of twelve countries did not differ sufficiently on all variables included in our models to warrant separate country analysis, all reported results are for these 12 countries. To control for country differences which would include gender and policy regimes, we include country dummy variables in all our models.<sup>1</sup> As a further robustness check, we ran the analysis without the Nordic countries, which have substantially different policies; interestingly, the effects of male breadwinning on hours' constraints were robust to their exclusion.

There were 5,791 employed men of working age in the twelve countries, out of which listwise information was available for 3,425 men. We employed multiple imputations using chained equations to produce a final analysis sample of 4,662 men (Model 4).

## **ANALYTICAL PLAN**

Using multinomial logistic regressions we analysed how specialisation, attitudes, income, work-life interference and working characteristics are associated with the mismatch between actual and desired hours. We estimated the effects of the explanatory variables on the odds of wanting to work fewer or more than actual hours (reference category is no mismatch). As a robustness check, we ran our models including a control for working hours which did not affect our findings. We present results without the control for hours worked because of potential endogeneity.

We included three additional models to investigate the research hypotheses. Model II added a control for men's conservative attitudes to test H2. Model III included the variables that measure objective and subjective evaluations of a person's income in order to test H3. Model

IV adds variables for work-life interference and work characteristics to Model II to test H4 and H5. The rationale is that any effects found for the family status variables in Model I might instead be due to the work characteristics associated with being a breadwinner or equal earner. Hypotheses H2, H3, H4, and H5 imply model comparison as they state that the inclusion of certain factors mediates the effect of other factors, for example the variable financial position mediates whether men express overwork or underwork as implied in H3. Direct comparison of logits is inadmissible because unobserved heterogeneity differs between analytical samples. Average marginal effects were calculated to compare effect sizes between models (as they are consistent with the effect sizes obtained in the logistic models we do not report them separately but the results are available on request).

## MEASURES

The dependent variable is the mismatch between individuals' actual reported hours and the hours they would prefer to work. The ESS 5 questionnaire asks, "Regardless of your basic or contracted hours, how many hours do/did you *normally work* a week (in your main job), including any paid or unpaid overtime." The survey's question about desired hours is: "How many hours a week, if any, would you choose to work, bearing in mind that your earnings would go up or down according to how many hours you work?" The formulation of these questions elicits the most realistic configuration of hours and earnings adjustments according to Golden and Gebreselassi (2007), although some men may only report what they feel is feasible rather than exercising a completely 'free' choice (Campbell and Van Wanrooy, 2013).

The key explanatory variable to test the effects of specialisation is a seven-category variable that measures whether a man is single (the reference category). In relation to men with a female partner and without children we categorise men as being the breadwinner (in income

terms), an equal earner or as having a female partner who is the main earner. We separately categorise couples with children using these earning relationship categories.

The specific question the ESS asks is, “Around how large a proportion of the household income do you provide yourself?” We define men as breadwinners when they say they provide more than half of the household income, equal earners when they provide half and as having a female partner who is the main earner when she provides over half of the household income. Our definition broadly follows the idea of Crompton’s modified male breadwinner. Warren (2007) highlights the potential distortion that occurs from either including or excluding the self-employed, particularly when comparing across European countries. We include the self-employed, because the measure of income share is a self-classification rather than being based on reported incomes. A dummy variable indicates whether children under age 6 were present in the household to control for specific challenges.

Traditional gender role attitudes were gauged through answers to two questions. First, conservative attitudes were measured by respondents’ answers to the statement, “A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family.” The relative prioritisation of men over women came from answers to “When jobs are scarce, men should have more right<sup>3</sup> to a job than women.” In both cases, answers were coded from 1 to 5. We dichotomised both variables such that agree or strongly agree were collapsed into indicator variables (reference categories are neither disagree nor agree, disagree, and strongly disagree).

We measured the interface between work and family using three measures based on responses to questions. The first question was, “How often feel too tired after work to enjoy the things you would like to do at home?” Responses included never, hardly ever, sometimes, often, always, and don’t know. The second item was based on responses to “Job prevents you from giving the time you want to your partner and family. How often?” The third item measured

how often respondents worried about work problems when they were not working (response categories are on a 5-point scale, never to always).

We measured work control mainly by responses to two statements. The first was, “I am allowed to decide on a daily basis how work is controlled.” Responses were coded from 0 (“I have no influence”) to 10 (“I have complete control”). To measure u-shaped effects of work control on hours’ constraints, we entered the variable as it is, and, treating it as quasi-interval, also entered it after having it centered and squared. The second statement related to schedule control: “I can decide the time I start and finish work,” we recoded this variable as follows: full control, a little or some control, and no control. Dummy variables for whether the man worked on weekends or evenings were added to indicate whether the timing of hours was unsocial or non-standard.

Separate dummy variables indicate whether a man was working in a managerial position (based on 1-digit ISCO, reference category contains all other 1-digit ISCO positions) and responsible for supervising other employees. The personal incentive to work longer hours was measured by responses to two statements: “My opportunities for advancement are good” with answers coded on a scale of 1-5 and “My wage or salary depends on the amount of effort I put into my work” with answers coded 0-4. Work status was further characterised by a dummy indicating whether the individual had a limited duration or no work contract. We proxied for work experience with a variable indicating the total years in the current kind of work. A variable for the size of firm was coded according to the following categories: fewer than 10 workers, 10-24 workers, 25-99, 100-499, and 500 or more.

Two measures of a household’s financial position were included. An objective scale of household income was constructed from the respondent’s self-categorisation of income from a range of income bands, while a subjective measure captured feelings about the household’s income from “living comfortably on present income” to “finding it very difficult on present

income.” In addition, we controlled for age and age squared, and included dummy variables for each of the countries.

## **DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS**

The results from the 2010 ESS data show that the proportion of working men experiencing a mismatch was very large across all countries included in the analysis (Table 1), consistent with several single-country studies in Europe, for example for Germany (Constant and Otterbach, 2011; Merz, 2002) and the UK (Stewart and Swaffield, 1997). It is important to note that unemployed men were not included in our sample. Men in male-breadwinner couples tend to work substantially longer hours: for example male breadwinners with children worked 45.96 hours compared to 41.28 hours for men in couples with children in which the woman is the main earner. The extent of male breadwinning amongst heterosexual couples ranges across contexts: for those with children from 44% in Switzerland to 30% in Sweden, those without children from only 7% in Italy to 18% in the UK, Norway and Finland.

## **ANALYTICAL RESULTS**

Model 1 (Table 2) shows that relative to single men, male breadwinners, contrary to the expectation put forward in H1a, experienced an elevated likelihood of overwork. They also had a lesser likelihood of underwork, which may reflect the selection of men with better employment prospects into a breadwinning relationship. Counter to H1b, male breadwinners were not at a higher risk of underwork. The male breadwinner effects for overwork and underwork extended to men with and without children. Model 1 shows that men in specialised relationships did not have a lower but rather a higher risk of overwork, therefore we would no longer expect attitudes to mediate the results as put forward in H2. Indeed, there



was no evidence that male breadwinners hold conservative attitudes which mediate whether they experience overwork or underwork since the male breadwinner coefficients on overwork are unchanged by the inclusion of the attitude variables (comparison of average marginal effects is consistent). However, men who believe that men should have priority in the labour market were less likely to be in the overwork category. Men who expressed conservative attitudes to women's work were more likely to be in the underwork category, perhaps reflecting the challenge to their masculinity from not being able to achieve their desired hours.

Examining H3, the introduction of the income variables in Model 3 provides crucial insights into the effects of fatherhood and partnership type. A higher level of objectively measured income is associated with a higher likelihood of overwork. Moreover the effects for male breadwinner found in Model 1 do not persist suggesting that there is an association between being a male breadwinner and higher income and higher income is actually responsible for the breadwinner effect found in Model 1. Thus we seem to find evidence that men feel able to express overwork when they have higher incomes. Consistent with our expectation set out in H3, underwork was associated with feeling insecure about income and negatively related to a higher assessment of objective income.

We expected that work-family issues would be prominent in explaining overwork. Accordingly, we found that the work-life variables mediated the demographic variable (these results are not presented in the table). In particular, the variable "the job prevents you from giving time to your family" was significant in explaining overwork and its inclusion rendered the results on the demographic variable insignificant, providing some evidence that male breadwinners' overwork relates to their desire to spend time with their families, both when they have children and when they do not.

We also wanted to test whether the effects we had found for family variables were not actually caused by family status, or even work-life interference, but by the characteristics of

the kind of work men were engaged in, as set out in H5. The result for male breadwinners with children was not robust to the inclusion of work-related characteristics (even in a model, not shown, in which the income variables and work-life interference variables were removed). The fact that male breadwinners with children were not more susceptible to overwork once work characteristics were controlled points to the interrelatedness of men's earning status within couples, children, position in the income hierarchy and types of work engaged in. The fact that work-life interference variables were significant even controlling for a large number of work characteristics suggests that the effects on overwork are about the way that work and life articulate.

Several findings are of note in relation to work characteristics. The more control men had over their hours, which is related to higher-status work, the more likely they were to be in the overwork category, confirming Echtelt et al.'s (2006) autonomy paradox. Our results did not provide evidence for Schieman et al.'s (2009) schedule control paradox, and we did not find any significant effect for being able to control one's schedule relative to having a little control. However, we did find that those without any schedule control were much less likely to be in the overwork category. Weekend work was associated with both underwork and overwork. It might be an indicator of non-standard work and contingent employment, and thus, in many cases, a weak labour market position (Rosenberg and Lapidus, 1999). Concurrently, more privileged workers with high levels of work and schedule control might put in hours on weekends or evenings, which increase the feeling of overwork.

Managers and those responsible for other employees were more likely to want to work both more and fewer than their actual hours. Our prior expectation had been that being a manager would be associated only with wanting to work fewer hours. We may be able to explain the wanting-to-work-more result, however, by some managers feeling that by working more they can demonstrate their latent superior performance. Larger establishment size was associated

with a higher likelihood of overwork but had no association with underwork, while tenure was associated with a lower risk of underwork.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

Much of the recent attention to men's working hours has rested on the gender equality concern that when men work long hours, or longer hours than they desire, they are less able to participate in family life (Clarkberg and Moen, 2001; Jacobs and Gerson, 2004). The tacit understanding is that men want to participate more fully in their relationships and with their families but inflexible workplaces prevent them. This study provides a new angle, examining whether male breadwinners in western Europe actually *want* to work fewer hours to participate in family life. We show that male breadwinners are at a higher risk of overwork and this is related to the job interfering with their family life, a specific form of work-life conflict. The implication is that male breadwinners feel constrained from participating as fully as they desire in family life, even if they do not have children. The scale of this issue varies across European contexts but in all of the included countries male breadwinner couples with children exceeded 30% of all couples.

Our analysis cannot predict whether men would participate more in family life if they were able to work fewer hours, but they suggest that male breadwinners at least desire this. Paving the way for this participation and contrary to some other studies, we find no evidence that conservative gender role attitudes mediate male breadwinners' feelings about overwork. Most previous studies have not directly addressed how being a breadwinner or equal earner affect hours mismatches, although theories of equality and specialisation do suggest substantial differences in ways of organising paid and unpaid work. Studies from the USA have found that children have little effect on overwork (Reynolds and Johnson, 2012) consistent with the findings of this research. However, Golden and Gebresalassie (2007) found being married and

having children under the age of three had minor effects. The implication of children not causing men's overwork is that resolving overwork would not lead to men participating more in care, as one component of Fraser's (1994) envisaged redistribution. However, for specific men overwork is related to work interfering with family life and thus the resolution of overwork could contribute to these men more actively participating in family life. For these men working fewer hours may overcome the alienation from family life that Blood and Wolfe (1960) identified as the downside of male breadwinning.

The results contribute to our understanding of contemporary family formation processes showing that for male breadwinners being in a partnership is more salient to overwork than having children. Perhaps it is the inability to spend time with a partner that stimulates the feeling of overwork because as Blood and Wolfe (1960) observed companionship is a key component of marriage. In more recent times Coontz (2005) has proposed that relationships based on love and intimacy may well require higher time investments. The finding of overwork for partnered men may also be tied to the increase in hours they experience in the transition to partnership, as found by Ahituv and Lerman,(2007) and Astone et al. (2010). As these authors explain, having children is part of a chain of events in family formation.

Many studies have found that marriage adds a labour market premium through the perception of higher male work performance (Korenman and Neumark, 1991; Krashinsky, 2004), particularly for male breadwinners (Killewald and Gough, 2013). Our models further highlight the interconnectedness of work and domestic arrangements. Male breadwinning has an effect on feelings about hours worked which is closely tied to certain types of work such as being a manager, supervising others and working in a larger establishment. Organisational practices continue to operate on the premise of the male breadwinner even while that model is changing in the home. Work forms also matter for underwork. An important issue is that tenure at an organisation was negatively associated with underwork pointing to the positive

effects of stability for workers at the bottom of the wage distribution. The security that goes with this stability has been dramatically eroded in recent times (Kalleberg et al., 2000), calling for the need for worker protection to enhance workers' well-being.

Male breadwinners seem able to express overwork because of their higher incomes (see Model 3). This finding leads to the business case that if organisations want to keep these more highly-paid workers, they need to pay more serious attention to work-life balance as an issue for men, not only a women's issue as currently seems to be the practice (Smithson and Stokoe, 2005). The results of this analysis strongly underscore that work-life balance is a men's issue: work-life variables are significant in relation to overwork, even when the characteristics of work are controlled. Overwork is clearly about how work and life articulate, not just about work or family factors.

The implications of both overwork and underwork go beyond this business case. MacInnes (2005) has argued that governments need to take action on working hours in much the same way that they previously intervened in the setting of wage rates. This kind of action would certainly bring benefits for the growing numbers of insecure workers and potentially weaken the norms around managers devoting themselves only to work, to the exclusion of their family lives.

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## NOTES

1. Using country dummies will provide yield the same results as would be obtained when running a multilevel model using fixed effects where individuals are nested within countries.

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## Author Biographies

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TABLE 1

The Extent of Under- and Overwork across 12 European Countries by ISCO Category and Family/Relative Earning Status  
for Men in Work and of Working Age (n = 5082)

	Average weekly work hours, including overtime	Averaged desired weekly work hours	% wanting to work more hours	% wanting to work less hours	% wanting to work same hours
<i>Family and relative earning status</i>					
Single	43.36	39.07	22.07	48.60	29.33
Couple no children male breadwinner	45.20	38.64	15.12	56.96	27.92
Couple no children equal earner	42.59	37.89	17.38	54.21	28.41
Couple no children woman main earner	40.47	38.09	29.05	49.21	21.74
Couple with children male breadwinner	45.96	39.07	14.60	58.33	27.08
Couple with children male equal earner	42.64	38.93	26.05	40.09	33.86
Couple with children woman main earner	41.28	40.13	32.72	37.86	29.41

*Note:* Countries are Belgium (BE), Switzerland (CH), Germany (DE), Finland (FI), Great Britain (GB), Spain (ES), Denmark (DK), Netherlands (NL), Norway (NO), Portugal (PT), Sweden (SE), and France (F). Weighted by design and population weights (but not including imputed values).

TABLE 2  
Logit Estimates of Work Hour Mismatches (Reference Category is no Mismatch)

	Model 1 (n = 5654)				Model 2(n = 5616)							
	Underworked		Overworked		Underworked		Overworked					
[Single]												
Couple no kids male breadwinner	-0.319	*	(0.147)	0.229	*	(0.102)	-0.325	*	(0.147)	0.214	*	(0.102)
Couple no kids equal earner	-0.356		(0.196)	0.018		(0.136)	-0.358		(0.196)	-0.021		(0.137)
Couple no kids woman main earner	0.041		(0.266)	-0.029		(0.199)	0.040		(0.267)	-0.071		(0.200)
Couple kids male breadwinner	-0.299	*	(0.137)	0.194	*	(0.094)	-0.311	*	(0.138)	0.191	*	(0.094)
Couple kids equal earner	-0.099		(0.172)	-0.121		(0.127)	-0.086		(0.173)	-0.127		(0.128)
Couple kids woman main earner	0.212		(0.233)	-0.040		(0.183)	0.242		(0.234)	-0.042		(0.185)
Kids under 6 years	-0.040		(0.138)	0.028		(0.096)	-0.046		(0.139)	0.018		(0.097)
Men preferential right							-0.092		(0.148)	-0.463	***	(0.113)
Conservative attitude to women's work							0.179		(0.106)	0.048		(0.077)
Too tired after work to enjoy things												
Job prevents you giving time to family												
Worry about work problems when not working												
Control of how work is organised												
Control of how work is organised, centered and squared												
Can decide when to start or finish work [a little, somewhat]												
Not at all												
Yes												
Evening work												
Week-end work												
Manager												
Responsible for supervising other employees												
Wage depends on effort I put in												
Current job: good oportunities for advancement												
Contract limited												
Total years doing kind of work currently doing												
Est. Size												
Objective income												
Subjective income												
Age	-0.142	***	(0.041)	0.003		(0.031)	-0.139	**	(0.042)	0.001		(0.031)
Age, squared	0.001	**	(0.000)	0.000		(0.000)	0.001	**	(0.000)	0.000		(0.000)

Notes: Based on weighted (design and population) multiple imputation, estimates for country dummies and constants not shown.  
\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$  (two-tailed tests). Standard errors in parentheses. Model F test for Model 1 and 2 are 11.65\*\*\* and 11.00\*\*\*, respectively.

TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)  
Logit Estimates of Work Hour Mismatches(Reference Category is no Mismatch)

	Model 3 (n = 5589)				Model 4(n = 4662)			
	Underworked		Overworked		Underworked		Overworked	
[Single]								
Couple no kids male breadwinner	-0.146	(0.153)	0.031	(0.107)	-0.063	(0.174)	0.020	(0.121)
Couple no kids equal earner	-0.151	(0.202)	-0.221	(0.142)	-0.152	(0.225)	-0.083	(0.158)
Couple no kids woman main earner	0.243	(0.272)	-0.286	(0.204)	0.221	(0.335)	0.018	(0.251)
Couple kids male breadwinner	-0.133	(0.147)	-0.025	(0.102)	-0.124	(0.164)	-0.045	(0.112)
Couple kids equal earner	0.118	(0.182)	-0.368 **	(0.135)	0.096	(0.198)	-0.315 *	(0.146)
Couple kids woman main earner	0.390	(0.241)	-0.266	(0.190)	0.253	(0.281)	-0.238	(0.218)
Kids under 6 years	-0.041	(0.140)	0.044	(0.097)	-0.172	(0.155)	-0.080	(0.107)
Men preferential right	-0.196	(0.150)	-0.386 **	(0.115)	0.122	(0.174)	-0.293 *	(0.136)
Conservative attitude to women's work	0.151	(0.107)	0.092	(0.078)	0.093	(0.123)	-0.023	(0.088)
Too tired after work to enjoy things					-0.055	(0.062)	0.134 **	(0.045)
Job prevents you giving time to family					0.082	(0.052)	0.253 ***	(0.037)
Worry about work problems when not working					0.080	(0.052)	0.064	(0.037)
Control of how work is organised					-0.007	(0.021)	0.031 *	(0.016)
Control of how work is organised, centered and squared					0.002	(0.006)	-0.006	(0.004)
Can decide when to start or finish work [a little, somewhat]								
Not at all					0.032	(0.132)	-0.496 ***	(0.097)
Yes					-0.209	(0.182)	-0.079	(0.117)
Evening work					-0.017	(0.116)	0.210 **	(0.079)
Weekend work					0.371 **	(0.116)	0.207 *	(0.083)
Manager					0.398 *	(0.189)	0.564 ***	(0.127)
Responsible for supervising other employees					-0.083	(0.118)	0.276 ***	(0.079)
Wage depends on effort I put in					-0.111	(0.064)	0.017	(0.041)
Current job: good oportunities for advancement					0.096	(0.051)	-0.019	(0.040)
Contract limited					0.152	(0.133)	-0.074	(0.097)
Total years doing kind of work currently doing					-0.028 ***	(0.006)	-0.003	(0.004)
Est. Size					0.026	(0.040)	0.069 **	(0.028)
Objective income	-0.057 *	(0.023)	0.086 ***	(0.017)				
Subjective income	0.264 ***	(0.066)	-0.042	(0.051)				
Age	-0.134 **	(0.042)	-0.007	(0.032)	-0.058	(0.050)	0.017	(0.036)
Age, squared	0.001 *	(0.000)	0.000	(0.000)	0.001	(0.001)	0.000	(0.000)

Notes:Based on weighted (design and population) multiple imputation, estimates for country dummies and constants not shown.  
\**p*< .05; \*\* *p*< .01; \*\*\* *p*< .001 (two-tailed tests). Standard errors in parentheses. Model F tests for Model 3 and 4 are 12.64\*\*\* and 8.89\*\*\*, respectively.