The Changing Nature of Work: What can we learn from Time Use Diaries?

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Abstract

We use new time-use diary data from the UK Office for National Statistics to examine the persistence of remote work and its relationship with the allocation and organisation of time, well-being, and self-perceived productivity. Between November 2022 and March 2025, all paid work is done at home in 28% of weekday diaries recording at least four hours of paid work, compared with around 5% in 2014/15. On days spent working from home, men and women spend 67 and 56 fewer minutes travelling and 28 and 22 fewer minutes in paid work than observationally similar on-site workers. They spend more time sleeping, on unpaid work and on health-related leisure. The organisation of the working day also differs: paid work shifts from the early morning towards the late afternoon and is split into more separate blocks, with around 15 more minutes of unpaid work within the working day, but no significant difference in its span. Despite these differences, the instantaneous enjoyment of paid work is lower at home, and male graduates are less likely to report being fully productive. The allocation of waking time on days spent working from home is associated with higher enjoyment, but for men this advantage is mainly offset by lower enjoyment of paid work when done remotely. Overall, we find little evidence of a systematic difference in the enjoyment of the waking day. Our findings demonstrate how time-use diaries can document differences in the allocation, organisation and experience of time that may contribute to the value workers attach to remote work, but are not captured by conventional measures of working hours or job satisfaction.

Keywords: time use diaries, working from home, instantaneous enjoyment, self-perceived productivity.

JEL Classification: J16, J22, J81, D13, I31, R41.

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1 Introduction

The sharp rise of remote work since 2019 has fundamentally reshaped labour markets and daily life. Initially emerging as a temporary response to global health restrictions, remote work increasingly looks to be a permanent shift in the way work is structured (Aksoy et al., 2022; Hansen et al., 2023; Buckman et al., 2025).

This transformation raises important considerations for employers and policymakers seeking to promote business and macroeconomic competitiveness, as these new working arrangements have implications for productivity (Bloom et al., 2015; Choudhury et al., 2021; Gibbs et al., 2023; Bloom et al., 2024), economic efficiency and the location of economic activity (Davis et al., 2024; Ramani et al., 2024), and workforce characteristics and quality, through which workers select into remote jobs, how long they stay and how they are trained (Emanuel and Harrington, 2024; Emanuel et al., 2023; Bloom et al., 2024; see Barrero et al., 2023, for a review). The shift towards remote working also has significant consequences for workers, potentially affecting career options (Emanuel et al., 2023; Bloom et al., 2024), commuting behaviours (Aksoy et al., 2023; Ramani et al., 2024), work-life balance (Wheatley, 2017; Restrepo and Zeballos, 2022; Pabilonia and Vernon, 2022) and wellbeing (Bloom et al., 2024; Cowan and Spearing, 2026; Emanuel et al., 2026). Remote work may also promote or hinder gender equality in the labour market, by reshaping the distribution of paid and unpaid work between men and women (Pabilonia and Vernon, 2023; Di Filippo et al., 2025). Understanding why workers continue to choose remote work, even when it may involve trade-offs such as accepting lower pay (Barrero et al., 2021, and Cullen et al., 2025, for the US; Nagler et al., 2024, for Germany) and lower wage growth (Barrero et al., 2022, for the US; De Fraja et al., 2025, for the UK), is crucial for identifying the motivations that sustain these arrangements.

From a revealed-preference perspective, the choice to work remotely, when workers have the option of working on-site, suggests that they derive higher overall utility from this arrangement. The persistence of remote work is consistent with this interpretation, although observed working arrangements also reflect changes in employer policies and the nature of jobs. However, observed choices alone do not identify the underlying sources of this utility, nor how different dimensions of well-being are affected. Remote work may involve trade-offs between work-related enjoyment or productivity, commuting costs, temporal flexibility, and the organisation of paid and unpaid activities over the day. Disentangling these components is therefore essential for understanding what workers value in remote work and how it affects their experienced well-being.

Existing studies have shed light on broad patterns of remote work and employees' preferences using specially designed employee surveys (Barrero et al., 2021, 2023) and employer surveys (Barrero et al., 2022; Jones et al., 2024). Some studies have explored the relationship between remote work and the time allocation of workers and households for US and UK employees (Restrepo and Zeballos, 2022; Pabilonia and Vernon, 2022; Giménez-Nadal et al., 2024; Cowan, 2024). These studies largely consider the period up to two years after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The sustained implications of remote work after the pandemic remain an open question.

Our contribution is to examine how remote work is associated not only with the allocation of time between paid work and other activities, but also with the organisation of paid work within

the day and the enjoyment associated with these activities. By combining measures of working-time duration, timing, span and fragmentation with episode-level enjoyment and self-perceived productivity, we provide a more comprehensive account of the experience of remote work than is available from conventional measures of working hours or usual working arrangements.

We use new experimental time use data for the UK to address four key research questions. First, we ask whether time use diaries, collected consistently over time, can be used to provide new information about remote work trends in the UK.[1] Second, we investigate whether remote workers organise their day differently from office workers, both within and outside working hours. Third, we assess whether remote workers report higher enjoyment of work, of non-work activities and of the day as a whole, and perceive themselves to be more productive than their counterparts in traditional office settings. Finally, we assess whether the association between remote work and time use, enjoyment and self-perceived productivity differs by gender.

To address these questions, we analyse and develop a new survey of time use collected by the UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS) between April 2020 and March 2025. We organise the analysis around a simple framework that disentangles the value workers attach to a working arrangement, the allocation and organisation of time that it permits, and the enjoyment they experience in their daily activities (Section 4.1). Because respondents report work at home through their choice of activity codes rather than in answer to direct questions about remote work, the diaries measure remote work independently of workers' preferences and avoid the biases that can arise from the directed questions which underpin much of the available evidence. The ONS online time use survey (OTUS) can be benchmarked against an earlier survey from 2014/2015. Since the share of diaries reporting remote work is broadly stable from November 2022, we then focus on this post-pandemic "new normal", from November 2022 to March 2025, and examine how individuals allocate time across activities on days when they work remotely rather than in the workplace, and the instantaneous enjoyment they associate with these activities. In the two most recent waves (March 2024 and March 2025), we extended the OTUS diaries to elicit workers' self-perceived productivity for each work episode, allowing us to compare it across working arrangements.

Our findings reveal several important trends. First, remote work has remained a stable feature of the labour market beyond the immediate effects of the pandemic. Between November 2022 and March 2025, 28.1% of weekday diaries of employees who spent at least four hours in paid work reported doing all of their paid work at home. This result contributes to the literature on measuring working from home (Barrero et al., 2024; Buckman et al., 2025; Kmetz et al., 2023) showing that time use data can be used to establish trends in work patterns while also providing detailed information on other aspects of work and everyday life.

Second, we find that remote working days involve less paid work, by 28 and 22 minutes (6% and 5%) for men and women, and around an hour less travel (67 and 56 minutes). On these days, workers spend more time sleeping, in unpaid work and caregiving, and in health-related leisure. They also organise their working day differently: on days spent working from home not only paid

[1]We will refer to remote work to include all forms of working from home (fully remote, hybrid work). Because each respondent contributes at most one weekday diary per survey wave, our comparisons are between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home, rather than between workers with different remote or hybrid working arrangements.

work is shorter, but also it takes place less in the early morning, when workers sleep longer, and more in the late afternoon, and is split into more separate blocks of paid work, with about 15 more minutes of unpaid work within the working day, while the span of the working day does not differ significantly. Furthermore, home working is associated with more multitasking: remote workers report more time listening to music, podcasts or the radio while working. Our new findings for the UK support early findings that remote work is associated with more multitasking and unpaid work (Aksoy et al., 2023; Cowan, 2024; Giménez-Nadal et al., 2024; Pabilonia and Vernon, 2022), and they add evidence on how the organisation of the working day differs on remote working days, in its timing and in its fragmentation into separate blocks of paid work, consistent with the greater temporal flexibility that remote work affords.

Third, we find that despite these differences, working from home is associated with lower instantaneous enjoyment of work than working away from home, by 0.14 and 0.19 points on the seven-point scale for men and women. Over the day as a whole, the allocation of time on days spent working from home is associated with higher enjoyment, by 0.07 points on the seven-point scale for both men and women, with less time spent travelling making the largest contribution. For men, this advantage is offset by lower enjoyment in paid work when it is performed at home, and for both men and women we find little evidence of a systematic difference in the enjoyment of the waking day between days spent working from home and on-site, except among male graduates, for whom the waking day is less enjoyable on days spent working from home, by 0.17 points. Men, and in particular graduate men, are also less likely to report being fully productive when working remotely, by 5.7 and 8.8 percentage points. These two results suggest that the choice to work from home may not be primarily driven by gains in productivity or enjoyment of work. On both dimensions, our results differ from evidence based on direct questions, in which remote workers report higher job satisfaction (Wheatley, 2017; Bloom et al., 2024) and say that they are as productive or more productive at home (Barrero et al., 2021; Aksoy et al., 2022; Burdett et al., 2024). In the diaries, respondents rate each work episode without being asked to compare working at home with working elsewhere, so their answers are less exposed to recall bias and to the wish to justify their own working arrangement.

Finally, on days spent working from home, both men and women spend about half an hour more on unpaid work (31 and 30 minutes more than on-site workers), and women also spend 9 more minutes on unpaid care. Because the additional time is similar for men and women, the gender gap in unpaid work (housework) is broadly unchanged: women do 22 more minutes of unpaid work than men on days spent working away from home and 20 more on days spent working from home, conditional on individual characteristics. These patterns are in line with evidence that, in US dual-earner couples, parents spend more time on childcare when they work from home and fathers do more household production when both partners work from home (Pabilonia and Vernon, 2023), and men's additional unpaid work is in line with evidence that fathers' regular working from home is associated with a more egalitarian division of housework in Germany (Schüller, 2026). Our results add individual-level post-pandemic evidence for both men and women in the UK. [2] The association with the experience of paid work is similar for men and

[2]Since the diaries record the time use of only one household member, we cannot establish whether the additional unpaid work undertaken by men on days spent working from home substitutes for their partners' unpaid work or increases total household production. This distinction is important for understanding whether remote work

women: the lower enjoyment of work at home and the lower likelihood of being fully productive do not differ significantly by gender. Over the day as a whole, however, waking time outside paid work is more enjoyable on days spent working from home for women (by 0.26 points, compared with 0.06 for men), a gender difference of 0.21 points that is significant at the 1% level.

Taken together, these findings highlight the distinction, set out in Section 4.1, between the value workers attach to a working arrangement and the enjoyment they experience in their daily activities. Our findings suggest that neither the experience of paid work nor the enjoyment of the waking day is systematically more favourable on days spent working from home. The value of remote work may therefore extend beyond the enjoyment associated with how time is spent on a given day. The ability to reorganise the working day, respond to household needs and choose among alternative schedules may be valuable even when the activities themselves are no more enjoyable.

These insights contribute to the ongoing literature about the future of work by offering an updated perspective on how workers allocate time and which patterns may contribute to the value they attach to remote work. The study highlights the need for employers to carefully evaluate the benefits and challenges of remote work policies, particularly when designing hybrid work models. For policymakers, our findings emphasise the importance of addressing commuting inefficiencies and work-related expenses, which may be important considerations in the decision to work from home.

The rest of the paper is organised as follows. Section 2 sets out the UK context. Section 3 presents the data. Section 4 sets out a simple conceptual framework and our empirical approach, and Section 5 discusses the main results. Section 6 concludes.

2 UK Context

As it did in many countries, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered an unprecedented disruption to the UK labour market, reshaping working patterns through strict public health measures and government intervention. The UK experienced three national 'strict' lockdowns, from March to July 2020, in November 2020 and from January to June 2021, which forced many workers to operate remotely while the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough) sustained employment for those unable to work from home. These measures, while essential in mitigating economic collapse and reducing contagion, introduced profound shifts in work organisation, the effects of which continue to shape the post-pandemic landscape of work arrangements.

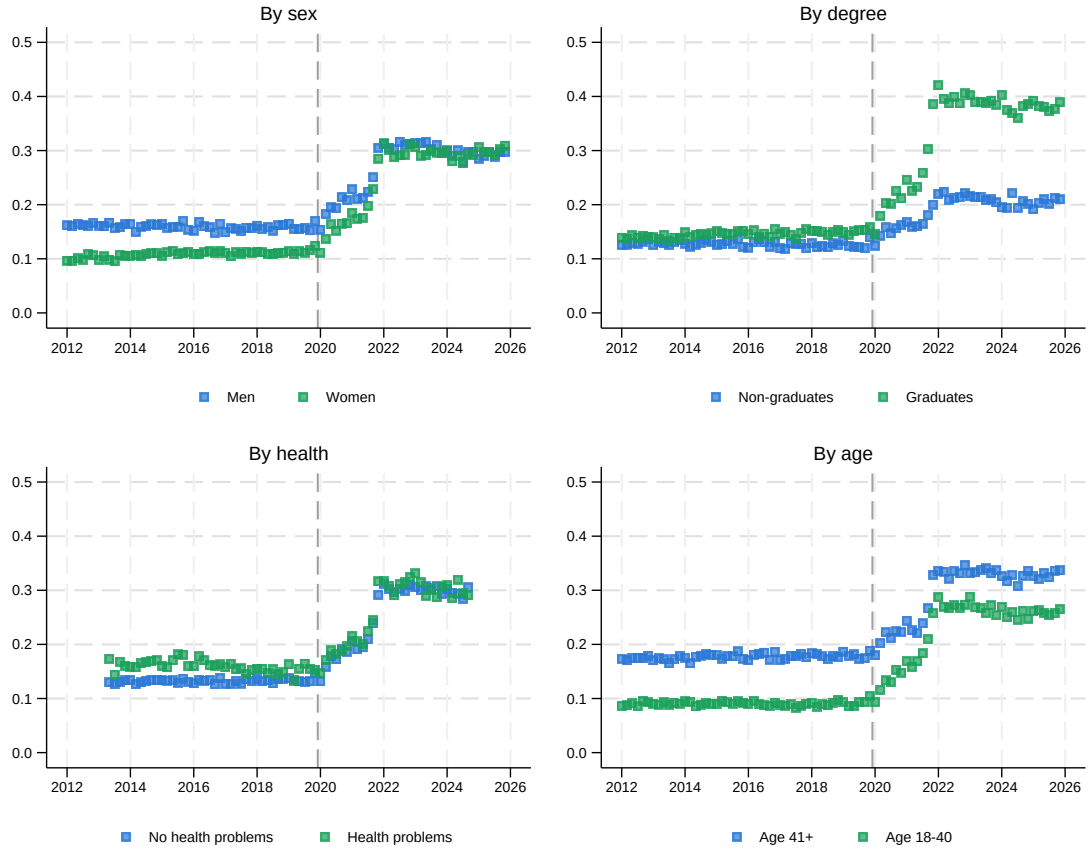
The most significant shift was the widespread adoption of remote working. Figure 1 shows the proportion of respondents in work who reported working mainly or partly from home in the Annual Population Survey (APS), broken down by gender, highest qualification, health status, and age. The proportion of all workers working mainly or partly from home rose from 14% in 2019 to 30% in 2022 and remained stable at that level thereafter (29% in 2024 and 30% in 2025).[3] Notably, this shift led to a gender convergence in remote work, with women, who were less likely

changes the division of unpaid work within couples and, ultimately, gender norms around household responsibilities (Farré et al., 2023).

[3] As reported in Aksoy et al. (2022), the UK was one of the countries with the highest number of paid, planned and desired full days working from home at the end of 2021 and beginning of 2022.

to work from home before 2020, experiencing a sharper rise compared to men (top left panel). The shift to remote work was concentrated among graduate workers (top right panel), while the increase was similar for younger and older workers (bottom right panel) and for workers with and without health conditions (bottom left panel). The greater likelihood of transitioning to remote work for workers with a college degree is observed by Barrero et al. (2023) also for the US and for other countries, reflecting occupational differences between knowledge-based roles and jobs requiring physical presence. The proportions were flat in all groups between 2012 and 2019, which shows that this shift was a structural break rather than an acceleration of existing trends.[4]

Figure 1: Proportion working mainly or partly from home – by gender, college degree, health status and age



Notes: The figure shows the bi-monthly weighted proportion of APS respondents in work who report working mainly or partly from home, January 2012 – December 2025 (January 2012 – September 2024 for the health panel, because the question on activity-limiting health problems has no answers in the 2024 and 2025 household datasets). 2012–2023: APS person datasets; 2024–2025: APS household datasets, which cover full calendar years. Working from home is one when respondents report working from their own home, from the same grounds or building, or in different places with home as a base. The dashed line marks the start of 2020. Health problems: respondents reporting a health condition that limits their activities (available from 2013). Proportions are weighted with the APS person weights (in 2024–2025, the person weight of the household datasets; for January–September 2024 the person dataset gives a proportion 0.6 percentage points higher than the household dataset).

[4]The proportion of APS respondents who report working mainly from their own home follows a similar pattern. The gaps in this proportion across socio-demographic groups are small or non-existent before 2019. After the COVID-19 pandemic this proportion shifted from 5% to 20%, mostly driven by graduate workers.

3 Time Use Data

Conventional surveys capture broad trends in remote work adoption and working hours but cannot reveal the nuances of how work is structured within daily routines, an important factor that could have implications for productivity, worker well-being and their preferences. To address this gap, we turn to time-use data, which offer granular insights into how work is integrated with other activities. Continuous time-use diaries are widely regarded as great tools for tracking behavioural changes, as they minimize recall bias and are less influenced by social desirability bias compared to survey questions (Gershuny et al., 2020; Sullivan et al., 2021). These data allow us to assess not only remote and on-site workers' allocation of their time between total working hours and other activities but also shifts in multitasking and episode-specific experiences. We use new nationally representative data from the United Kingdom, collected with time use diary surveys during and after the COVID-19 pandemic: the On-line Time Use Survey (OTUS) data, developed by the ONS. Respondents are UK adults aged 18 and over, from the NatCen Opinion Panel. Although some respondents may be interviewed in more than one wave, the survey is designed as a repeated cross-section. Data collection took place across nine waves between 2020 and 2025. The first three waves were conducted in March–April 2020 during the first COVID-19 lockdown, September–October 2020 as most restrictions were lifted, and March 2021 amid the vaccine rollout. From wave 4 onward, time-use data collection followed a more regular pattern, with subsequent waves in March 2022, November 2022, March 2023, September–October 2023 and March 2024 and 2025. Participants were assigned two diary days, one weekday and one weekend day, and for each day reported their main activities (primary activities) and any activities carried out at the same time (secondary activities). Activities were recorded using a predefined list of 116 activity codes (see Appendix Table B8).

Primary activities are reported in 10-minute intervals, while secondary activities can change every five minutes. Co-presence and location for each activity are not recorded, however respondents are asked to select different activity codes for work from home and work from the workplace. The working from home indicator used in the analysis is thus derived from respondents' activity-code choices, not from a separate location field. [5] A picture of the online instrument used by the ONS to collect time use diaries is provided in Figure A1, Appendix A. A follow up question appearing in a pop-up window after each activity collects information about instantaneous enjoyment on a seven-point scale, allowing collection over a 24-hour period. We use this measure as a proxy for well-being. The question asks respondents for one overall rating of each episode, so that respondents themselves weigh the different feelings associated with an activity. White and Dolan (2009) show that such an overall rating of each episode can give a more comprehensive picture of experienced well-being than measures that aggregate separate feelings, and Knabe et al. (2010) use a similar single question on satisfaction during each episode for this reason; as in their study, averaging the ratings across episodes or over the day treats the scale as cardinal. To enable us to better understand the relationship between remote work and productivity, we introduced from March 2024 a new, and experimental, follow-up question

[5] Paid work recorded with the code for working from a café or other workspace (about 3% of paid work away from home) is counted as work away from home. In the first wave (April 2020), a single code was used for working from home, a café or another workspace; paid work recorded with this code is counted as work at home, so that the share of diaries with all paid work at home may be slightly overstated in that wave.

on self-perceived productivity that was asked every time respondents selected a spell of paid work. The question asked was "During this time, roughly how productive were you?" and the possible choices were "1 = 100% productive; 2 = 90-99% productive; 3 = 80-89% productive; 4 = 70-79% productive; 5 = Less than 70% productive" as shown in Figure A2, Appendix A. The question was developed by the Cabinet Office to study productivity and effectiveness in the Civil Service. Its wording was informed by cognitive testing, which suggested that respondents were confident that they could assess their own productivity, but not their productivity compared with others, and that they mostly associated productivity with completing work, such as delivering on objectives, and with the use of time, such as meeting deadlines or working efficiently; some also associated it with a feeling of making a difference. Reporting being 100% productive may therefore reflect task completion, concentration, efficient use of time or satisfaction with one's own performance. The measure provides information on workers' perceived effectiveness during individual work episodes, rather than on output per hour. Its episode-level nature allows us to examine how perceived effectiveness varies across working days and alongside the instantaneous enjoyment of work. As with any self-assessment, this measure may differ from actual output, and the direction of the difference is not obvious. We therefore interpret the measure as workers' own perception of how productive their time is, which is relevant to their choice of work arrangement, rather than as a measure of output.

The OTUS data include 7,555 weekday diaries of employees collected between April 2020 and March 2025. We restrict the sample to individuals (employees) reporting at least four hours of paid work per day in order to focus on a more homogeneous group of workers and to exclude marginal or casual employment with very limited daily working time. As a consequence, the analysis excludes days involving fewer than four hours of paid work, including days on which employees may choose to work shorter hours from home to accommodate caring responsibilities. This leaves 6,772 diaries, of which 4,386 were collected between November 2022 and March 2025. Following Pabilonia and Vernon (2022), we also exclude 148 of these diaries, in which some paid work was done at home but less than four hours away from home (see Section 5), which leaves 4,238 diaries. Appendix B (Table B1) presents the main demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the sample used for most of our regression models (November 2022 – March 2025), which contains 4,238 diaries reported by 3,319 respondents. A comparison across waves indicates that the respondent pool remains balanced; however, women and individuals with a college degree are overrepresented compared to national averages. This is less problematic for the purposes of our analysis, as graduates are also more likely to work from home (around 40% of graduates compared with around 20% of non-graduates in the APS since 2022; Figure 1) and therefore constitute a core component of the population of interest. To account for these differences, we apply sample weights provided by the ONS. Table B3 compares main weighted summary statistics for the APS, the main household survey in the UK, and OTUS data showing that the weighted samples are very similar. The 2-digit occupation code (SOC 2020) is missing for about 30% of the sample between November 2022 and March 2025. All regressions include a category for missing occupation and an indicator for codes filled from another wave.

We use OTUS data to construct measures of daily time spent in paid work and other activities

by whether respondents worked from home or from the workplace.[6] Episode level enjoyment and self-perceived productivity are recorded independently of the location of activities. Importantly, given that each respondent contributes at most one weekday diary per survey wave, our measures of time use, enjoyment and self-perceived productivity capture time use on weekdays on which individuals do all their paid work at home, rather than the typical time allocation of workers with different long-run remote working arrangements. Table B2 in Appendix B provides descriptive statistics for time-use measures from OTUS diaries of employed respondents. Lastly, Appendix B (Figures B1 and B2) presents the distributions of self-reported productivity and work enjoyment for the sample in the last two waves of OTUS data.

To benchmark the incidence of remote work before the pandemic, we use the UK Time Use Survey 2014/15 (Gershuny and Sullivan, 2017), a nationally representative household survey in which respondents completed paper diaries of their activities in 10-minute slots, recording the location of each activity separately. In these data, paid work is classified as carried out at home when its recorded location is the respondent's home or second home. We select weekday diaries of respondents in employment with at least four hours of paid work, define working from home as in the OTUS data (all paid work at home, compared with at least four hours of paid work away from home) and apply the diary weights. Since the 2014/15 survey uses paper diaries and records location separately, whereas in OTUS work at home is identified through the activity codes, the comparison between the two surveys is only indicative.

4 Analytical approach

4.1 A simple framework

To organise the evidence, we distinguish three related but distinct objects: the value that a worker attaches to a working arrangement, the allocation and organisation of time that the arrangement permits, and the enjoyment experienced in daily activities.

Let $r \in \{H, O\}$ denote working from home or on-site. On a working day, individual i chooses the time devoted to each primary activity, $\mathbf{t} = (t_1, \ldots, t_A)$, including paid work, travel, sleep, unpaid work and leisure, and a schedule $\mathbf{s}$ that describes when and in what sequence activities are undertaken, as well as how activities are combined. Drawing on the framework of Becker (1965) for the allocation of time, we represent the value of a working day in location r as

$$V_i(r) = \max_{(\mathbf{t},\mathbf{s}) \in \mathcal{F}_i(r)} U_i(c, \mathbf{t}, \mathbf{s}; r)$$

$$\text{subject to} \quad \sum_{a=1}^{A} t_a = 24, \qquad c = y_i + Y_i(r, t_W) - k_i(r),$$

where c is consumption, which depends on non-labour income y_i, labour earnings $Y_i(r, t_W)$ and the monetary costs of working in location r, $k_i(r)$, such as commuting expenses. Labour earnings may depend on the working arrangement and on paid working time t_W, although for salaried workers they need not vary with the hours of paid work undertaken on a particular

[6] The full set of categories of activities considered in the paper is the following: sleeping, personal care, travelling, unpaid housework, unpaid care, watching TV, leisure, fitness/wellbeing related leisure and internet/social media. Detailed activities by activity category are presented in Table B8 (Appendix B).

day. U_i depends on consumption, on the day's activities and their organisation, and directly on location r, which captures other attributes of working in that location, such as longer-term career considerations or a direct preference for autonomy. Following Becker (1965), time is also an input into the production of commodities that generate utility: the value of time devoted to household production, for example, may derive from the services produced rather than from the enjoyment of undertaking household tasks. U_i is therefore a reduced-form representation, which captures both the enjoyment of activities and the value of what is produced with time.

The feasible set $\mathcal{F}_i(r)$ contains the daily schedules available to the worker, given contractual working hours, employer requirements and the nature of work tasks. Working from home removes the need to commute to the workplace and may enlarge this set, for instance by allowing household tasks to be undertaken between periods of paid work. In this sense, temporal flexibility is a property of the feasible set: its value comes from having more discretion over the organisation of the day, not necessarily from choosing a more fragmented day. Other things being equal, a larger feasible set cannot lower the value of the working day. Moreover, when workers face uncertainty about their work or household commitments, the ability to adapt their schedules may be valuable even if it is not exercised on a particular day.

The framework describes the allocation and organisation of time on a working day, conditional on its location. A longer-term working arrangement, such as hybrid work, may also be valuable because it allows workers to choose between working from home and on-site on different days, depending on their work tasks and household circumstances. The value of such an arrangement therefore depends not only on the experience of working in each location, but also on the opportunities it provides to choose between them.

The diaries provide information on two of these objects. First, they measure the realised allocation and organisation of time, $(\mathbf{t}, \mathbf{s})$: the duration of activities (Table 1), the timing of paid work and other activities across the day (Figure 4 and Appendix E), the span and fragmentation of the working day and the activities undertaken within it (Table 2), and the activities undertaken while working (Table 3). Second, they provide an empirical indicator of experienced well-being associated with the realised allocation of time (Kahneman et al., 1997; Kahneman and Krueger, 2006). We measure the instantaneous enjoyment of each episode, e_{ij} (Figure 5), and its duration-weighted average over the waking day,

$$E_i(r) = \sum_{a \in \mathcal{W}} s_{ia}(r)\, e_{ia}(r),$$

where $\mathcal{W}$ is the set of waking activities (all activities except sleep), s_{ia} is the share of waking time devoted to activity a and e_{ia} is its average enjoyment. Differences in the enjoyment of the waking day may therefore reflect both differences in the allocation of time across activities and differences in enjoyment within activities (Table 4). The measure refers to waking time and therefore does not directly capture the value workers may attach to additional sleep or its longer-term benefits. We distinguish this measure from the overall value of working in a given location, which also depends on consumption, the organisation of time and the alternatives available to workers. Self-perceived productivity (Table 5) provides a further dimension of the experience of paid work, which may matter to workers through their sense of achievement, their

pay or their career prospects.

The value of the working arrangement is not observed in the diaries. Evidence on it comes from studies of workers' choices: workers are willing to accept lower pay to work from home (Mas and Pallais, 2017; Barrero et al., 2021; Cullen et al., 2025), and quit less under hybrid arrangements (Bloom et al., 2024). In a compensating wage differentials framework, workers' willingness to pay for remote work may be reflected, other things being equal, in lower wages for jobs that offer this amenity (Rosen, 1986).

The framework makes clear that $V_i(H) > V_i(O)$ does not require $E_i(H) > E_i(O)$. Working from home may be preferred even when the realised day is not more enjoyable, because of differences in monetary commuting costs, the services produced through household production, the organisation of time, other attributes of the working location, or the value of having a wider range of feasible schedules. Our data therefore allow us to document how the allocation, organisation and experience of time differ between days spent working from home and on-site, but not to measure the value of the working arrangement or how workers trade off its different components. As working locations are chosen by workers or employers, the comparisons in this paper are descriptive.

4.2 Empirical approach

Following Pabilonia and Vernon (2022), we define respondents as remote workers if they report at least four hours of paid work, all of it at home, on the diary day, and as on-site workers if they report at least four hours of paid work away from home. We begin with a comparison of the proportion of weekday diaries reporting remote work during weekdays in the OTUS data over time with the corresponding proportion in the UK Time Use Survey 2014/15, after selecting a similar sample of workers.[7] This comparison enables us to describe and quantify the shift toward working from home during and after the pandemic based on time use diary data.

Focusing on the post-pandemic period (November 2022 to March 2025), when the rate of remote work was broadly stable, we compare time use across different activities between diary days in which work is performed at home and diary days in which work is performed away from home, and examine whether these differences vary by gender. Second, we investigate how working from home on the diary day is associated with temporal flexibility in the organisation of work time, measured by how paid work is distributed across the hours of the day, and with patterns of multitasking, instantaneous enjoyment, and self-reported productivity. To understand the association between time use and remote working on the diary day we estimate the following equation:

$$Time^a_{iq} = \alpha + \beta\ WFH_i + \delta\ Female_i + \gamma\ WFH_i \times Female_i + X_i\zeta + \sum_q \xi_q D_q + \varepsilon^a_{iq} \qquad (1)$$

Where the dependent variable $Time^a_{iq}$ represents the reported total diary time for individual i in activity a (*sleeping, personal care, travel, unpaid work, unpaid care, watching television,*

[7] The UK Time Use Survey 2014–15 (UKTUS) is a nationally representative study that collects detailed information on how people allocate their time across daily activities. It was conducted between April 2014 and December 2015.

leisure, wellbeing and fitness, social media/browsing the internet, total time in paid work) in wave q; WFH is a binary indicator taking value 1 if the respondent does all paid work at home on the diary day and 0 if the respondent does at least four hours of paid work away from home, whether or not some paid work is also done at home (following Pabilonia and Vernon, 2022, diaries with some paid work at home and less than four hours away from home are excluded); *Female* is a dummy variable for whether the respondent is a woman; X is a comprehensive set of individual characteristics, 2-digit SOC code occupation dummies and region dummies; D_q is a set of wave dummies and, finally, ε^a_{iq} is an idiosyncratic error term.[8] Our coefficients of interest are β for men and $\beta + \gamma$ for women as they capture the difference in time use between remote workers and office workers. A similar approach is then used to estimate the difference in multitasking between office and remote workers: in this case $Time^a_{iq}$ is time spent in secondary activities while the main reported activity is paid work, using the first secondary activity reported in each time slot.

To examine when during the day the differences in paid work between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home arise, we estimate equation (1) separately for each clock hour of the diary day:

$$Work^h_{iq} = \alpha_h + \beta_h WFH_i + \delta_h Female_i + \gamma_h WFH_i \times Female_i + X_i\zeta_h + \sum_q \xi_{qh} D_q + \varepsilon^h_{iq} \quad (2)$$

where $Work^h_{iq}$ is the number of minutes of paid work reported by individual i in wave q during clock hour h of the diary day ($h = 0$ for 00:00–00:59, ..., 23 for 23:00–23:59), and the other variables are defined as in equation (1). The coefficients on the controls are allowed to differ across hours, therefore the estimates account for differences in the daily schedules of workers in different occupations, regions and waves. The coefficients β_h for men and $\beta_h + \gamma_h$ for women measure the difference in minutes of paid work in hour h between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home; by construction, they sum over the 24 hours to the corresponding daily differences in paid work reported in Table 1. The same approach is used to describe the timing of sleep and travel (Appendix E figures E1 and E2).

Results about time use report many differences between days spent working from home and away from home, so some estimates would appear significant by chance. Standard errors are robust to heteroskedasticity in the diary-level regressions (equations 1 and 2) and clustered at the diary level in the episode-level regressions (equations 3 and 4), since each diary contributes several episodes. We therefore also report p-values adjusted for multiple testing. In Tables 1, 2, 3 and E1 we report Romano–Wolf step-down adjusted p-values (Romano and Wolf, 2005; Clarke et al., 2020), which control the probability of at least one false rejection among all the differences in a table (for men and women), separately for all employees and graduates, while allowing for the correlation between outcomes. For the hourly profiles (Figures 4, E1 and E2) we report, together with pointwise 95% confidence intervals, simultaneous 95% confidence bands (Montiel Olea and Plagborg-Møller, 2019), which cover all 48 hourly differences of a figure jointly

[8] All regressions include the following set of individual characteristics: education levels, age, relationship status, household size, indicators for children in three age groups, ethnicity, house tenure, indicators for income bands, indicator for whether the respondent has a health condition, total workhours in the week, with a separate category for the 2.5% of diaries, all in waves 5 to 7, without this information.

with 95% probability. Both are computed from the same 10,000 bootstrap replications, in which diaries are resampled with replacement. In the text, we describe a difference as significant after the correction when its adjusted p-value is below 0.10, and we indicate the differences that are significant only at the 10% level; for the hourly profiles, which are shown with 95% simultaneous bands, these are the hours with Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values between 0.05 and 0.10. The results on enjoyment and productivity (Figure 5, Tables 4, 5 and D2, and the corresponding tables for graduates) report conventional p-values, without adjustment for multiple testing.[9]

We use OTUS data to investigate instantaneous enjoyment across different groups of activities (treating paid work at the workplace and paid work at home as distinct activities) by estimating the following equation separately for men and women (g=Men, Women):

$$\begin{aligned} Enj^{g}_{ijq} = {} & \beta^{g}_{1}\, Travel_{ij} + \beta^{g}_{2}\, Unpaid\ work_{ij} + \beta^{g}_{3}\, Unpaid\ care_{ij} \\ & + \beta^{g}_{4}\, Work\ from\ office_{ij} + \beta^{g}_{5}\, Work\ from\ home_{ij} \\ & + \beta^{g}_{6}\, Watching\ television_{ij} + \beta^{g}_{7}\, Leisure_{ij} + \beta^{g}_{8}\, Fitness_{ij} \\ & + \gamma^{g} T_{ij} + \theta_{iq} + \varepsilon^{g}_{ijq} \end{aligned} \tag{3}$$

The dependent variable Enj_{ijq} is the instantaneous enjoyment reported by individual i for episode j in wave q; travel, *unpaid work, unpaid care, watching television, leisure, wellbeing and fitness, paid work from home* and *paid work from the office* are binary indicators for the main types of activities, where the baseline is sleeping and personal care, activities that are inevitable and therefore reported by all respondents in the sample; and T_{ij} is the total time of the episode.[10] Because each respondent reports several activity episodes on the diary day, the individual fixed effect θ_{iq}, a fixed effect for each diary, is estimated from variation across episodes within the same diary and absorbs each individual's overall tendency to rate enjoyment on that day, including any effect of mood or general disposition as well as characteristics that do not vary within the diary day. The difference between the enjoyment of working from home and working away from home is measured relative to the baseline, that is each individual's enjoyment sleep and personal care. This estimation relies on the assumption that working from home is not associated with a different enjoyment of these baseline activities, which we examine in Section 5 (Table D2). Episodes of social media and internet use and of other activities are excluded from this analysis. Some on-site diaries also include paid work at home (275 of the 2,985 on-site diaries, 131 minutes on average); these episodes are coded as work from home, as in the activity codes chosen by the respondents, whereas in the diary-level analyses (equations 1 and 2 and Table 4) and in equation (4) these diaries are classified as on-site days. Our coefficients of interest are β^{g}_{k} (where $k = 1, \ldots, 8$), as they capture differences in enjoyment across activities relative to sleeping and personal care, net of episode length and unobserved individual heterogeneity. In particular, the comparison between β^{g}_{4} and β^{g}_{5} quantifies the conditional difference in enjoyment

[9] All time-use models are estimated by OLS, so that the hourly differences add up to the daily ones. As a robustness check, we re-estimated the regressions of Tables 1 and 3 with Poisson pseudo-maximum likelihood models and the hourly paid-work regressions of Figure 4 with fractional logit models for the share of each hour spent in paid work. The average marginal effects are very close to the OLS estimates: the largest difference is 4.1 minutes, for men's travel (−62.9 compared with −67.0 minutes), and the fractional logit model does not converge only for the hours between 2:00 and 5:00. These estimates are available on request.

[10] The full list of OTUS activities is reported in Table B8, Appendix B.

between working from home and working from the office. The aim of this analysis is therefore to assess whether the enjoyment of paid work, relative to the baseline activities within each diary, differs between work undertaken at home and away from home.

To assess whether the day as a whole is more enjoyable, we also compute, for each diary, the average enjoyment of waking time, weighting each episode by its duration, and estimate equation (1) with this and related day-level measures as dependent variables. We then decompose the raw difference in the average enjoyment of waking time between days spent working from home and on-site into the contribution of the allocation of time across activities, holding the enjoyment of each activity at its on-site level, and the contribution of differences in enjoyment within activities. Activity shares are calculated within each diary and averaged using diary weights; the enjoyment of each activity is averaged across diaries using weights equal to the product of the diary weight and the activity's share of the diary's waking time, so that the two components add up to the raw difference in the diary-weighted mean of the day-level measure.

Finally, we focus on work episodes reported in the last two waves of the OTUS data (March 2024 and March 2025) and estimate the association between working from home and the self-perceived productivity (as well as enjoyment for a comparison) by estimating the following equation:

$$Prod_{ijq} = \alpha + \beta\ WFH_i + \delta\ Female_i + \gamma\ WFH_i \times Female_i + X_i\zeta + \xi D_{\text{March 2025}} + \varepsilon_{ijq} \quad (4)$$

The dependent variable $Prod_{ijq}$ is the measure of self-perceived productivity for individual i collected by OTUS only for episodes j of work and is defined on a five-point scale where 1 is the highest productivity and 5 is the lowest. For the analysis we reverse this scale such that a positive estimate for β and $\beta + \gamma$ would imply that respondents perceive a higher productivity when working from home. We also transform this five-point scale into dichotomous indicators according to different cut-offs and use probit models to estimate the association between working from home and self-perceived productivity as marginal effects.[11] Individuals may select into working from home on particular days depending on the nature of tasks or their expected productivity or enjoyment, therefore these estimates should be interpreted as descriptive associations rather than as causal effects of remote work on enjoyment or productivity.

5 Results

To explore the evolution of working from home in time use data before, during, and after the pandemic we first compare the proportion of diaries that report time working from home in the UK TUS 2014/15 with the diaries in the OTUS waves. Figure 2 shows the percentage of diaries in which respondents report doing all their paid work at home. This percentage was 5% for men and 4% for women in 2014/15. It increased sharply during the pandemic, when social restrictions

[11] All regressions include the following individual characteristics: education levels, age, relationship status, household size, indicators for children in three age groups, ethnicity, indicators for income bands, an indicator for whether the respondent has a health condition, usual weekly working hours, public sector employment and supervisory responsibilities, together with 2-digit SOC occupation and region dummies and a dummy for March 2025.

meant that working from home was higher by default, peaking at 44% for women in April 2020, during the first lockdown, and at 44% for men in March 2021, during the third lockdown. From November 2022 onwards it ranged between 24% and 34% for men and between 25% and 31% for women; once differences in the characteristics of respondents across waves are taken into account, the differences between these waves are small and not statistically significant (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Proportion of diaries reporting all paid work at home

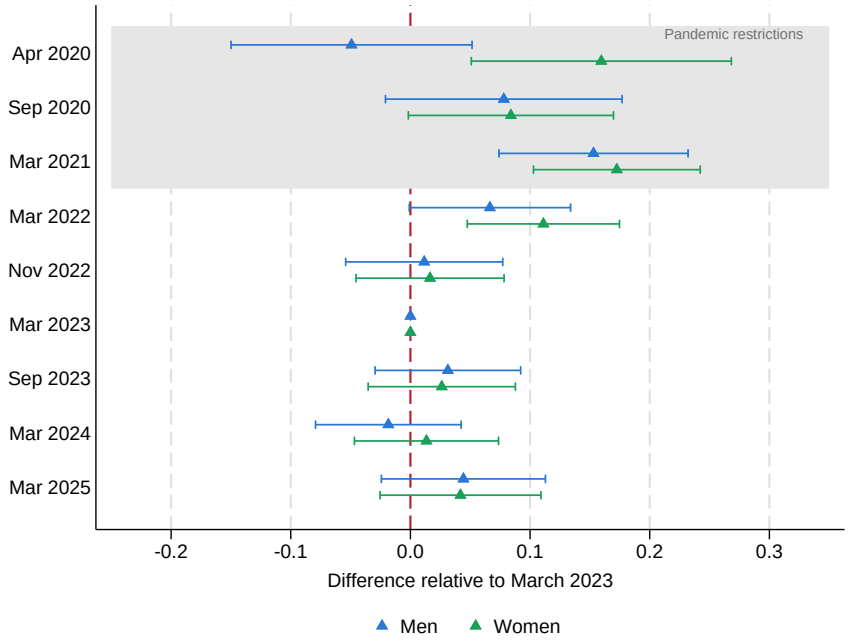


Notes: Data from the UK Time Use Survey 2014/15 and nine waves of the OTUS time diary survey (April 2020 to March 2025). Observations are weekday diaries of respondents in employment reporting at least four hours of paid work. The figure shows the percentage of diaries, by sex, in which all paid work is done at home, among diaries with all paid work at home or at least four hours of paid work away from home (diaries with some paid work at home and less than four hours away are excluded), with 95% confidence intervals. Percentages are weighted using the diary weights of each survey; confidence intervals for 2014/15 account for respondents completing more than one diary.

We now examine changes in the probability of working from home across the OTUS waves, using a linear probability model that controls for individual characteristics, 2-digit occupation and region (Figure 3). The estimates show the difference in this probability in each wave relative to March 2023, for all employees.[12] During the waves collected under pandemic restrictions (April 2020 to March 2021, shaded in the figure), when working from home was higher because of the social restrictions in place, the probability was up to 17 percentage points higher than in March 2023. In March 2022, after the restrictions had been lifted, it was still 7 and 11 percentage points higher for men and women, respectively, suggesting a period of adjustment; for this reason our analysis of the post-pandemic period starts in November 2022. Between November 2022 and March 2025 the probability is stable: the differences relative to March 2023 are 4 percentage points or less and not statistically significant. The pattern across waves is similar for graduates, although less precisely estimated (Figure F1, Appendix F). Overall, these estimates suggest that, once differences in the characteristics of respondents are taken into account, the probability of working from home was stable between November 2022 and March 2025. This is consistent with the APS, in which the proportion of workers working mainly or partly from home was not

[12]We use a March wave as the baseline so that comparisons with the other March waves are not affected by seasonal differences.

Figure 3: Probability of working from home – differences across OTUS waves, all employees



Notes: The figure reports estimates from linear probability models for the probability that all paid work reported in a diary is done at home, rather than at least four hours away from home, for all employees. Each model is estimated on the pooled sample of men and women and includes wave dummies, a female dummy and its interactions with the wave dummies, so that differences across waves are estimated separately for men and women, together with controls for age, region, monthly earnings, marital status, number of children, education, health, housing tenure, household size, working hours, spouse's employment status, ethnicity and 2-digit SOC occupation. The baseline is March 2023. The shaded area marks the waves collected under pandemic restrictions (April 2020 to March 2021). Regressions use diary weights; bars are 95% confidence intervals based on robust standard errors. Sample: weekday diaries of employees with at least four hours of paid work, excluding diaries with some paid work at home and less than four hours away from home.

significantly different in March–April 2025 from a year earlier (29.4% and 28.6%; Figure 1). [13]

In the remainder of this paper, we will focus our analysis on the post-pandemic period November 2022 to March 2025, when the rate of remote working was broadly stable at a new norm. We present results for the full sample; results for university graduates, who are more likely to work from home (Section 3), are reported in Appendix F and discussed when they differ from those for the full sample.

Table 1 reports results from separate OLS regressions of time spent on each activity, with time in each activity regressed on an indicator for remote work, a female dummy, and their interaction term (as in equation 1). Regressions are estimated for the full sample over the period November 2022 to March 2025 (results for graduates are reported in Table F1, Appendix F). All specifications include socio-economic and demographic controls, regional and occupation fixed effects, and robust standard errors.[14] For men and women, the table reports the mean time spent in each activity by on-site workers (columns 1 and 4), the difference in minutes between remote and on-site workers with its standard error (columns 2 and 5), and this difference as a

[13]The APS and OTUS provide complementary measures of remote work. The APS measures the proportion of workers whose usual working arrangements involve working mainly or partly from home, while OTUS measures the proportion of working days on which all paid work is undertaken at home. The evolution of these two measures provides complementary evidence on the persistence of remote work after the pandemic.

[14]The full list of controls is reported in Table B1 in Appendix B.

percentage of the on-site mean (columns 3 and 6). For men, the estimates are the coefficients on the WFH dummy; for women, this is the sum of the WFH dummy and the WFH×Female interaction term.[15] The dependent variable is minutes spent in different activity groups, with diary entries as the unit of observation.

Working from home is associated with a different allocation of time across activities in the diary day; we discuss only the differences that remain significant after correcting for multiple testing. Men and women who work from home spend 67 and 56 fewer minutes travelling than on-site workers (80% and 74% less) and 37 and 23 more minutes sleeping or resting (8% and 5% more). They also spend 31 and 30 more minutes on unpaid work (46% and 32% more) and 12 and 8 more minutes on well-being and fitness activities (108% and 80% more, from a baseline of about 11 minutes). Men and women working from home spend 28 and 22 fewer minutes in paid work (6% and 5% less), so that, on these days, less paid work is accompanied by more unpaid work. Women working from home also spend 9 more minutes on unpaid care (56% more) and 11 fewer minutes on personal care (9% less), and 13 more minutes watching TV (15% more; significant only at the 10% level). Men working from home spend 6 more minutes on unpaid care (37% more; significant only at the 10% level).

From September–October 2023, the diaries distinguish travel to or from paid work, including commuting and travel to conferences or clients, from travel for other purposes. In these waves, travel to or from paid work is almost absent on days spent working from home, compared with 68 and 57 minutes on days spent working away from home for men and women, respectively; conditional on individual characteristics, it is 79 and 66 minutes shorter, more than the on-site means, as the characteristics associated with working from home are also associated with longer commuting times on days spent working on-site. However, other travel is longer on days spent working from home, by 9 minutes for men and 5 minutes for women, conditional on individual characteristics, with the latter difference significant only at the 10% level (Table D4, Appendix D). The reduction in total travel time therefore understates the reduction in work-related travel, as it is partly offset by additional travel for other purposes.

These patterns are similar among graduates (Table F1, Appendix F), although the reduction in travel time is slightly larger (72 and 62 fewer minutes for men and women) and, for graduate women, the differences in personal care and watching TV are not significant after the correction. Overall, the findings indicate that WFH is associated with substantial time savings in commuting and modest increases in home production. Gender differences in time allocation remain pronounced: because women's baseline time in unpaid work is higher, the gender gap in unpaid work is broadly the same on days spent working from home and on days spent working away from home (24 and 26 minutes in the unadjusted means, Table B4; 20 and 22 minutes conditional on individual characteristics, Table C1a).[16]

[15] Full estimates and standard errors are reported in Tables C1a and C1b in Appendix C. The gender coefficients indicate persistent differences in time use among individuals who work at least four hours away from home on the diary day (the baseline). Compared to men, women spend 11 more minutes in personal care, engage in 22 additional minutes of unpaid work and 6 more minutes in social media/internet (columns 2, 4 and 9 of Table C1a). They also spend less time than men on paid work (−11 minutes), travel (−7 minutes), leisure (−13 minutes), and watching TV (−15 minutes). These gender gaps are largely consistent across samples (full sample and graduates only), although among graduates the gap in unpaid work is smaller (13 minutes), the gaps in paid work, travel and social media/internet are not statistically significant and the gap in leisure is significant only at the 10% level.

[16] For robustness, we also report the results for the sample of respondents with full occupation (SOC) information

Table 1: Working from home and time across different main activities (November 2022–March 2025)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Men			Women		
	On-site mean (min)	WFH difference (min)	WFH (%)	On-site mean (min)	WFH difference (min)	WFH (%)
Full sample						
Sleeping	481.3	37.4***	7.8	494.3	23.0***	4.7
		(5.3) [<0.01]			(4.9) [<0.01]	
Personal care	112.8	−0.7	−0.6	122.8	−10.9**	−8.9
		(3.4) [1.00]			(3.5) [0.02]	
Travel	84.2	−67.0***	−79.6	75.9	−56.4***	−74.4
		(3.1) [<0.01]			(2.9) [<0.01]	
Unpaid work	66.3	30.8***	46.4	92.2	29.7***	32.2
		(4.2) [<0.01]			(4.4) [<0.01]	
Unpaid care	15.4	5.7*	37.0	15.8	8.9***	56.3
		(2.2) [0.08]			(2.4) [<0.01]	
Watching TV	97.2	0.4	0.4	85.4	12.9*	15.1
		(4.7) [1.00]			(4.7) [0.06]	
Leisure	44.6	−0.6	−1.4	37.8	2.9	7.7
		(5.1) [1.00]			(4.3) [0.94]	
Wellbeing / fitness	10.8	11.7***	108.2	10.5	8.4***	80.3
		(2.4) [<0.01]			(1.8) [<0.01]	
Social media / Internet	27.6	7.3	26.4	35.2	4.1	11.7
		(3.6) [0.25]			(3.8) [0.81]	
Paid work	491.8	−28.3***	−5.8	459.6	−22.0***	−4.8
		(5.2) [<0.01]			(5.6) [<0.01]	
N (diaries)			4,238			

Notes: Columns (1) and (4) report the weighted mean minutes per day spent in each activity by respondents working away from home. Columns (2) and (5) report the difference in minutes per day between remote and on-site workers, from separate OLS regressions of time in each activity (equation 1): for men, the coefficient on the WFH dummy; for women, the sum of the WFH dummy and the WFH×Female interaction term. Robust standard errors in parentheses; Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values in square brackets, which allow for the 20 differences tested in the table (10 activities for men and women) and are based on 10,000 bootstrap replications (see Section 4). Columns (3) and (6) express this difference as a percentage of the on-site mean. All regressions include demographic and socio-economic controls, 2-digit SOC occupation (missing occupation as a separate category), region and wave dummies, and are estimated using diary weights. Sample: weekday diaries of employees with at least four hours of paid work, either all at home (working from home) or at least four hours away from home (on-site). *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, based on the Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values. The large percentage changes for well-being and fitness activities reflect a near-zero baseline for on-site workers (approximately 11 minutes); the absolute minute differences for these rows are more informative.

Figure 4 shows when during the day the differences in paid work arise. For each hour of the day, it plots the average minutes of paid work on days spent working away from home (orange line), the corresponding minutes on days spent working from home (blue line) and the difference between the two, estimated from equation (2), with its pointwise 95% confidence interval and a wider simultaneous 95% band (dark and light green areas). In both groups paid work is done mostly between 9:00 and 17:00. After correcting for multiple testing, the differences that remain significant are concentrated at the start and the end of the working day. Men working from home do 18 fewer minutes of paid work than on-site workers between 6:00 and 9:00 (36% less), mostly between 8:00 and 9:00 (10 fewer minutes, compared with 31 minutes on-site), 4 fewer minutes between 12:00 and 13:00 (10% less) and 5 and 6 more minutes between 16:00 and 17:00 and between 17:00 and 18:00 (12% and 26% more), the differences at 12:00–13:00 and 16:00–17:00

(Table D1, Appendix D). The main patterns are unchanged, except for unpaid work: in this sample, men's additional unpaid work on days spent working from home is larger (38 minutes, compared with 31) and the gender gap in unpaid work is smaller on these days, although the difference is not statistically significant.

being significant only at the 10% level. Women working from home do 6 fewer minutes of paid work between 8:00 and 9:00 (21% less), 4 fewer minutes between 13:00 and 14:00 (10% less) and 4 more minutes between 16:00 and 17:00 (14% more), the last two differences being significant only at the 10% level. Among graduates, only the lower paid work between 8:00 and 9:00, for both men and women, and between 12:00 and 13:00, for men, remains significant.

Appendix E shows how these differences relate to the timing of other activities; we discuss only the differences that remain significant after correcting for multiple testing, at least at the 10% level. In the early morning (6:00–9:00), men and women working from home spend 24 and 23 fewer minutes travelling than on-site workers (over 90% less) and 32 and 27 more minutes sleeping (57% and 51% more) (Table E1 and Figures E1 and E2); men also do 18 fewer minutes of paid work (36% less), while women spend 7 fewer minutes on personal care (17% less) and 5 more minutes on unpaid work (44% more), two differences that are significant only at the 10% level. Travel time is lower in the rest of the day too: by 6 and 5 minutes between 9:00 and 12:00, by 19 and 18 minutes in the late afternoon (14:00–18:00) and by 12 and 9 minutes in the evening (18:00–22:00). Around lunchtime (12:00–14:00), men and women working from home spend 8 and 9 more minutes in unpaid work. Table 2 shows that on days spent working from home, paid work is also split into more separate blocks (0.4 and 0.3 more blocks for men and women, compared with 1.8 and 1.7 on days spent working away from home), and the time between the start and the end of the working day includes 14 and 15 more minutes of unpaid work. For men, the total non-work time within the working day is 20 minutes longer (38% more; significant only at the 10% level).[17]

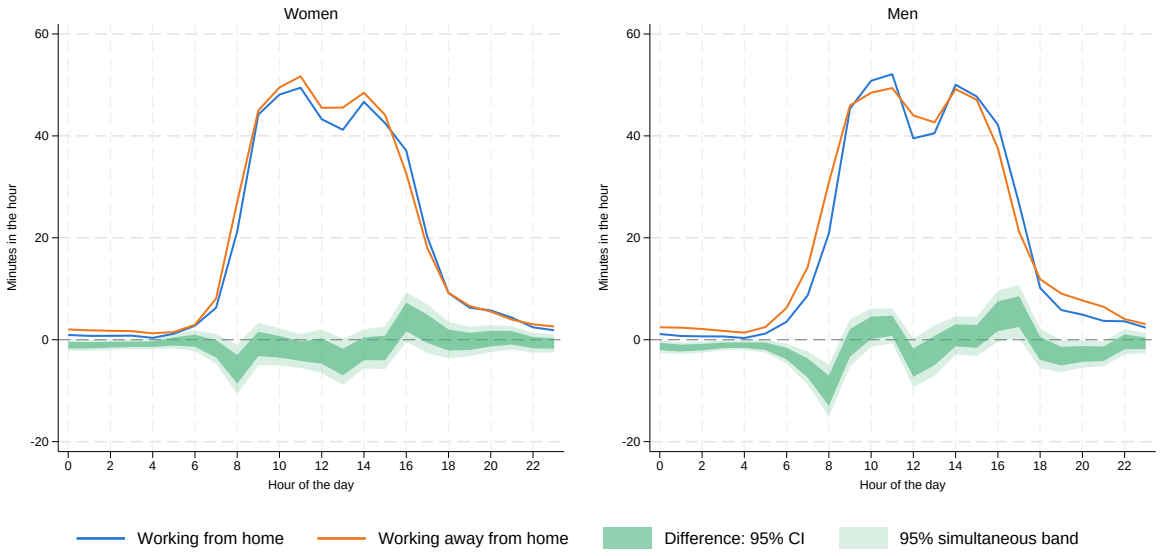
Overall, working from home is associated with a different organisation of the working day. Four dimensions of working time can be distinguished: its duration, its timing across the hours of the day, its span from the first to the last period of paid work, and its fragmentation into separate periods. On days spent working from home, paid work is shorter (Table 1) and takes place less in the early morning and more in the late afternoon (Figure 4); it is split into more separate blocks, with more unpaid work in between (Table 2); but the span of the working day does not differ significantly (-0.13 and -0.10 hours for men and women, compared with 9.1 and 8.5 hours on days spent working away from home). The differences in the organisation of paid work on days spent working from home therefore concern how paid work is distributed within a working day of similar span, rather than the span itself. These results illustrate why measures of working hours alone provide an incomplete account of the organisation of work. Less time spent commuting and working early in the morning is matched mostly by more sleep, while part of the time not spent commuting in the late afternoon is matched by more paid work, consistent with evidence that remote workers devote a sizeable share of the time saved from commuting to their jobs (Aksoy et al., 2023). Remote workers also fit unpaid work into a working day that is split into more separate blocks of paid work, but they do not work more in the evening. These patterns are consistent with the greater flexibility afforded by remote work. The early-morning difference in paid work is larger for men than for women (18 and 8 fewer minutes between 6:00

[17]The 275 on-site diaries that also include some paid work at home (Section 4.2) are classified as on-site days. Excluding them, the differences in Table 1 change by at most 5 minutes (women's paid work is 17 rather than 22 minutes shorter), and the differences in the fragmentation of the working day are larger: 0.46 and 0.42 more blocks of paid work for men and women, and 29 and 25 more non-work minutes within the working day. The span of the working day still does not differ significantly (0.01 and 0.14 hours).

and 9:00; for women, the difference over the three hours is not significant after the correction, Table E1), although the difference between 8:00 and 9:00 is significant for both. As for the other results, these differences are descriptive: workers may choose to work from home on days when their tasks or other commitments suit a different schedule.

An important question with implications for work productivity is whether people working from home are more likely to engage in multitasking while working. We answer this question by looking at differences in time spent in reported secondary activities while the primary activity is paid work, between individuals working from home and away from home.

Figure 4: Minutes of paid work by hour of the day – All, November 2022-March 2025



Notes: The figures show, for each hour of the day, the average minutes of paid work on diary days spent working away from home (orange line), the corresponding minutes on days spent working from home (blue line), and the difference between the two with its pointwise 95% confidence interval (dark green area) and a simultaneous 95% confidence band (light green area), for women (left panel) and men (right panel). Differences are OLS estimates from equation (2), estimated separately for each clock hour with the specification of Table 1 (individual characteristics, 2-digit SOC occupation, region and wave dummies); for men the difference is the coefficient on WFH and for women the sum of the WFH and WFH×Female coefficients. The line for days spent working from home is the on-site mean plus the estimated difference. Working from home is defined as doing all paid work at home on the diary day, and working away from home as doing at least four hours of paid work away from home. Sample: weekday diaries of employees with at least four hours of paid work, November 2022–March 2025 (4,238 diaries). Estimates are weighted using diary weights; robust standard errors. The hourly differences sum to the daily differences in paid work in Table 1. The simultaneous band covers all 48 hourly differences of a figure (24 hours for men and women) jointly with 95% probability (Montiel Olea and Plagborg-Møller, 2019); its critical value, from 10,000 bootstrap replications, is 3.39. Hours in which the simultaneous band excludes zero remain significant after adjusting for multiple testing. The text also reports as significant after the correction the hours with Romano–Wolf step-down adjusted p-values below 0.10 (Section 4.2); as the step-down procedure is less conservative than the single-step band, the band includes zero in some of these hours.

Table 3 examines how remote work is associated with time spent on secondary activities, that is, activities conducted simultaneously with a primary activity, such as secondary childcare or leisure, for the full sample (Table F3, Appendix F, reports the results for graduates). Each column presents results from separate regressions, controlling for gender, remote work status, their interaction, as well as a set of demographic and socio-economic characteristics. All specifications include socio-economic and demographic controls, regional and occupation fixed effects, and robust standard errors. As in Table 1, the table reports for men and women the mean time

Table 2: Shape of the working day, working from home and working away from home (November 2022–March 2025)

	Men		Women	
	On-site mean	WFH difference	On-site mean	WFH difference
Length of the working day (hours)	9.10	−0.13	8.52	−0.10
		(0.12) [0.90]		(0.13) [0.93]
Number of separate blocks of paid work	1.80	0.36***	1.72	0.32***
		(0.06) [<0.01]		(0.06) [<0.01]
Non-work minutes within the working day	54.4	20.5*	51.8	15.7
		(5.4) [0.06]		(5.9) [0.24]
of which: unpaid work	5.1	14.5***	7.2	15.5***
		(1.6) [<0.01]		(2.3) [<0.01]
of which: care	1.3	0.9	0.8	2.5
		(0.6) [0.86]		(1.0) [0.27]
of which: personal care (incl. eating)	21.4	2.6	17.9	0.1
		(1.7) [0.80]		(1.6) [1.00]
of which: travel	8.1	−3.2	7.2	−2.2
		(1.4) [0.34]		(1.2) [0.59]
of which: on a work break	2.7	−0.4	2.3	−0.6
		(0.8) [0.98]		(0.6) [0.90]
of which: other leisure	1.3	1.5	1.3	0.0
		(1.1) [0.86]		(0.6) [1.00]
of which: sleep, TV, wellbeing and other	14.5	4.7	15.1	0.5
		(2.8) [0.73]		(3.0) [1.00]
N (diaries)		4,238		

Notes: Weekday diaries of employees with at least four hours of paid work, either all at home (working from home) or at least four hours away from home (on-site), November 2022–March 2025. The working day runs from the start of the first to the end of the last 5-minute slot of paid work recorded in the diary. A block of paid work is a sequence of consecutive slots of paid work. Non-work minutes are the minutes between the start and the end of the working day not spent in paid work, broken down by activity. On-site means are weighted means among respondents working away from home. WFH differences are OLS estimates with the specification of Table 1 (individual characteristics, 2-digit SOC occupation, region and wave dummies): for men, the coefficient on WFH; for women, the sum of the WFH and WFH×Female coefficients. Estimates are weighted using diary weights. Robust standard errors in parentheses; Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values in square brackets (20 differences; 10,000 bootstrap replications). *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, based on the Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values. Results for graduates are reported in Table F2, Appendix F.

spent in each secondary activity by on-site workers (columns 1 and 4), the difference in minutes between remote and on-site workers with its standard error (columns 2 and 5), and this difference as a percentage of the on-site mean (columns 3 and 6).[18]

Among all individuals, working from home is associated with more than twice the amount of time spent on leisure as a secondary activity while working compared with office workers (+20 and +18 minutes for men and women, respectively, or +122% and +134%). Most of this difference reflects listening to music, podcasts, audiobooks or the radio while working (+19 and +16 minutes), with a smaller contribution from watching TV (+2 and +3 minutes), while other leisure activities, such as reading, socialising or taking a break, decrease slightly (by about one minute). Time spent on unpaid work and care as a secondary activity is also higher, by 4 minutes, for women. A similar pattern is observed among graduates, although among graduates the difference in secondary unpaid work and care is not significant after adjustment (Table F3, Appendix F). Overall, these results indicate that working from home is associated with more multitasking, mostly in the form of activities that can be combined with work, such as listening

[18]Full estimates and standard errors are reported in Table C2 in Appendix C. Gender differences in the baseline (individuals working from the office) are not statistically significant.

to music or the radio, and to a lesser extent with care and housework. Remote work does not appear to be associated with more time in other secondary activities.

Table 3: Time in secondary activities while working (November 2022–March 2025)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Men			Women		
	On-site mean (min)	WFH difference (min)	WFH (%)	On-site mean (min)	WFH difference (min)	WFH (%)
Full sample						
Rest, personal care, eating and drinking	10.6	2.0	18.7	10.1	1.7	16.5
		(2.0) [0.81]			(1.9) [0.81]	
Unpaid work and care	2.3	4.0	176.1	3.0	3.9**	128.4
		(1.8) [0.17]			(1.2) [0.02]	
TV, leisure and wellbeing	16.6	20.2***	122.1	13.1	17.5**	134.1
		(5.1) [<0.01]			(5.2) [0.013]	
Internet, social media and communication	12.6	1.3	10.3	11.5	−1.9	−16.2
		(3.1) [0.81]			(2.4) [0.81]	
N (diaries)			4,238			

Notes: The table reports estimates from separate OLS regressions where the dependent variable is the number of minutes spent in each group of secondary activities while the primary activity is paid work; the unit of observation is the diary, and only the first secondary activity reported in each time slot is used. Columns (1) and (4) report weighted means among respondents working away from home. Columns (2) and (5) report the difference in minutes between remote and on-site workers (for men, the coefficient on WFH; for women, the sum of the WFH and WFH×Female coefficients), with robust standard errors in parentheses and Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values in square brackets (8 differences; 10,000 bootstrap replications); columns (3) and (6) express this difference as a percentage of the on-site mean. Regressions include the controls of Table 1 (demographic and socio-economic characteristics, 2-digit SOC occupation, region and wave dummies) and are estimated using diary weights. Internet, social media and communication includes browsing, social media, email, telephone and video calls, meetings and conversations. Travel as a secondary activity while working, which averages less than one minute per day, is not shown; its estimates are reported in Table C2. Listening to music, podcasts, audiobooks or the radio accounts for most of the time in TV, leisure and wellbeing while working: 13 of the 17 minutes among on-site men and 9 of the 13 minutes among on-site women, and +19 and +16 minutes of the differences in columns (2) and (5); watching TV accounts for a further +2 and +3 minutes. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, based on the Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values.

So far we have observed that working from home in the post pandemic years is associated with a different organisation of time within the working day and greater multitasking. The next set of results explores how working from home on the diary day is associated with instantaneous enjoyment of paid work and self-reported productivity.

First of all, we estimate differences in instantaneous enjoyment across activities, distinguishing between work carried out at home and work carried out away from home. This analysis covers November 2022–March 2025 and uses a regression framework at the episode level, controlling for episode length and individual fixed effects (as in equation 3). The baseline category is sleeping and personal care, as these are activities which appear in all diaries. Figure 5 shows that, relative to their own enjoyment of sleeping and personal care, respondents report lower enjoyment when working from home than when working away from home. In the full sample, the difference between work at home and work away from home is 0.14 points on the seven-point scale for men and 0.19 points for women (significant at the 5% and 1% levels, respectively); among graduates, it is larger, 0.29 and 0.24 points for men and women (both significant at the 1% level; Figure F3, Appendix F). Travelling is one of the least liked activities compared with sleeping and personal care, both in the full sample and among graduates. By contrast, the activities to which remote workers allocate the time they do not spend commuting are enjoyed as much as or more than sleeping and personal care. Sleep, to which they allocate a large part of this time, is the baseline itself; unpaid care is enjoyed more, by 0.62 and 0.69 points for men and women, wellbeing and

fitness activities by 0.90 and 1.02 points and, for women, watching TV by 0.82 points (Figure 5). Unpaid work is the exception, as it is enjoyed less than sleeping and personal care (by 0.25 and 0.28 points), although more than travelling (0.42 points less than sleeping and personal care for both men and women).

We also examine whether the enjoyment of non-work activities differs between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home, and we find few differences: women enjoy travelling more on days spent working from home, by 0.21 points, and men enjoy wellbeing and fitness activities less, by 0.25 points (both significant at the 5% level), while the other differences are not statistically significant (Table D2, Appendix D). In particular, the enjoyment of sleep and personal care, the baseline in Figure 5, is the same on the two types of days (a difference of −0.04 and −0.01 points for men and women). Since the enjoyment of the baseline activities does not differ between the two types of days, the lower relative enjoyment of work at home is unlikely to reflect higher enjoyment of the baseline activities on these days.

The previous results compare the enjoyment of each activity. Since days spent working from home differ both in the allocation of time across activities and in the enjoyment of work, we also examine whether the day as a whole is more enjoyable. For each diary, we compute the average enjoyment of waking time, weighting each episode by its duration, as well as the average enjoyment of paid work and of waking time outside paid work, and the share of waking time spent in activities rated 1 to 3 on the seven-point scale. Despite the differences in the allocation of time and in the enjoyment of work, we find little evidence of a systematic difference in the enjoyment of the waking day between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home (Table 4, Panel A). The differences are small on the seven-point scale, −0.06 points for men and +0.09 points for women, the latter significant only at the 10% level. For women, waking time outside paid work is more enjoyable on days spent working from home, by 0.26 points (significant at the 1% level), while for men the lower enjoyment of paid work (−0.21 points, significant at the 5% level) offsets the small difference outside work. For women, the lower enjoyment of paid work is smaller here than in Figure 5 (−0.11 compared with −0.19 points), as the two estimates differ: Figure 5 compares each work episode with the worker's own enjoyment of sleep and personal care on the same day, with each episode counted once, whereas Table 4 compares the duration-weighted enjoyment of paid work across workers, conditional on individual characteristics.

Panel B decomposes the raw difference in the enjoyment of the waking day. The decomposition follows the national time accounting approach of Krueger et al. (2009), who separate changes in time use from changes in the enjoyment of each activity, and is similar in spirit to the comparison of the days of employed and unemployed people by Knabe et al. (2010). The different allocation of time on days spent working from home is associated with higher enjoyment of the day, by 0.07 points for both men and women. Less time spent travelling makes the largest individual contribution (0.026 and 0.031 points, 35% and 46% of the allocation component for men and women), followed by more time in wellbeing and fitness activities and leisure for men and in watching TV and wellbeing and fitness activities for women (Table D3, Appendix D). The additional time spent in unpaid work makes a small negative contribution, because unpaid work is slightly less enjoyable than the average waking activity on days spent working on-site. This

illustrates how the ability to integrate household tasks into the working day, as documented in Table 2, may be valuable to workers for reasons other than the enjoyment of the tasks themselves. For men, the advantage associated with the allocation of time is offset by lower enjoyment within activities (−0.14 points), about two thirds of which reflects the lower enjoyment of paid work (−0.09 points); for women, the difference in enjoyment within activities is close to zero (+0.02 points). The higher enjoyment of travel on days spent working from home, particularly for women (4.88 compared with 4.40 points), is likely to reflect a different purpose of travel, as travel to or from paid work is almost absent on these days (Table D4), rather than a higher enjoyment of the same journeys. As the decomposition uses raw differences, the contributions of individual activities need not match the adjusted differences in Table 1: for men, for example, leisure makes a positive contribution, although the adjusted difference in leisure time is close to zero.[19] Among graduates, the enjoyment of the waking day is lower on days spent working from home for men, by 0.17 points (95% confidence interval of −0.30 to −0.05; significant at the 1% level), while the difference for women is close to zero (−0.01 points; Table F5, Appendix F). The decomposition shows that the more favourable allocation of time among male graduates (+0.07 points) is more than offset by lower enjoyment within activities (−0.26 points), mainly reflecting lower enjoyment of paid work (−0.19 points); as for all employees, the decomposition refers to the raw difference (−0.19 points) and gives similar results with the average of the two references (0.07 and −0.26 points). These results treat the enjoyment scale as cardinal and capture one dimension of the experience of a working day: they do not measure commuting costs, autonomy or the option to respond to household needs.

Finally, we investigate whether remote workers perceive their working time as more productive. To address this question, we utilize the experimental measure of self-perceived productivity that we collected in the two most recent waves of the OTUS time-use diaries from March 2024. Each time respondents recorded a period of paid work in their diary, they were asked to assess their productivity on a five-point scale, as well as their enjoyment on a seven-point scale.

Figure B1, Appendix B, shows the distribution of this measure for remote and office workers and for the full sample (top panels) and for the subsample of only graduates (bottom panels). Office workers are more likely to report the highest level of self-perceived productivity (productive at 100%) compared to respondents working from home. Figure B2 presents in parallel the distribution of instantaneous enjoyment of paid work, where office workers are more likely to report higher enjoyment. Table 5 presents the estimated differences in self-reported productivity and enjoyment between remote and on-site workers (equation 4), separately for men and women, for all employees, covering March 2024 and March 2025 (Table F4, Appendix F, reports the estimates for graduates). As in Tables 1 and 3, for each outcome it reports the mean among on-site workers of the same sex, the difference between work episodes on days spent working from home and on-site, and this difference as a percentage of the on-site mean; the full set of estimates, including the coefficients on the female dummy and its interaction with working from home, is reported in Table C3 in Appendix C. Self-reported productivity is analysed both as a continuous measure and as three binary indicators for reporting at least 80%, at least 90%

[19] Using the enjoyment of activities on days spent working from home as the reference, or averaging the two references, gives similar results: with the average of the two references, the allocation component is 0.07 points for men and 0.06 points for women, and the within-activity component −0.13 and +0.03 points.

Table 4: Enjoyment of the day on days spent working from home and on-site (November 2022–March 2025)

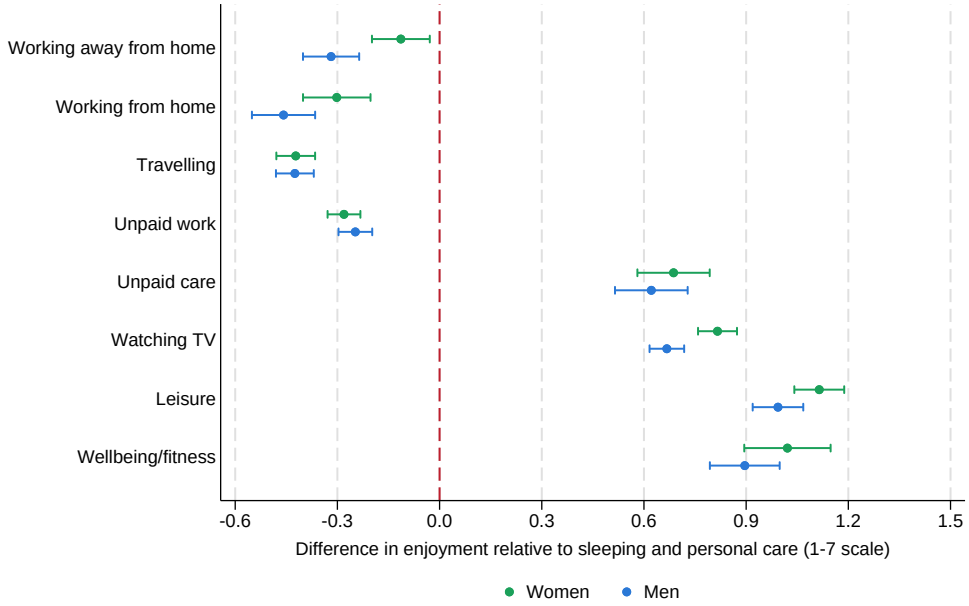
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Men		Women	
	On-site mean	WFH difference	On-site mean	WFH difference
Panel A: day-level enjoyment, regression estimates				
Enjoyment of waking time (1–7)	4.96	−0.06	5.03	0.09*
		(0.06)		(0.05)
Enjoyment of paid work (1–7)	4.63	−0.21**	4.79	−0.11
		(0.08)		(0.07)
Enjoyment of waking time outside paid work (1–7)	5.31	0.06	5.26	0.26***
		(0.05)		(0.05)
Waking time rated 1–3 (%)	11.0	1.0	9.7	−1.0
		(1.4)		(1.0)
Waking time rated 6–7 (%)	36.7	0.3	39.1	3.3*
		(1.8)		(1.8)
N (diaries)		4,238		
Panel B: decomposition of the raw difference in the enjoyment of waking time				
Total difference (WFH – on-site)	−0.06 (0.06)		0.09 (0.05)	
Allocation of time	0.07 (0.01)		0.07 (0.01)	
Enjoyment within activities	−0.14 (0.05)		0.02 (0.05)	
of which: paid work	−0.09		−0.03	

Notes: Panel A: estimates from separate OLS regressions where the dependent variable is a day-level measure of instantaneous enjoyment and the unit of observation is the diary; enjoyment is averaged over the 10-minute slots of each diary, so that each episode is weighted by its duration; waking time excludes sleep. Columns (1) and (3) report weighted means among respondents working away from home. Columns (2) and (4) report the difference between days spent working from home and on-site (for men, the coefficient on WFH; for women, the sum of the WFH and WFH×Female coefficients), with robust standard errors in parentheses. Differences are in points on the 1–7 scale, and in percentage points for the share of waking time rated 1–3 and 6–7. Regressions include the controls of Table 1 and are estimated using diary weights. Including sleep, the difference in the enjoyment of the 24 hours is −0.06 (0.06) for men and 0.01 (0.05) for women. The difference between women and men is 0.14 (0.07) for waking time and 0.21 (0.07) for waking time outside paid work. Panel B: decomposition of the difference in mean enjoyment of waking time between days spent working from home (H) and on-site (O), without controls: $E^H - E^O = \sum_a (s_a^H - s_a^O)e_a^O + \sum_a s_a^H(e_a^H - e_a^O)$, where s_a is the share of waking time in activity a and e_a its mean enjoyment. Activity shares are calculated within each diary and averaged using diary weights; the enjoyment of each activity is averaged across diaries using weights equal to the product of the diary weight and the activity's share of the diary's waking time, so that $E^r = \sum_a s_a^r e_a^r$ equals the diary-weighted mean of the Panel A outcome; paid work is one activity, whatever its location. Bootstrap standard errors in parentheses (999 replications, diaries resampled). The total difference in Panel B is the raw difference in means and need not equal the regression estimate in Panel A (−0.055 and −0.062 for men, 0.087 and 0.088 for women). Contributions by activity are reported in Table D3. Enjoyment is reported for 99% of waking time on both types of day. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10 (conventional p-values).

and 100% productivity; we also report the difference in instantaneous enjoyment for the same work episodes. As in the time-use models, respondents without an occupation code are included, with a separate category for missing occupation (2,777 work episodes from 1,461 diaries; 1,518 episodes from 746 diaries for graduates). Since each diary contributes about two work episodes, standard errors are clustered at the diary level.

Working from home is associated with lower self-perceived productivity mainly through a lower likelihood of reporting the highest level of productivity (100% productive), mainly among graduates (Table 5 and Table F4, Appendix F). Male graduates working from home are 8.8 percentage points less likely than male graduates working on-site to report being fully productive, equivalent to 42% of the on-site share (21%; significant at the 5% level); for female graduates the difference is smaller and not statistically significant (4.7 percentage points, 24% of an on-site

Figure 5: Instantaneous enjoyment by activity – All employees, November 2022–March 2025



Notes: The figures report coefficients and 95% confidence intervals from episode-level regressions of instantaneous enjoyment (1–7 scale) on activity dummies, episode length and individual fixed effects (equation 3), estimated separately for women and men, for all employees. The baseline category is sleeping and personal care, activities that appear in all diaries. Working from home and working away from home are episodes of paid work recorded with the corresponding activity codes. Sample: episodes from weekday diaries of employees with at least four hours of paid work, November 2022–March 2025 (64,194 episodes). Regressions use diary weights; standard errors are clustered at the diary level.

share of 20%).[20] The gap between graduates and non-graduates is significant only at the 10% level (joint test of the interactions of a graduate dummy with the differences for men and women in the probability of being fully productive, p = 0.10). Among all employees, men working from home are 5.7 percentage points less likely to report being fully productive (25% of an on-site share of 23%) and 6.7 percentage points less likely to report being at least 90% productive (13% of an on-site share of 50%), both significant only at the 10% level; for women, the differences are smaller and not statistically significant (3.3 percentage points for being fully productive, 14% of an on-site share of 23%). Differences in the average productivity score are small and not statistically significant, except for male graduates (−0.21 points on the five-point scale; significant at the 10% level). Instantaneous enjoyment of the same work episodes is lower on WFH days for men (−0.39 points on the seven-point scale; −0.42 points among graduates) and for female graduates (−0.31 points), while the difference for women in the full sample is smaller and not statistically significant (−0.18 points). Restricting the sample to respondents with an occupation code (2,238 work episodes from 1,187 diaries) gives similar estimates: graduates working from

[20]The estimates are similar when each minute of paid work, rather than each work episode, is given the same weight, when the measures are averaged over the paid work recorded in each diary, when episode duration is included as a control, and when the work episodes done at home on days spent working on-site (104 episodes) are excluded. Male graduates working from home are between 7.9 and 10.0 percentage points less likely to report being fully productive (significant at least at the 5% level), and men in the full sample between 5.5 and 7.6 percentage points (significant at the 5% level with duration weights, diary averages and the duration control, and only at the 10% level otherwise); the differences for women remain smaller and not statistically significant. The lower enjoyment of work on days spent working from home ranges between 0.30 and 0.40 points for men and between 0.40 and 0.43 points for male graduates.

home are 8.5 (men) and 7.1 (women) percentage points less likely to report being fully productive, and men's enjoyment of work is 0.49 points lower (0.58 points for male graduates).[21]

Table 5: Self-perceived productivity and enjoyment of work episodes (March 2024–March 2025)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
		Men			Women	
	On-site mean	WFH difference	WFH (%)	On-site mean	WFH difference	WFH (%)
All employees						
Productivity score (1–5)	3.48	−0.16		3.60	0.01	
		(0.10)			(0.09)	
At least 80% productive (%)	80.6	−0.6	−0.8	85.4	3.4	4.0
		(3.0)			(3.0)	
At least 90% productive (%)	50.1	−6.7*	−13.4	56.2	−0.1	−0.3
		(4.0)			(4.1)	
100% productive (%)	22.5	−5.7*	−25.3	22.9	−3.3	−14.4
		(3.2)			(3.3)	
Enjoyment (1–7)	4.77	−0.39***		4.79	−0.18	
		(0.11)			(0.11)	
N: work episodes (diaries)			2,777 (1,461)			

Notes: Data from OTUS waves 8 and 9 (March 2024 and March 2025). Observations are work episodes reported in weekday diaries by employees working at least four hours on the diary day, either all at home or at least four hours away from home; respondents without an occupation code are included, with a separate category for missing occupation. Columns (1) and (4) report weighted means among on-site workers: average scores for the productivity score (1–5, where 5 = 100% productive) and enjoyment (1–7), and percentages for the binary productivity indicators. Columns (2) and (5) report the difference between work episodes on days spent working from home and on-site (for men, the coefficient on WFH; for women, the sum of the WFH and WFH×Female coefficients), with standard errors clustered at the diary level in parentheses; columns (3) and (6) express this difference as a percentage of the on-site share for the binary indicators; percentages are not reported for the productivity score and enjoyment, whose scales have no natural zero. The productivity score and enjoyment are estimated by OLS; the binary indicators by probit models, reported as average marginal effects in percentage points. The marginal effects of WFH and WFH×Female are average derivatives of the probit index, so that the difference for women is their sum; average discrete changes computed separately for men and women give similar estimates (for example, −5.4 and −3.4 percentage points for men and women being fully productive). Controls include age, marital status, household size, monthly earnings, indicators for children by age group, education, ethnicity, health condition, usual weekly working hours in the main and second job (less than 30, 30 to 40 and more than 40 hours), public sector employment and supervisory responsibilities, 2-digit SOC occupation dummies (with a category for missing occupation and an indicator for codes filled from another wave), region dummies and a dummy for March 2025. Regressions are estimated using diary weights. The number of observations differs slightly across outcomes, because the probit models drop the occupation and region categories that predict the outcome perfectly and enjoyment is missing for 21 work episodes; full estimates and sample sizes are reported in Table C3. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10 (conventional p-values).

It is possible that workers select WFH days for tasks that are intrinsically less stimulating or that require less intensive effort. Evidence from companion research using time-use diaries collected among public sector workers observed both at home and at the workplace suggests that WFH days are indeed characterised by a substantial reallocation towards less enjoyed asynchronous communication and individual tasks and away from preferred colleague interaction and service user contact (Foliano et al., 2026). If so, the lower enjoyment and perceived productivity observed on WFH days would partly reflect task composition rather than the effect of the work location itself. The OTUS diaries do not record task content, so this alternative

[21]For men, the difference in the enjoyment of work between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home is larger here than in Figure 5 (−0.39 compared with −0.14 points) for two reasons. First, it is larger in the March 2024 and March 2025 waves: the model of Figure 5 estimated on these waves gives −0.24 points. Second, for men it is larger when work episodes are compared across workers (−0.44 points without controls and −0.34 points with the controls of Table 5, estimated separately for men and women and controlling for episode length, in the same waves) than when it is measured relative to each worker's own enjoyment of sleep and personal care, as in Figure 5. For women, the two approaches give similar results (−0.24 and −0.23 points).

explanation cannot be ruled out.

6 Summary and Conclusions

This paper explores novel time use diary data to study the shift in remote work that was initiated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We document the sustained transformation in remote work patterns in the UK since the end of the pandemic and validate trends in remote work observed from representative time use diaries against trends observed in traditional population surveys. The sustained proportion of diaries reporting home-based work from November 2022 suggests that many workers, and possibly employers, perceive remote work as a viable and often preferable alternative to traditional office-based arrangements.

Our analysis of time use documents several potential sources of the value workers attach to remote working. On days spent working from home, workers spend less time travelling and more time in activities that are typically ranked higher on the enjoyment scale. This includes sleep, well-being and fitness activities, as well as unpaid care. Remote workers also allocate some of the time freed up from less commuting to unpaid (house)work. On days spent working from home, both men and women spend less time in paid work and more in unpaid work. Our results also reveal that remote workers and on-site workers spread their working time differently across the day. Compared to on-site workers, remote workers do less paid work early in the morning and more in the late afternoon, and fit more unpaid work into their working day, consistent with the greater temporal flexibility afforded by remote work. Remote workers also spend more working time in combination with other activities, mostly listening to music or the radio. These patterns document potential sources of the value workers attach to remote work, which may help explain why workers are willing to accept a pay cut (Barrero et al., 2021) or lower wage growth (De Fraja et al., 2025) in order to work remotely.

We provide novel insight into the relationship between remote working, instantaneous enjoyment and self-perceived productivity. We find that time spent in work is perceived as less enjoyable, and less often as fully productive, when conducted remotely rather than on-site. This contrasts with evidence from surveys (Barrero et al., 2021). Compared to surveys, our data minimize recall bias and are less influenced by social desirability bias. The differences in perceived productivity and enjoyment that we observe between remote and on-site working are particularly pronounced for graduates: among them, work at home is less enjoyable for both men and women and, for men, less often fully productive. Over the waking day as a whole, the different allocation of time on days spent working from home is associated with higher enjoyment, with less time spent travelling making the largest contribution, but, particularly for men, this advantage is offset by lower enjoyment within activities, most notably paid work. As a result, we find little evidence of a systematic difference in the enjoyment of the waking day between days spent working from home and on-site, except among male graduates, for whom it is lower by 0.17 points.

These findings highlight the distinction between the experience of a working day and the value of the working arrangement itself. The latter may depend not only on the enjoyment associated with the activities undertaken, but also on the monetary costs of commuting, autonomy, the flexibility to organise time and the ability to respond to household needs. Time-use diaries provide a distinctive means of documenting the allocation, organisation and experience of time,

while also illustrating the limits of experienced enjoyment as a comprehensive measure of the value workers attach to different working arrangements.

Finally, gender differences emerge mainly in the allocation of time and in the enjoyment of time outside paid work. On days spent working from home, men and women both do about half an hour more unpaid work, so that the gender gap in unpaid work remains broadly unchanged; the larger percentage increase for men (46% and 32%) reflects their lower baseline. Men also shift the timing of paid work more, doing less paid work early in the morning and in the evening, although among graduates the difference between 8:00 and 9:00 is similar for men and women. The differences between men and women in how the enjoyment and perceived productivity of work vary with working from home (the WFH×Female interactions) are not statistically significant, although the lower values on days spent working from home are larger and more precisely estimated for men. Women's waking time outside paid work, by contrast, is more enjoyable on days spent working from home, by 0.21 points more than men's.

Our study highlights the interplay between work location, time use, and economic trade-offs, reinforcing the need for nuanced discussions around the future of hybrid and remote work. It complements recent research exploring the trade-offs workers face when choosing remote work, particularly in relation to productivity, mental well-being, and long-term career development (Emanuel and Harrington, 2024; Gibbs et al., 2023; Cowan and Spearing, 2026; Emanuel et al., 2026; De Fraja et al., 2025). It raises important questions for employers and policymakers alike. For employers considering hybrid or fully remote working arrangements, our findings suggest that the value workers attach to remote work should not be assessed solely through the enjoyment or perceived productivity of paid work. The flexibility to organise paid and unpaid activities, together with the potential savings in commuting costs, may also be important considerations in the design of working arrangements. Policymakers aiming to support workers in a remote-first world may need to focus on improving the infrastructure for home-based work and rethinking urban commuting policies to make in-office work more attractive.

The relationships we uncover between enjoyment, perceived productivity and the location of work might arise because of differences in tasks carried out at home and on-site or other unmeasured selection. Larger scale time diaries carried out over multiple workdays and distinguishing in-work tasks would provide a helpful tool for future research into the relationship between productivity and the location of work.

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Appendix A: OTUS interface

Figure A1: OTUS instrument

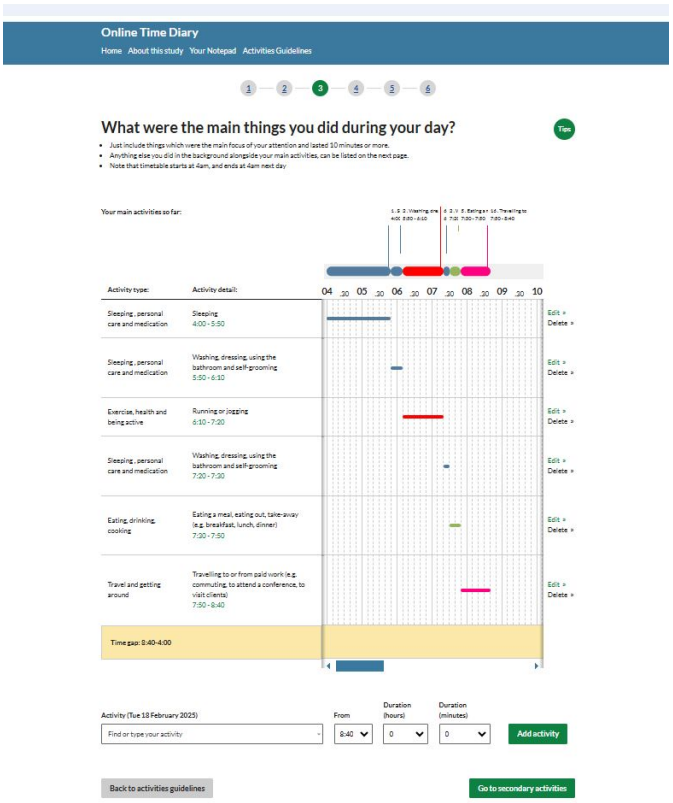
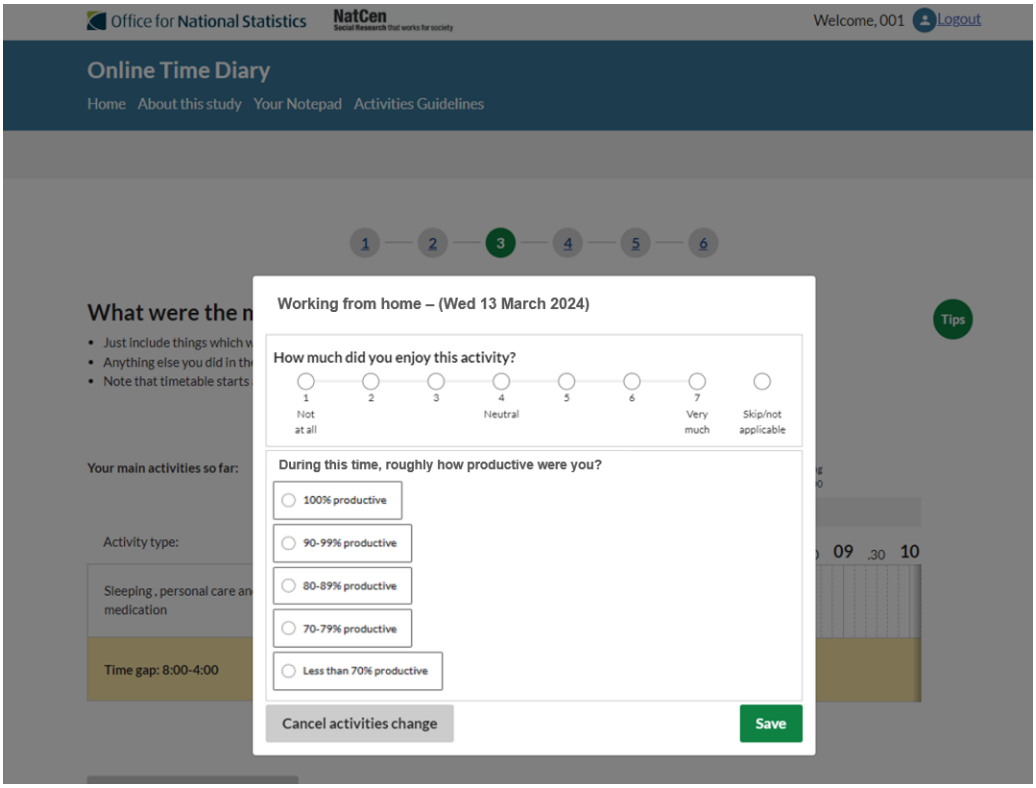
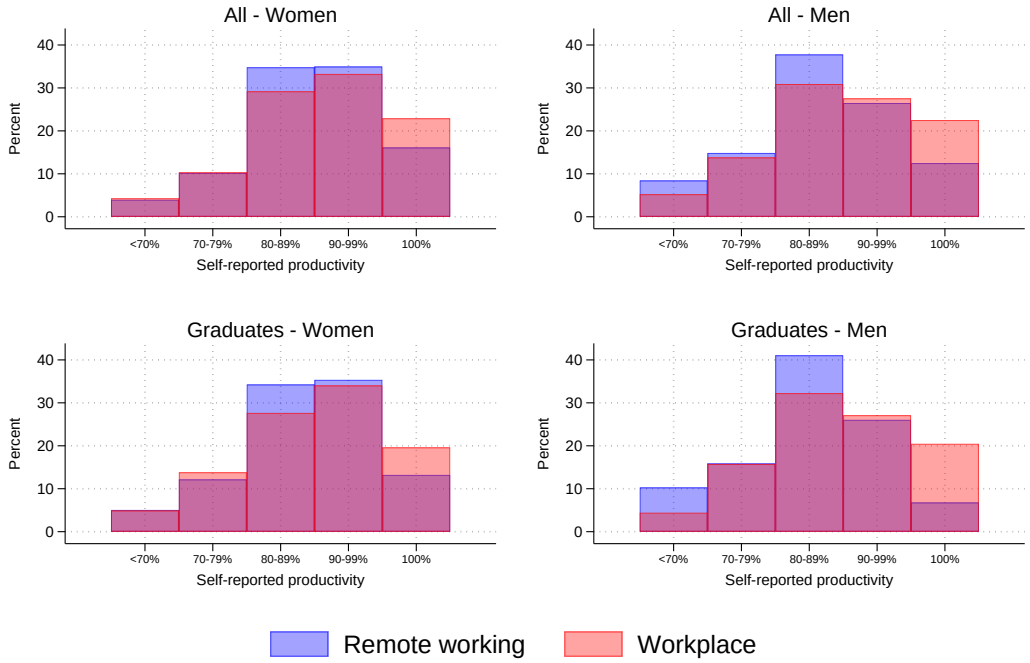


Figure A2: OTUS Wave 8 – Self-reported productivity



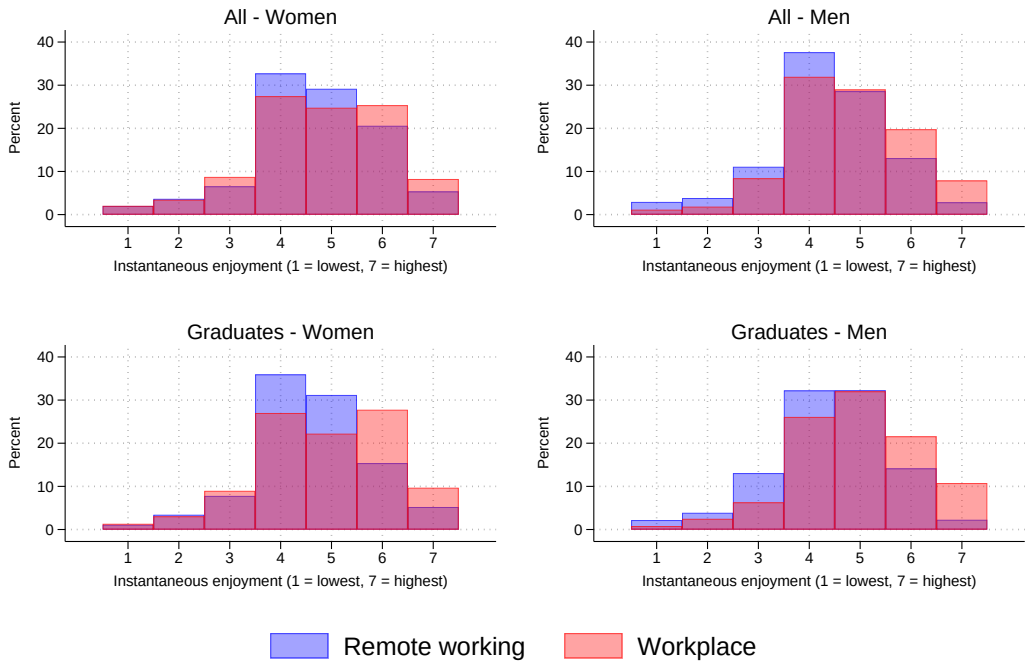
Appendix B: OTUS data

Figure B1: Self-reported productivity – March 2024 and March 2025



Notes: the figures report the weighted distribution of the measure of self-reported productivity for the full sample and for graduates. Values of the measure are: 5 = 100% productive ; 4 = 90-99% productive ; 3 = 80-89% productive ; 2 = 70-79% productive ; 1 = Less than 70% productive. The sample is the regression sample of Table 5 and Table C3: all work episodes, including those of respondents without an occupation code (2,777 episodes; 1,518 for graduates).

Figure B2: Instantaneous enjoyment in work – March 2024 and March 2025



Notes: weighted measure of enjoyment on a seven-point scale (1=lowest enjoyment, 7=highest enjoyment) across work episodes in the 2024 and 2025 waves of OTUS data, in the regression sample of Table 5 and Table C3: all work episodes, including those of respondents without an occupation code (2,756 episodes; 1,511 for graduates).

Table B1: Summary Statistics of socio-economic characteristics in OTUS data

	Waves				
	Nov 2022	*Mar 2023*	*Sep 2023*	*Mar 2024*	*Mar 2025*
WFH	0.288	0.305	0.287	0.267	0.330
	(0.453)	(0.460)	(0.453)	(0.443)	(0.471)
Female	0.536	0.507	0.475	0.495	0.483
	(0.499)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)
College degree	0.599	0.606	0.518	0.486	0.539
	(0.490)	(0.489)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.499)
GCSE-A level	0.353	0.353	0.426	0.459	0.415
	(0.478)	(0.478)	(0.495)	(0.499)	(0.493)
Other or no qual.	0.047	0.041	0.056	0.056	0.047
	(0.212)	(0.198)	(0.230)	(0.229)	(0.211)
Age: less than 34	0.210	0.210	0.219	0.261	0.210
	(0.408)	(0.408)	(0.414)	(0.439)	(0.407)
Age: 35 to 44	0.258	0.279	0.258	0.245	0.284
	(0.438)	(0.449)	(0.438)	(0.431)	(0.451)
Age: 45 to 55	0.279	0.263	0.281	0.261	0.234
	(0.449)	(0.440)	(0.450)	(0.439)	(0.424)
Age: 55+	0.254	0.248	0.241	0.233	0.272
	(0.435)	(0.432)	(0.428)	(0.423)	(0.445)
Single	0.435	0.433	0.418	0.404	0.418
	(0.496)	(0.496)	(0.493)	(0.491)	(0.494)
With health condition	0.267	0.298	0.325	0.296	0.303
	(0.443)	(0.458)	(0.469)	(0.457)	(0.460)

(continued)

	Waves				
	Nov 2022	*Mar 2023*	*Sep 2023*	*Mar 2024*	*Mar 2025*
House owner	0.721	0.716	0.683	0.674	0.681
	(0.449)	(0.451)	(0.465)	(0.469)	(0.466)
Hh size: 1 person	0.114	0.131	0.121	0.099	0.134
	(0.318)	(0.338)	(0.326)	(0.300)	(0.341)
Hh size: 2 people	0.346	0.354	0.297	0.329	0.329
	(0.476)	(0.478)	(0.457)	(0.470)	(0.470)
Hh size: 3–4 people	0.435	0.418	0.474	0.468	0.435
	(0.496)	(0.493)	(0.500)	(0.499)	(0.496)
Hh size: 5 or more	0.105	0.097	0.108	0.103	0.102
	(0.307)	(0.296)	(0.311)	(0.305)	(0.303)
Workhours: <30	0.167	0.151	0.174	0.174	0.159
	(0.373)	(0.358)	(0.379)	(0.380)	(0.366)
Workhours:>=30 &<=40	0.551	0.571	0.562	0.587	0.606
	(0.498)	(0.495)	(0.497)	(0.493)	(0.489)
Workhours:>40	0.251	0.233	0.231	0.239	0.236
	(0.434)	(0.423)	(0.422)	(0.427)	(0.425)
Children aged 0–4	0.108	0.110	0.105	0.120	0.108
	(0.310)	(0.314)	(0.306)	(0.325)	(0.310)
Children aged 5–10	0.180	0.177	0.183	0.156	0.157
	(0.384)	(0.381)	(0.387)	(0.363)	(0.364)
Children aged 11–15	0.209	0.171	0.199	0.172	0.162
	(0.407)	(0.376)	(0.399)	(0.377)	(0.368)
Hh income band 1	0.097	0.119	0.102	0.081	0.162
	(0.296)	(0.324)	(0.303)	(0.274)	(0.368)
Hh income band 2	0.011	0.008	0.012	0.023	0.004
	(0.102)	(0.091)	(0.110)	(0.151)	(0.066)
Hh income band 3	0.033	0.041	0.040	0.037	0.009
	(0.178)	(0.198)	(0.197)	(0.190)	(0.093)
Hh income band 4	0.087	0.061	0.065	0.054	0.023
	(0.282)	(0.240)	(0.246)	(0.227)	(0.151)
Hh income band 5	0.087	0.069	0.072	0.079	0.033
	(0.282)	(0.253)	(0.258)	(0.270)	(0.180)
Hh income band 6	0.131	0.105	0.083	0.087	0.102
	(0.338)	(0.306)	(0.276)	(0.281)	(0.303)
Hh income band 7	0.084	0.097	0.111	0.107	0.079
	(0.278)	(0.296)	(0.314)	(0.310)	(0.269)
Hh income band 8	0.120	0.144	0.132	0.140	0.108
	(0.325)	(0.351)	(0.338)	(0.347)	(0.310)
Hh income band 9	0.134	0.147	0.162	0.163	0.160
	(0.341)	(0.355)	(0.369)	(0.369)	(0.367)
Hh income band 10	0.117	0.124	0.123	0.134	0.192
	(0.322)	(0.330)	(0.329)	(0.341)	(0.394)
Hh income band 11	0.100	0.085	0.099	0.094	0.128
	(0.300)	(0.280)	(0.298)	(0.292)	(0.334)
White	0.882	0.890	0.871	0.879	0.862
	(0.323)	(0.313)	(0.336)	(0.327)	(0.345)
SOC missing	0.360	0.426	0.351	0.335	0.022
	(0.480)	(0.495)	(0.478)	(0.472)	(0.146)

(continued)

	Waves				
	Nov 2022	*Mar 2023*	*Sep 2023*	*Mar 2024*	*Mar 2025*
SOC 11	0.030	0.029	0.050	0.034	0.082
	(0.171)	(0.169)	(0.218)	(0.180)	(0.274)
SOC 12	0.013	0.019	0.010	0.014	0.031
	(0.114)	(0.137)	(0.098)	(0.118)	(0.172)
SOC 21	0.068	0.055	0.039	0.056	0.102
	(0.252)	(0.229)	(0.194)	(0.229)	(0.303)
SOC 22	0.034	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.038
	(0.182)	(0.173)	(0.175)	(0.173)	(0.191)
SOC 23	0.045	0.046	0.040	0.049	0.063
	(0.207)	(0.210)	(0.197)	(0.216)	(0.242)
SOC 24	0.067	0.059	0.056	0.063	0.100
	(0.250)	(0.236)	(0.230)	(0.244)	(0.301)
SOC 31	0.012	0.014	0.015	0.016	0.026
	(0.108)	(0.118)	(0.120)	(0.124)	(0.160)
SOC 32	0.014	0.013	0.010	0.012	0.026
	(0.119)	(0.115)	(0.098)	(0.107)	(0.160)
SOC 33	0.008	0.005	0.010	0.017	0.001
	(0.089)	(0.071)	(0.098)	(0.129)	(0.038)
SOC 34	0.008	0.012	0.011	0.009	0.016
	(0.089)	(0.108)	(0.104)	(0.095)	(0.126)
SOC 35	0.054	0.054	0.048	0.057	0.093
	(0.226)	(0.227)	(0.213)	(0.232)	(0.291)
SOC 41	0.054	0.040	0.052	0.066	0.096
	(0.226)	(0.196)	(0.223)	(0.248)	(0.295)
SOC 42	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.018	0.020
	(0.134)	(0.131)	(0.130)	(0.133)	(0.141)
SOC 51	0.004	0.008	0.010	0.006	0.006
	(0.063)	(0.091)	(0.098)	(0.080)	(0.076)
SOC 52	0.009	0.014	0.021	0.012	0.023
	(0.096)	(0.118)	(0.142)	(0.107)	(0.151)
SOC 53	0.012	0.008	0.015	0.016	0.009
	(0.108)	(0.091)	(0.120)	(0.124)	(0.093)
SOC 54	0.007	0.007	0.013	0.010	0.015
	(0.081)	(0.082)	(0.115)	(0.101)	(0.120)
SOC 61	0.043	0.031	0.051	0.039	0.054
	(0.204)	(0.173)	(0.220)	(0.193)	(0.226)
SOC 62	0.016	0.011	0.011	0.013	0.015
	(0.125)	(0.104)	(0.104)	(0.113)	(0.120)
SOC 71	0.029	0.022	0.030	0.037	0.044
	(0.168)	(0.146)	(0.172)	(0.190)	(0.205)
SOC 72	0.014	0.012	0.022	0.028	0.017
	(0.119)	(0.108)	(0.147)	(0.166)	(0.131)
SOC 81	0.003	0.008	0.007	0.008	0.013
	(0.051)	(0.091)	(0.085)	(0.088)	(0.114)
SOC 82	0.020	0.015	0.021	0.014	0.031
	(0.139)	(0.122)	(0.142)	(0.118)	(0.172)
SOC 91	0.004	0.005	0.007	0.003	0.010
	(0.063)	(0.071)	(0.085)	(0.051)	(0.100)

(continued)

	Waves				
	Nov 2022	*Mar 2023*	*Sep 2023*	*Mar 2024*	*Mar 2025*
SOC 92	0.054	0.036	0.052	0.039	0.048
	(0.226)	(0.186)	(0.223)	(0.193)	(0.214)
N	761 (18.0%)	1,195 (28.2%)	821 (19.4%)	774 (18.3%)	687 (16.2%)

Notes: Unweighted means (standard deviations in parentheses) of the characteristics of the analysis sample: weekday diaries of employees with at least four hours of paid work, all at home or at least four hours away from home, November 2022 – March 2025 (4,238 diaries). Weekly working hours: usual hours in the main and second job. SOC: 2-digit SOC 2020 sub-major groups (group 63 is merged with 62), including codes filled from the same respondent in the nearest other wave (12%, 11%, 14%, 16% and 0.4% of diaries in the five waves); SOC missing is the share without a code after filling. Children: indicators for at least one child in each age group. Diaries without weekly working hours (3% to 5% in waves 5 to 7) are a separate category in the regressions. Percentages next to N are shares of the 4,238 diaries.

Table B2: Summary Statistics of time use in OTUS data across waves

	Waves								
	Apr 2020	Sep 2020	Mar 2021	Mar 2022	Nov 2022	Mar 2023	Sep 2023	Mar 2024	Mar 2025
Sleeping	498.3	489.3	484.7	486.3	487.7	493.6	492.5	490.7	481.2
	(84.6)	(75.0)	(74.2)	(81.8)	(84.5)	(81.3)	(87.0)	(89.5)	(89.2)
Personal care	112.6	116.6	109.1	114.8	112.4	115.5	117.4	119.5	117.2
	(55.3)	(58.1)	(51.9)	(66.8)	(62.3)	(56.2)	(60.9)	(58.2)	(61.1)
Total work	445.7	462.7	469.0	462.7	462.3	465.6	465.8	471.8	465.6
	(110.0)	(104.9)	(108.7)	(106.5)	(111.2)	(103.5)	(104.0)	(106.8)	(108.9)
Travelling	24.4	51.5	39.4	54.7	60.8	63.4	66.9	70.7	66.3
	(39.9)	(51.6)	(49.8)	(57.3)	(56.0)	(66.4)	(64.4)	(68.2)	(62.9)
Unpaid work	93.1	81.2	88.7	88.3	86.6	90.4	91.3	86.1	89.7
	(78.4)	(71.7)	(75.3)	(77.3)	(70.5)	(72.9)	(77.6)	(72.8)	(74.0)
Unpaid care	25.3	21.6	20.1	21.4	22.0	19.8	19.0	19.6	11.6
	(74.9)	(51.4)	(47.9)	(48.6)	(51.8)	(49.0)	(47.9)	(46.7)	(32.9)
Watching TV	116.9	111.2	120.5	103.7	106.9	95.9	95.8	97.4	94.4
	(90.6)	(80.7)	(83.8)	(85.3)	(84.4)	(81.1)	(82.6)	(84.3)	(84.3)
Leisure	56.9	48.0	44.9	49.2	52.5	40.3	41.5	35.2	38.2
	(75.1)	(69.5)	(62.5)	(75.2)	(77.0)	(70.3)	(76.2)	(64.0)	(68.5)
Fitness/wellbeing	20.0	17.8	16.9	15.2	12.0	15.4	14.3	13.1	14.9
	(36.1)	(38.6)	(33.6)	(31.8)	(29.4)	(34.2)	(33.5)	(31.4)	(31.9)
Social media/internet	42.1	37.1	43.5	39.6	34.1	36.4	31.9	31.2	31.2
	(61.4)	(51.0)	(60.4)	(57.8)	(54.8)	(55.6)	(58.4)	(50.8)	(54.8)
N	335	400	715	936	797	1,231	845	801	712

Notes: Unweighted mean minutes per day in paid work and other main activities, standard deviations in parentheses. Weekday diaries of employees with at least four hours of paid work, all OTUS waves (6,772 diaries).

Table B3: Comparison of main summary statistics between the Annual Population Survey and OTUS data

	APS			OTUS waves				
	2019	2022	2024	5	6	7	8	9
Age: less than 34	0.344	0.341	0.334	0.343	0.328	0.329	0.330	0.324
	(0.475)	(0.474)	(0.472)	(0.475)	(0.470)	(0.470)	(0.470)	(0.468)
Age: 35 to 44	0.224	0.231	0.232	0.236	0.250	0.242	0.246	0.262
	(0.417)	(0.422)	(0.422)	(0.425)	(0.433)	(0.429)	(0.431)	(0.440)
Age: 45 to 55	0.261	0.250	0.250	0.220	0.224	0.229	0.228	0.203
	(0.439)	(0.433)	(0.433)	(0.415)	(0.417)	(0.420)	(0.420)	(0.403)
Age: 55+	0.171	0.178	0.184	0.200	0.198	0.201	0.196	0.211
	(0.376)	(0.382)	(0.387)	(0.401)	(0.399)	(0.401)	(0.397)	(0.409)
Female	0.474	0.478	0.479	0.451	0.445	0.439	0.468	0.467
	(0.499)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.498)	(0.497)	(0.497)	(0.499)	(0.499)
Single	0.323	0.329	0.322	0.490	0.486	0.472	0.456	0.496
	(0.468)	(0.470)	(0.467)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.499)	(0.498)	(0.500)
Higher education	0.456	0.483	0.517	0.520	0.526	0.469	0.451	0.510
	(0.498)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.499)	(0.498)	(0.500)
N	122,019	81,158	49,862	761	1,195	821	774	687
	(48.2%)	(32.1%)	(19.7%)	(18.0%)	(28.2%)	(19.4%)	(18.3%)	(16.2%)

Notes: Weighted means (standard deviations in parentheses). APS: respondents in employment in 2019, 2022 and 2024, with APS person weights; percentages below N are shares of the three APS years combined. OTUS: analysis sample of waves 5 to 9 (November 2022 – March 2025; 4,238 diaries), with diary weights; percentages below N are shares of the 4,238 diaries. The higher share of single respondents in OTUS is likely to reflect differences in the definition of marital and partnership status between the two surveys.

Table B4: Summary Statistics of primary time use in waves 5 to 9 by place of work and gender (full sample)

	Men		Women	
	Working from the workplace	Working from home	Working from the workplace	Working from home
Sleeping	481.265	520.244	494.308	509.628
	(89.368)	(85.294)	(95.714)	(81.194)
Personal care	112.833	109.852	122.751	110.221
	(58.785)	(55.874)	(62.801)	(57.930)
Total work	491.789	452.923	459.626	442.680
	(105.667)	(87.716)	(111.954)	(96.480)
Travelling	84.173	27.347	75.873	28.345
	(66.377)	(41.585)	(60.023)	(43.373)
Unpaid work	66.260	90.352	92.173	114.300
	(63.850)	(72.441)	(75.032)	(81.568)
Unpaid care	15.406	21.520	15.808	24.225
	(40.200)	(52.226)	(43.348)	(54.902)
Watching TV	97.230	91.964	85.406	99.315
	(85.966)	(81.113)	(81.495)	(83.472)
Leisure	44.620	51.282	37.812	41.531
	(79.979)	(80.269)	(67.765)	(67.701)
Fitness/wellbeing	10.796	24.901	10.516	19.874
	(29.000)	(41.567)	(27.273)	(36.345)
Social media/internet	27.611	38.305	35.198	39.870
	(48.853)	(63.078)	(57.286)	(64.895)
Other activities and unrecorded time	8.018	11.309	10.529	10.010
	(37.324)	(42.567)	(40.822)	(32.120)
N	1,484 (70.0%)	635 (30.0%)	1,501 (70.8%)	618 (29.2%)

Notes: Weighted mean minutes per day in paid work and other main activities, standard deviations in parentheses. Other activities and unrecorded time is the rest of the 24 hours (activities not listed and gaps in the diary), so that each column adds up to 1,440 minutes. Sample: analysis sample of Table 1.

Table B5: Summary statistics of primary time use in waves 5 to 9 by place of work and gender (graduates)

	Men		Women	
	Working from the workplace	Working from home	Working from the workplace	Working from home
Sleeping	474.403	517.750	482.698	506.841
	(83.964)	(83.214)	(82.627)	(81.753)
Personal care	110.794	109.120	118.457	109.689
	(55.751)	(54.962)	(58.480)	(52.169)
Total work	487.127	456.653	470.837	440.145
	(106.837)	(91.199)	(106.409)	(89.540)
Travelling	94.203	26.934	86.921	28.872
	(67.108)	(40.934)	(64.012)	(42.615)
Unpaid work	64.176	90.390	80.708	112.332
	(62.015)	(73.921)	(66.553)	(78.013)
Unpaid care	20.071	25.492	16.858	27.265
	(46.941)	(57.605)	(41.896)	(56.490)
Watching TV	88.587	87.870	79.190	91.453
	(82.017)	(80.904)	(77.875)	(80.324)
Leisure	46.919	49.545	43.885	42.313
	(80.314)	(75.808)	(70.176)	(68.380)
Fitness/wellbeing	12.391	26.167	12.794	23.113
	(28.763)	(40.705)	(28.846)	(38.585)
Social media/internet	32.368	38.703	38.814	47.007
	(53.644)	(62.193)	(63.306)	(68.673)
Other activities and unrecorded time	8.961	11.375	8.838	10.969
	(39.469)	(45.525)	(38.212)	(32.770)
N	708 (61.1%)	451 (38.9%)	773 (64.8%)	419 (35.2%)

Notes: Weighted mean minutes per day in paid work and other main activities, standard deviations in parentheses. Other activities and unrecorded time is the rest of the 24 hours (activities not listed and gaps in the diary), so that each column adds up to 1,440 minutes. Sample: graduates in the analysis sample of Table 1.

Table B6: Summary statistics of secondary time use (whilst working) in waves 5 to 9 by place of work (full sample)

	Men		Women	
	Working from the workplace	Working from home	Working from the workplace	Working from home
Rest, personal care, eating and drinking	10.61	13.36	10.14	13.47
	(30.73)	(33.46)	(29.05)	(37.44)
Travel	0.80	0.18	0.43	0.79
	(9.95)	(3.37)	(3.78)	(6.93)
Unpaid work & Unpaid care	2.29	5.70	3.01	6.90
	(25.33)	(29.56)	(25.59)	(21.35)
Watching TV & Leisure & wellbeing/fitness	16.57	34.81	13.07	31.22
	(73.80)	(98.43)	(55.94)	(100.41)
Social media/Internet browsing	12.59	13.55	11.45	9.14
	(59.27)	(51.50)	(54.07)	(35.91)
N	1,484 (70.0%)	635 (30.0%)	1,501 (70.8%)	618 (29.2%)

Notes: weighted mean number of minutes in secondary activities while the main activity is paid work. Standard deviations in parentheses.

Table B7: Summary Statistics of secondary time use (whilst working) in waves 5 to 9 by place of work (graduates)

	Men		Women	
	Working from the workplace	Working from home	Working from the workplace	Working from home
Rest, personal care, eating and drinking	11.10	12.60	11.31	15.50
	(30.36)	(31.64)	(26.53)	(44.49)
Travel	0.87	0.13	0.61	0.38
	(9.48)	(2.04)	(4.92)	(4.40)
Unpaid work & Unpaid care	3.34	5.20	3.26	6.66
	(34.26)	(29.99)	(28.41)	(23.12)
Watching TV & Leisure & wellbeing/fitness	16.18	35.40	11.29	31.11
	(69.50)	(94.74)	(49.18)	(98.87)
Social media/Internet browsing	11.11	14.86	12.87	11.64
	(47.50)	(55.30)	(56.89)	(43.42)
N	708 (61.1%)	451 (38.9%)	773 (64.8%)	419 (35.2%)

Notes: weighted mean number of minutes in secondary activities while the main activity is paid work. Standard deviations in parentheses.

Table B8: Detailed Activities by Activity type - OTUS data

Activity number	Variable label	Activity type*
1	Sleeping	1
70	Resting (doing nothing) or in bed not asleep	1
2	Washing, dressing, using the bathroom, or self-grooming	2
3	Medication or other health-related care	2
4	Eating	2
7	Snacking	2
8	Drinking	2
9	Working	3
10	Working from home, café or other workspace (WAVE 1 ONLY)	4
11	Working from home	4
18	Travelling	5
106	Travelling to or from paid work (e.g. commuting, to attend a conference, to visit clients)	5
107	Travelling to or from unpaid work (e.g. caring for others, volunteering)	5
108	Travelling to or from a shop (e.g. supermarket, garden centres, take-aways)	5
109	Travelling to or from socialising with others outside a private home (e.g. restaurant, pub, park)	5
110	Travelling to escort children to or from childcare or school	5
111	Travelling to or from another place (e.g. holiday, visiting family or friends, escorting others, medical centre, dentist, gym, appointments or errands)	5
5	Making food and drinks, cooking or washing up	6
6	Making food and drinks, cooking	6
19	Cleaning, hoovering, tidying house, sorting the bins	6
20	Using a dishwasher or washing up	6
21	Ironing, washing, other laundry tasks or mending clothes	6
22	Repairing, maintaining or making household goods, or vehicles	6
23	Caring for or playing with pets (including walking the dog)	6
24	Caring for or playing with pets	6
25	Walking the dog	6
26	Packing or unpacking, preparing for journey	6
27	Arranging, sorting or unpacking household items (e.g. unpacking shopping, organising and clearing out storage or rooms)	6
28	Lighting fire or cleaning fireplace, log burner or wood burning stove	6
29	DIY or gardening	6
30	Volunteering as part of a group, organisation, charity or sports club	6
46	Buying something, shopping	6
47	Browsing things to buy later	6
48	Window shopping	6
49	Browsing things to buy later, window shopping	6
50	Queueing or waiting	6
51	Banking, household errands, appointments including GP and dentist	6
52	Financial tasks (e.g. banking), sorting out bills, household errands, appointments (including doctors, dentist or similar)	6
53	Completing a document (e.g. job or university application, passport or benefit form or similar)	6
54	Household administration tasks (e.g. banking, sorting out bills)	6
55	Attending appointments or errands (e.g. doctor, vet, bank, hospital, haircut, beautician, garage, etc)	6

(continued)

Activity number	Variable label	Activity type*
112	DIY	6
113	Gardening	6
31	Feeding, washing, dressing or preparing meals for children	7
32	Supporting, comforting or cuddling children	7
33	Reading, playing with, or helping children with homework	7
34	Reading to children	7
35	Playing with children	7
36	Helping children with homework (including home-schooling)	7
37	Reading with children, helping with homework, doing other educational activities with children	7
38	Homeschooling children	7
39	Attending or watching a child's event or activity	7
40	Teaching children life skills (including potty training, dressing, or tying shoelaces)	7
41	Teaching children to develop, including writing, counting, role-play, cooking and baking	7
42	Time with child in your care (secondary activity)	7
43	Other childcare not elsewhere listed	7
44	Time with an adult in your care (secondary activity)	7
45	Helping, caring or looking after adults	7
56	Watching TV, Blu-ray or DVDs	8
57	Streaming TV or videos on the internet for entertainment (e.g. Netflix, Now TV or YouTube)	8
58	Watching TV and DVDs (including streaming, e.g., Sky, Netflix, Amazon prime, Disney+, YouTube etc)	8
59	On a work break (e.g. lunch)	9
60	Listening to music, podcasts, audiobooks, talk shows, radio or news	9
64	Reading books, magazines or newspapers	9
65	Socialising, spending time with friends, family, neighbours and colleagues	9
67	Playing games or computer gaming	9
68	Visits to cinema, theatre, concerts, sporting events, museums, galleries, library etc	9
69	Hobbies and other leisure activities	9
77	Taking other form of leisure time	9
78	Gym, fitness or exercise classes	10
79	Running or jogging	10
80	Playing team sports	10
81	Playing other sports and exercising	10
82	Going for a walk as exercise	10
83	Cycling	10
84	Meditating, having a massage, spa or well-being treatments	10
85	Other health or well-being activity	10
61	Browsing internet	11
62	Checking email	11
63	Checking or using social media	11
66	Telephoning (or video calling), emailing, texting or writing letters	11
75	Checking phone or tablet	11
91	Writing online public blogs or reviews	11
92	Writing open-source software for public	11

(continued)

Activity number	Variable label	Activity type*
93	Creating or coding a website	11
94	Writing online or creating content for public	11
95	Assisting others online e.g. on a forum	11
96	Supporting a cause on social media or petition website	11
98	Finding guidance on internet e.g. on YouTube or websites	11
100	On computer (no main purpose)	11
101	Using a computer or laptop, going online	11
102	Other computer or laptop use (e.g. creating or coding a website, writing online or creating content for public, assisting others online)	11
71	Just talking with spouse, children or parents, family, friends or neighbours	12
72	Attending religious event or meeting	12
73	Attending a political meeting	12
74	Attending a meeting or an event	12
76	Having a conversation	12
86	Attending formal education, lectures, classes, university (not for leisure)	12
87	Attending formal education or taking a course	12
88	Taking a course for fun	12
89	Studying, revising or doing homework	12
90	Learning or teaching yourself a skill not involving taught classes	12
97	Using a device for directions	12
99	Using a computer for other purposes (not elsewhere listed)	12
103	Praying	12
104	Smoking or vaping	12
105	Completing the time-use diary	12
114	Having a conversation (include telephone and video calling)	12
115	Writing, texting or emailing	12
199	Other activities not listed (if private time then please write 'personal')	12
12	Working from a café or other workspace	12
13	Providing childcare, cleaning or doing odd jobs for pay	12
14	Leasing or renting things you own (excluding business)	12
15	Using your private vehicle to earn money, including delivery services	12
16	Showing your own house, flat or building to potential buyers	12
17	Selling your things, apart from your home	12

** Activity types: 1 Sleep/rest; 2 Personal care; 3 Working away from home; 4 Working from home; 5 Travelling; 6 Unpaid household work; 7 Unpaid care; 8 Watching TV; 9 Leisure; 10 Exercise/sports/well-being; 11 Social Media/Internet; 12 Other. Activity types are the groups used for the categories of main activities (Table 1) and for Figure 5. Paid work recorded with code 12 (working from a café or other workspace) is included in total paid work and counted as work away from home in the WFH indicator (Section 3). In the analysis of secondary activities, conversations, telephone and video calls and emails are grouped with internet and social media (Table 3).*

Appendix C: Regression Results

Table C1a: Time across different activities (November 2022-March 2025) – Full sample

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	Sleeping	Personal care	Travel	Unpaid work	Unpaid care	Watching TV	Leisure	Wellbeing / fitness	Social media/ Internet	Paid work
	All 2022–2025									
Constant	494.491***	153.378***	72.312***	86.046***	−10.943	112.861***	26.558*	9.347	51.926***	445.674***
	(17.875)	(12.903)	(12.546)	(15.288)	(7.007)	(18.161)	(15.895)	(7.398)	(15.811)	(21.767)
Female	3.740	11.298***	−6.882**	21.504***	1.900	−14.910***	−13.152***	−1.017	6.116**	−10.614**
	(4.593)	(2.873)	(2.828)	(3.181)	(1.624)	(4.013)	(4.010)	(1.418)	(2.677)	(4.649)
WFH	37.409***	−0.713	−66.968***	30.763***	5.694**	0.377	−0.622	11.677***	7.277**	−28.319***
	(5.298)	(3.426)	(3.149)	(4.222)	(2.225)	(4.700)	(5.081)	(2.416)	(3.627)	(5.236)
WFH*Female	−14.411**	−10.152**	10.521***	−1.053	3.213	12.544*	3.544	−3.237	−3.148	6.322
	(6.935)	(4.701)	(3.950)	(5.919)	(3.255)	(6.507)	(6.404)	(2.887)	(4.952)	(7.430)
WFH+WFH*Female	22.998***	−10.865***	−56.447***	29.710***	8.907***	12.921***	2.922	8.440***	4.129	−21.997***
	(4.897)	(3.526)	(2.896)	(4.375)	(2.420)	(4.745)	(4.292)	(1.803)	(3.784)	(5.622)
N	4,238	4,238	4,238	4,238	4,238	4,238	4,238	4,238	4,238	4,238
R^2	0.134	0.067	0.210	0.132	0.296	0.120	0.073	0.070	0.072	0.192

Notes: the table reports the estimates from a set of OLS regressions where the dependent variable is number of minutes spent in different groups of activities and the unit of observation is diaries. Regressions include a comprehensive set of demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, occupation and region dummies and they were estimated using survey weights. Robust standard errors in parentheses. OTUS data from November 2022 to March 2025 (waves 5 to 9). *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10 (conventional p-values, not adjusted for multiple testing).

Table C1b: Time across different activities (November 2022-March 2025) - Graduates

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	Sleeping	Personal care	Travel	Unpaid work	Unpaid care	Watching TV	Leisure	Wellbeing / fitness	Social media/ Internet	Paid work
	Graduates 2022–2025									
Constant	498.998***	135.852***	68.868***	98.556***	−0.480	101.853***	40.361**	4.268	49.474***	440.621***
	(20.510)	(14.097)	(18.459)	(17.843)	(9.136)	(18.665)	(18.980)	(8.795)	(17.160)	(26.451)
Female	3.535	9.775***	−5.593	12.984***	1.926	−13.834***	−9.347*	−1.059	4.876	−4.660
	(5.234)	(3.677)	(4.140)	(3.969)	(2.125)	(5.114)	(5.630)	(2.179)	(4.029)	(6.338)
WFH	41.243***	−0.826	−71.512***	29.178***	6.980**	0.300	−4.028	12.365***	3.984	−20.976***
	(6.244)	(3.937)	(3.959)	(5.022)	(3.107)	(5.732)	(6.049)	(2.853)	(4.416)	(6.555)
WFH*Female	−16.254**	−8.760	9.881*	4.310	1.355	11.818	2.322	−1.823	2.957	−3.631
	(8.002)	(5.344)	(5.107)	(6.851)	(4.072)	(7.828)	(7.760)	(3.565)	(6.583)	(8.903)
WFH+WFH*Female	24.989***	−9.586**	−61.631***	33.488***	8.335***	12.118**	−1.706	10.542***	6.941	−24.607***
	(5.802)	(3.856)	(3.958)	(4.949)	(2.739)	(5.679)	(5.321)	(2.353)	(5.269)	(6.447)
N	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351
R^2	0.156	0.075	0.278	0.153	0.359	0.131	0.096	0.086	0.083	0.214

Notes: the table reports the estimates from a set of OLS regressions where the dependent variable is number of minutes spent in different groups of activities and the unit of observation is diaries. Regressions include a comprehensive set of socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the respondents, occupation and region dummies and they were estimated using diary weights. Robust standard errors in parentheses. OTUS data from November 2022 to March 2025 (waves 5 to 9). *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10 (conventional p-values, not adjusted for multiple testing).

Table C2: Time in secondary activity while at work 2022-2025

	(1) Secondary rest, personal care, eating and drinking Waves 5-9	(2) Secondary Travel Waves 5-9	(3) Secondary Unpaid work+ Unpaid care Waves 5-9	(4) Secondary Watching TV+Leisure+ wellbeing/fitness Waves 5-9	(5) Social media/Internet browsing Waves 5-9
			All		
Constant	4.700	1.667	−2.763	−10.152	−11.459
	(5.861)	(1.840)	(6.735)	(12.463)	(8.008)
Female	0.261	−0.484	1.348	−1.240	−3.616
	(1.399)	(0.358)	(1.233)	(2.947)	(3.021)
WFH	1.985	−0.775**	4.027**	20.235***	1.300
	(2.043)	(0.338)	(1.841)	(5.068)	(3.094)
WFH*Female	−0.315	1.202**	−0.160	−2.717	−3.152
	(2.610)	(0.535)	(2.089)	(7.237)	(4.108)
WFH+WFH*Female	1.670	0.427	3.867***	17.518***	−1.852
	(1.878)	(0.411)	(1.228)	(5.169)	(2.434)
N	4,238	4,238	4,238	4,238	4,238
R^2	0.033	0.032	0.034	0.043	0.031
			Graduates		
Constant	0.488	2.124	−13.520	3.139	−7.172
	(6.955)	(2.821)	(9.610)	(14.164)	(10.917)
Female	0.025	−0.198	0.802	−2.331	0.141
	(1.848)	(0.403)	(2.572)	(4.222)	(3.111)
WFH	1.371	−0.775**	3.663	20.422***	3.159
	(2.151)	(0.329)	(2.741)	(6.201)	(3.540)
WFH*Female	2.891	0.570	0.259	−1.729	−4.869
	(3.334)	(0.536)	(3.053)	(8.983)	(4.930)
WFH+WFH*Female	4.262	−0.205	3.922**	18.693***	−1.710
	(2.621)	(0.387)	(1.831)	(6.451)	(3.310)
N	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351
R^2	0.035	0.067	0.089	0.063	0.027

Notes: the table reports the estimates from a set of OLS regressions where the dependent variable is number of minutes spent in different groups of secondary activities while the main activity is paid work, and the unit of observation is diaries. Regressions include a comprehensive set of socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the respondents and they were estimated using diary weights. Robust standard errors in parentheses. OTUS data from November 2022 to March 2025 (waves 5 to 9). *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10 (conventional p-values, not adjusted for multiple testing).

Table C3: Self-perceived productivity and enjoyment of work episodes (March 2024–March 2025) – Full estimates

	(1) OLS	(2)	(3) Probit	(4)	(5) OLS
	Productivity	Pr(Prod≥80%)	Pr(Prod≥90%)	Pr(Prod=100%)	Enjoyment
All employees					
WFH	−0.155	−0.006	−0.067*	−0.057*	−0.393***
	(0.098)	(0.030)	(0.040)	(0.032)	(0.106)
Female	0.115	0.055**	0.052	0.004	−0.003
	(0.079)	(0.026)	(0.034)	(0.026)	(0.089)
WFH×Female	0.163	0.040	0.066	0.024	0.212
	(0.126)	(0.039)	(0.055)	(0.044)	(0.141)
WFH+WFH×Female	0.008	0.034	−0.001	−0.033	−0.181
	(0.089)	(0.030)	(0.041)	(0.033)	(0.110)
N (work episodes)	2,777	2,760	2,777	2,777	2,756
Diaries	1,461	1,452	1,461	1,461	1,450
Baseline men	3.483	0.806	0.501	0.225	4.767
Baseline women	3.602	0.854	0.562	0.229	4.785
R^2 / pseudo R^2	0.109	0.071	0.076	0.100	0.126
Graduates					
WFH	−0.207*	−0.004	−0.077	−0.088**	−0.424***
	(0.109)	(0.038)	(0.047)	(0.036)	(0.127)
Female	0.104	0.044	0.070	0.017	−0.024
	(0.111)	(0.038)	(0.045)	(0.030)	(0.128)
WFH×Female	0.202	0.028	0.065	0.041	0.116
	(0.161)	(0.053)	(0.068)	(0.050)	(0.181)
WFH+WFH×Female	−0.005	0.023	−0.012	−0.047	−0.308**
	(0.115)	(0.038)	(0.049)	(0.035)	(0.135)
N (work episodes)	1,518	1,497	1,510	1,498	1,511
Diaries	746	734	742	734	743
Baseline men	3.434	0.792	0.469	0.212	4.938
Baseline women	3.496	0.809	0.532	0.199	4.878
R^2 / pseudo R^2	0.165	0.101	0.100	0.183	0.183

Notes: Data from OTUS waves 8 and 9 (March 2024 and March 2025). Observations are work episodes reported in weekday diaries by employees working at least four hours on the diary day; respondents without an occupation code are included, with a separate category for missing occupation. Self-perceived productivity is coded 5 = 100% productive; 4 = 90-99% productive; 3 = 80-89% productive; 2 = 70-79% productive; 1 = less than 70% productive. Column 1 reports OLS estimates for the productivity score; columns 2 to 4 report marginal effects from probit models where the dependent variable equals one if productivity is at least 80%, at least 90% and 100%, respectively; column 5 reports OLS estimates for instantaneous enjoyment (1-7 scale) of the same episodes. WFH+WFH*Female is the difference between working from home and on-site for women; in columns 2 to 4, the marginal effects of WFH and WFH*Female are average derivatives of the probit index, so that WFH+WFH*Female is their sum. Baselines are weighted means (columns 1 and 5) and shares (columns 2 to 4) among on-site workers. Controls include age, marital status, household size, monthly earnings, indicators for children by age group, education, ethnicity, health condition, usual weekly working hours in the main and second job (less than 30, 30 to 40 and more than 40 hours), public sector employment and supervisory responsibilities, 2-digit SOC occupation dummies (with a category for missing occupation and an indicator for codes filled from another wave), region dummies and a dummy for March 2025. Regressions are estimated using diary weights. Standard errors clustered at the diary level in parentheses; Diaries is the number of diaries (clusters). R^2 for OLS, pseudo R^2 for probit models. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10.

Appendix D: Robustness checks

Table D1: Time across different activities (November 2022-March 2025) – Sample with no missing occupation information

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	Sleeping	Personal care	Travel	Unpaid work	Unpaid care	Watching TV	Leisure	Wellbeing / fitness	Social media/ Internet	Paid work
	All 2022–2025									
Female	0.467	9.107***	−5.913*	23.409***	1.458	−13.641***	−16.237***	−0.001	7.316**	−10.005*
	(5.878)	(3.489)	(3.308)	(3.823)	(1.950)	(4.717)	(4.842)	(1.754)	(3.122)	(5.728)
WFH	31.504***	−4.465	−67.303***	38.423***	6.504**	3.997	−5.237	10.077***	5.956	−24.679***
	(6.805)	(4.492)	(4.031)	(5.518)	(2.818)	(5.760)	(6.350)	(2.940)	(4.520)	(6.517)
WFH*Female	−12.416	−2.991	10.661**	−11.469	2.013	9.915	9.750	−2.805	−1.135	4.277
	(8.685)	(6.085)	(4.960)	(7.373)	(3.946)	(8.014)	(7.996)	(3.578)	(6.059)	(9.358)
WFH+WFH*Female	19.088***	−7.456	−56.642***	26.954***	8.517***	13.912**	4.513	7.272***	4.821	−20.402***
	(6.197)	(4.604)	(3.817)	(5.235)	(2.766)	(5.928)	(5.486)	(2.281)	(4.734)	(7.207)
N	2,893	2,893	2,893	2,893	2,893	2,893	2,893	2,893	2,893	2,893
R^2	0.141	0.071	0.207	0.150	0.279	0.136	0.095	0.071	0.085	0.211

Notes: the table reports the estimates from a set of OLS regressions where the dependent variable is number of minutes spent in different groups of activities and the unit of observation is diaries. Regressions include a comprehensive set of demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, occupation and region dummies and they were estimated using survey weights. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Sample does not include respondents without an occupation code (codes filled from another wave are included). OTUS data from November 2022 to March 2025 (waves 5 to 9). *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10 (conventional p-values, not adjusted for multiple testing).

Table D2: Enjoyment of non-work activities on days spent working from home and on days spent working away from home (November 2022–March 2025)

	Men	Women
All employees		
Sleep and personal care (baseline in Figure 5)	−0.04	−0.01
	(0.05)	(0.05)
Travelling	0.02	0.20**
	(0.09)	(0.08)
Unpaid work	−0.02	0.07
	(0.06)	(0.06)
Unpaid care	−0.16	−0.13
	(0.12)	(0.11)
Watching TV	−0.04	0.03
	(0.07)	(0.07)
Leisure	−0.19	0.07
	(0.12)	(0.09)
Wellbeing/fitness	−0.25**	−0.05
	(0.11)	(0.11)
N (diaries)	4,238	
Graduates		
Sleep and personal care (baseline in Figure 5)	−0.05	0.02
	(0.06)	(0.06)
Travelling	−0.10	0.15*
	(0.10)	(0.09)
Unpaid work	−0.08	−0.02
	(0.07)	(0.08)
Unpaid care	−0.18	−0.25**
	(0.14)	(0.12)
Watching TV	−0.11	0.02
	(0.09)	(0.08)
Leisure	−0.24*	0.20**
	(0.15)	(0.10)
Wellbeing/fitness	−0.30**	0.05
	(0.13)	(0.13)
N (diaries)	2,351	

Notes: For each activity group, OLS regressions of the enjoyment of episodes (1–7 scale) on the WFH dummy interacted with sex, a female dummy, episode length and the controls of Table 1, estimated on the non-work episodes of weekday diaries of employees with at least four hours of paid work, all at home or at least four hours away from home. The table reports the difference in enjoyment between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home, for men and women. Standard errors clustered at the diary level in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10 (conventional p-values). Regressions are estimated using diary weights.

Table D3: Decomposition of the difference in the enjoyment of waking time by activity (November 2022–March 2025)

	Men						Women					
	Share (%)		Enjoyment		Contribution		Share (%)		Enjoyment		Contribution	
	O	H	O	H	Alloc.	Within	O	H	O	H	Alloc.	Within
Paid work	51.9	49.6	4.63	4.46	0.007	−0.086	49.1	47.8	4.77	4.71	0.003	−0.029
Personal care	11.7	11.9	5.25	5.15	0.000	−0.012	12.9	11.9	5.22	5.35	−0.002	0.015
Travel	8.7	2.9	4.51	4.57	0.026	0.002	7.9	3.0	4.40	4.88	0.031	0.014
Unpaid work	6.9	9.8	4.90	4.81	−0.002	−0.009	9.8	12.4	4.90	5.02	−0.003	0.014
Unpaid care	1.6	2.3	5.80	5.60	0.006	−0.005	1.7	2.5	5.72	5.77	0.006	0.001
Watching TV	10.2	10.1	5.76	5.65	−0.001	−0.012	9.1	10.8	5.87	5.87	0.014	0.000
Leisure	4.6	5.6	6.24	6.08	0.013	−0.009	4.1	4.4	6.28	6.42	0.005	0.006
Wellbeing/fitness	1.1	2.7	6.17	6.06	0.019	−0.003	1.1	2.2	6.16	6.15	0.011	0.000
Other	3.3	5.1	5.26	5.20	0.005	−0.003	4.4	5.0	5.36	5.33	0.002	−0.002
Mean enjoyment of waking time			4.96	4.90					5.03	5.12		
Total					0.074	−0.136					0.068	0.020

Notes: Shares of waking time and mean enjoyment (1–7) by activity on days spent working away from home (O) and from home (H). Activity shares are calculated within each diary and averaged using diary weights; the enjoyment of each activity is averaged across diaries using weights equal to the product of the diary weight and the activity's share of the diary's waking time, so that the mean enjoyment of waking time equals the diary-weighted mean of the day-level measure in Table 4, Panel A (without controls); waking time excludes sleep. The allocation contribution of activity a is $(s_a^H - s_a^O)(e_a^O - E^O)$, where E^O is the mean enjoyment of waking time on on-site days; since the shares sum to one, these terms add up to the allocation component of Table 4, Panel B, and each is positive when time moves towards activities enjoyed more than the average on-site waking minute. The within contribution is $s_a^H(e_a^H - e_a^O)$. Paid work includes work at home and away from home. Other includes internet and social media, conversations, education and activities not classified elsewhere. Enjoyment is reported for 98–100% of the time in each activity on both types of day, except for other activities (93% and 96%). OTUS data, November 2022 to March 2025, all employees (4,238 diaries).

Table D4: Travel to or from paid work and other travel (September 2023–March 2025)

	Men			Women		
	On-site mean	WFH mean	Adjusted difference	On-site mean	WFH mean	Adjusted difference
All travel (minutes)	86.5	28.2	−70.2***	78.9	28.2	−60.3***
			(4.0) [<0.01]			(3.8) [<0.01]
Travel to or from paid work	68.4	0.8	−78.7***	57.2	0.3	−65.5***
			(3.1) [<0.01]			(2.7) [<0.01]
Other travel	18.0	27.4	8.5***	21.7	27.9	5.2*
			(3.0) [0.01]			(2.9) [0.08]
N (diaries)	2,282					

Notes: OTUS waves 7 to 9 (September–October 2023, March 2024 and March 2025), in which travel is recorded with detailed codes; in earlier waves all travel is recorded with a single code. Travel to or from paid work (code 106) includes commuting and travel to conferences or clients; other travel includes travel to or from unpaid work, shops, socialising, escorting children and other places. Means are weighted with diary weights. Adjusted differences: estimates from OLS regressions with the specification and controls of Table 1 (for men, the coefficient on WFH; for women, the sum of the WFH and WFH×Female coefficients), with robust standard errors in parentheses and Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values in square brackets (6 differences; 10,000 bootstrap replications). The adjusted differences need not equal the differences between the reported means, since the latter are unconditional. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, based on the Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values.

Appendix E: Timing of activities across the day

This appendix reports additional evidence on the timing of activities on days spent working from home and working away from home, which complements Figure 4. Table 2, in Section 5, describes the shape of the working day, measured between the first and the last 5-minute slot of paid work recorded in the diary. Table E1 reports the differences in minutes spent in each activity in five parts of the day. Figures E1 and E2 show hourly profiles of sleep and travel, estimated as in equation (2). All estimates use the specification of Table 1. Results for graduates are very similar: between 6:00 and 9:00, graduate men and women working from home spend 26 fewer minutes travelling and 33 and 34 more minutes sleeping, and around lunchtime (12:00–14:00) they spend 9 more minutes in unpaid work.

Table E1: Minutes in each activity by part of the day, working from home and working away from home – All employees (November 2022–March 2025)

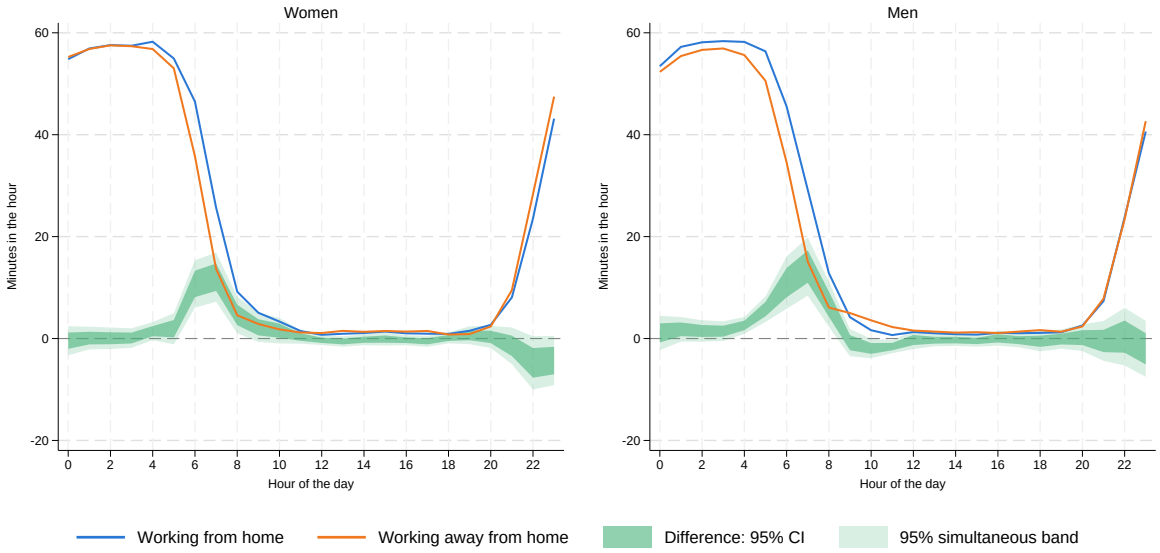
	06:00–09:00	09:00–12:00	12:00–14:00	14:00–18:00	18:00–22:00
Panel A: Men					
Paid work	−18.3***	4.4	−6.6	11.6	−10.5
	(2.4) [<0.01]	(3.0) [1.00]	(2.2) [0.36]	(3.6) [0.29]	(3.0) [0.19]
On-site mean	*51.4*	*143.8*	*86.7*	*155.1*	*35.1*
Travel	−23.9***	−5.6***	−1.9	−19.0***	−12.0***
	(1.2) [<0.01]	(0.9) [<0.01]	(0.7) [0.48]	(1.3) [<0.01]	(1.5) [<0.01]
On-site mean	*25.6*	*6.5*	*4.2*	*24.3*	*17.3*
Sleep	31.9***	−4.3	−0.6	−1.1	−1.0
	(3.5) [<0.01]	(1.4) [0.39]	(0.7) [1.00]	(1.0) [1.00]	(2.3) [1.00]
On-site mean	*55.8*	*10.8*	*2.9*	*4.9*	*13.2*
Personal care (incl. eating)	0.2	1.8	−0.1	−1.4	1.1
	(1.6) [1.00]	(1.1) [1.00]	(1.2) [1.00]	(1.2) [1.00]	(1.9) [1.00]
On-site mean	*30.3*	*7.7*	*14.9*	*14.4*	*32.4*
Unpaid work	3.9	3.7	7.9***	5.9	9.0
	(1.1) [0.19]	(1.1) [0.25]	(1.0) [<0.01]	(1.9) [0.36]	(2.5) [0.17]
On-site mean	*8.3*	*4.9*	*3.8*	*18.0*	*27.4*
Care	1.4	0.1	−0.1	1.1	2.9
	(0.7) [0.97]	(0.3) [1.00]	(0.2) [1.00]	(0.8) [1.00]	(1.3) [0.90]
On-site mean	*2.2*	*0.4*	*0.6*	*3.4*	*8.3*
Leisure (excl. work breaks)	0.1	−1.0	−0.5	−1.1	1.6
	(0.5) [1.00]	(0.4) [0.73]	(0.5) [1.00]	(1.1) [1.00]	(3.7) [1.00]
On-site mean	*1.1*	*1.1*	*1.3*	*5.5*	*21.2*
On a work break	0.0	−0.1	−0.7	0.5	0.0
	(0.0) [n.t.]	(0.2) [1.00]	(0.6) [1.00]	(0.3) [1.00]	(0.0) [n.t.]
On-site mean	*0.0*	*0.3*	*1.8*	*0.5*	*0.0*
Watching TV	0.3	−0.7	0.0	−2.0	1.6
	(0.6) [1.00]	(0.6) [1.00]	(0.5) [1.00]	(1.1) [0.98]	(3.7) [1.00]
On-site mean	*1.4*	*1.8*	*1.3*	*6.8*	*65.6*
Wellbeing and fitness	2.9	0.9	2.2	1.9	3.5
	(1.3) [0.90]	(0.5) [0.99]	(0.7) [0.39]	(1.2) [1.00]	(1.5) [0.79]
On-site mean	*1.2*	*0.8*	*0.8*	*2.6*	*4.8*
Other	1.6	0.9	0.6	3.7	3.9
	(0.8) [0.96]	(0.8) [1.00]	(0.4) [1.00]	(1.2) [0.39]	(2.5) [1.00]
On-site mean	*2.8*	*1.7*	*1.6*	*4.6*	*14.7*

(continued)

	06:00–09:00	09:00–12:00	12:00–14:00	14:00–18:00	18:00–22:00
Panel B: Women					
Paid work	−7.8	−4.4	−6.6	3.2	0.2
	(2.2) [0.20]	(2.9) [1.00]	(1.9) [0.22]	(3.8) [1.00]	(2.7) [1.00]
On-site mean	*38.1*	*146.2*	*91.1*	*143.3*	*25.3*
Travel	−22.9***	−5.4***	−1.4	−17.7***	−8.6***
	(1.2) [<0.01]	(0.7) [<0.01]	(0.5) [0.53]	(1.3) [<0.01]	(1.3) [<0.01]
On-site mean	*24.9*	*6.5*	*2.9*	*25.2*	*13.5*
Sleep	27.4***	4.0	−0.9	−1.2	−0.4
	(2.9) [<0.01]	(1.7) [0.76]	(0.5) [0.97]	(0.9) [1.00]	(1.7) [1.00]
On-site mean	*54.0*	*5.8*	*2.6*	*5.7*	*13.5*
Personal care (incl. eating)	−7.1*	1.7	−1.3	0.6	−3.2
	(1.6) [0.06]	(1.0) [0.99]	(1.0) [1.00]	(1.1) [1.00]	(2.0) [1.00]
On-site mean	*41.3*	*7.1*	*12.2*	*12.6*	*37.0*
Unpaid work	5.3*	4.3	8.7***	7.4	1.4
	(1.2) [0.06]	(1.2) [0.20]	(1.1) [<0.01]	(2.2) [0.23]	(2.3) [1.00]
On-site mean	*12.1*	*6.9*	*4.7*	*28.4*	*37.3*
Care	2.3	−0.3	0.4	4.9	1.2
	(0.8) [0.55]	(0.3) [1.00]	(0.3) [1.00]	(1.3) [0.14]	(1.3) [1.00]
On-site mean	*1.9*	*0.9*	*0.2*	*4.0*	*8.1*
Leisure (excl. work breaks)	0.2	0.0	0.0	−2.0	0.1
	(0.4) [1.00]	(0.2) [1.00]	(0.3) [1.00]	(1.0) [0.96]	(3.0) [1.00]
On-site mean	*1.0*	*0.8*	*0.8*	*5.7*	*20.6*
On a work break	0.0	0.4	−0.9	0.1	−0.1
	(0.0) [n.t.]	(0.3) [1.00]	(0.4) [0.81]	(0.3) [1.00]	(0.1) [n.t.]
On-site mean	*0.0*	*0.2*	*1.5*	*0.6*	*0.1*
Watching TV	−0.1	0.0	1.1	0.2	8.2
	(0.4) [1.00]	(0.5) [1.00]	(0.5) [0.88]	(1.0) [1.00]	(3.6) [0.83]
On-site mean	*0.9*	*1.3*	*1.0*	*5.1*	*60.5*
Wellbeing and fitness	1.7	0.5	0.7	3.0	2.3
	(0.7) [0.79]	(0.4) [1.00]	(0.5) [1.00]	(0.9) [0.22]	(1.1) [0.95]
On-site mean	*2.0*	*1.0*	*1.1*	*2.1*	*3.9*
Other	1.1	−0.7	0.2	1.5	−1.3
	(0.9) [1.00]	(0.6) [1.00]	(0.5) [1.00]	(1.6) [1.00]	(2.2) [1.00]
On-site mean	*3.9*	*3.3*	*1.9*	*7.3*	*20.1*
N (diaries)			4,238		

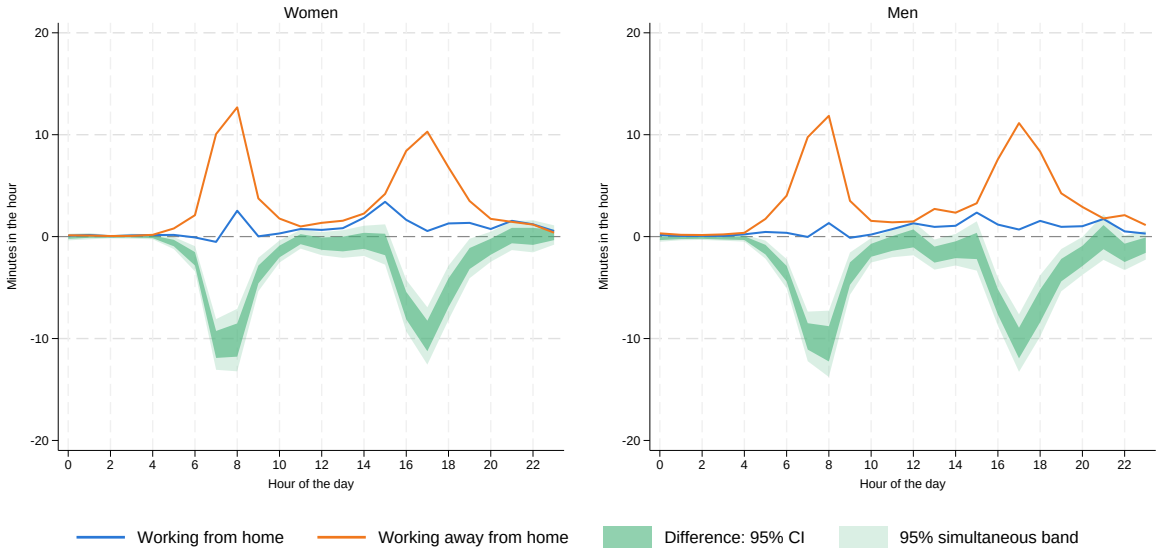
Notes: Minutes spent in each activity within each part of the day, all employees. WFH differences are OLS estimates with the specification of Table 1 (individual characteristics, 2-digit SOC occupation, region and wave dummies): for men, the coefficient on WFH; for women, the sum of the WFH and WFH×Female coefficients. Robust standard errors in parentheses, followed by Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values in square brackets (106 differences; 10,000 bootstrap replications; n.t.: not tested, because the activity is reported in fewer than 10 diaries in that part of the day); rows labelled "On-site mean" report weighted means among respondents working away from home. Leisure excludes time reported as "on a work break (e.g. lunch)", which is shown separately. Other includes internet and computer use, communication, education, religious and other activities. The five parts of the day cover 6:00–22:00, so the differences do not add up to the daily differences in Table 1; the remainder is at night (22:00–6:00), mostly in sleep and paid work. Sample and weights as in Table 2. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, based on the Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values.

Figure E1: Minutes of sleep by hour of the day – All, November 2022-March 2025



Notes: The figures show, for each hour of the day, the average minutes of sleep on diary days spent working away from home (orange line), the corresponding minutes on days spent working from home (blue line), and the difference between the two with its pointwise 95% confidence interval (dark green area) and a simultaneous 95% confidence band (light green area), for women (left panel) and men (right panel). Differences are OLS estimates from regressions estimated separately for each clock hour with the specification of Table 1, as in equation (2). Sample and weights as in Table 2; robust standard errors. The hourly differences sum to the daily differences reported in Table 1. The simultaneous band covers all 48 hourly differences of a figure (24 hours for men and women) jointly with 95% probability (Montiel Olea and Plagborg-Møller, 2019); its critical value, from 10,000 bootstrap replications, is 3.52. Hours in which the simultaneous band excludes zero remain significant after adjusting for multiple testing. The text also reports as significant after the correction the hours with Romano–Wolf step-down adjusted p-values below 0.10 (Section 4.2); as the step-down procedure is less conservative than the single-step band, the band includes zero in some of these hours.

Figure E2: Minutes of travel by hour of the day – All, November 2022-March 2025

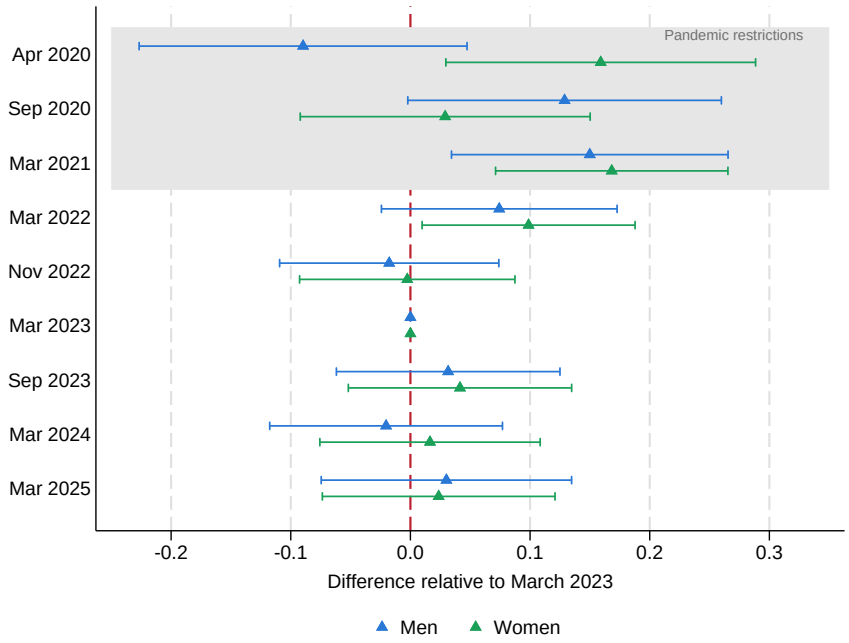


Notes: The figures show, for each hour of the day, the average minutes of travel on diary days spent working away from home (orange line), the corresponding minutes on days spent working from home (blue line), and the difference between the two with its pointwise 95% confidence interval (dark green area) and a simultaneous 95% confidence band (light green area), for women (left panel) and men (right panel). Differences are OLS estimates from regressions estimated separately for each clock hour with the specification of Table 1, as in equation (2). Sample and weights as in Table 2; robust standard errors. The hourly differences sum to the daily differences reported in Table 1. The simultaneous band covers all 48 hourly differences of a figure (24 hours for men and women) jointly with 95% probability (Montiel Olea and Plagborg-Møller, 2019); its critical value, from 10,000 bootstrap replications, is 3.69. Hours in which the simultaneous band excludes zero remain significant after adjusting for multiple testing. The text also reports as significant after the correction the hours with Romano–Wolf step-down adjusted p-values below 0.10 (Section 4.2); as the step-down procedure is less conservative than the single-step band, the band includes zero in some of these hours.

Appendix F: Results for graduates

This appendix reports the main results for the sub-sample of university graduates, who are more likely to work from home (Section 3), with the same definitions, specifications and samples as in the main text, restricted to respondents with a college degree (2,351 diaries, and 1,518 work episodes from 746 diaries for self-perceived productivity and enjoyment of work). Figures F1, F2 and F3 correspond to Figures 3, 4 and 5. Tables F1 to F3 correspond to Tables 1 to 3, Table F4 to Table 5 and Table F5 to Table 4, and report the differences between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home: for men, the coefficient on WFH; for women, the sum of the WFH and WFH×Female coefficients. Results for graduates are discussed in Section 5 where they differ from those for all employees.

Figure F1: Probability of working from home – differences across OTUS waves, graduates



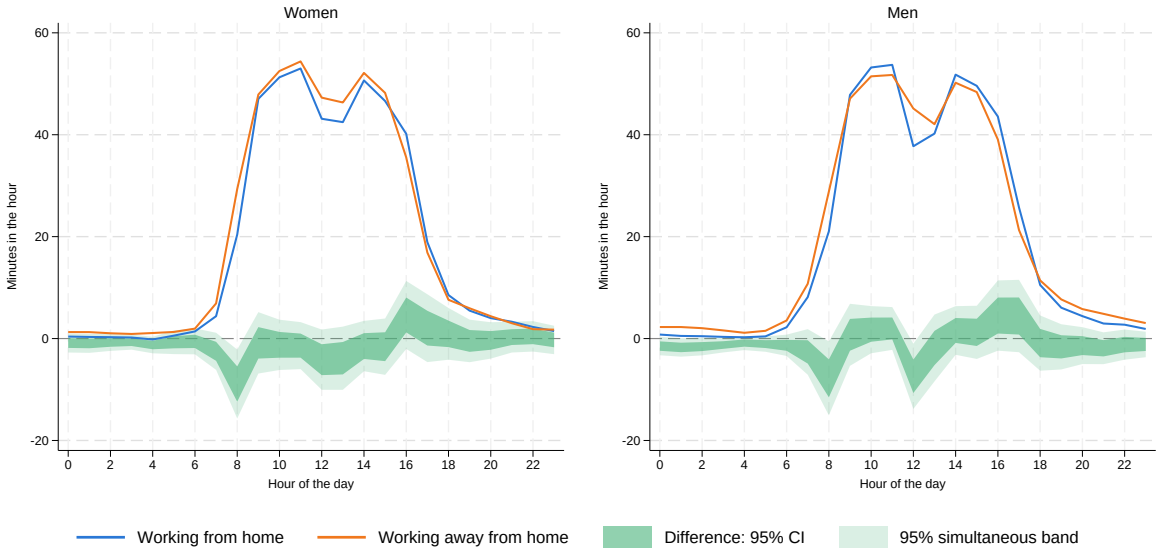
Notes: The figure reports the estimates of Figure 3 for graduates; see the notes to Figure 3 for the specification and sample.

Table F1: Working from home and time across different main activities, graduates (November 2022–March 2025)

	Men	Women
Sleeping	41.2***	25.0***
	(6.2) [<0.01]	(5.8) [<0.01]
Personal care	−0.8	−9.6
	(3.9) [0.99]	(3.9) [0.12]
Travel	−71.5***	−61.6***
	(4.0) [<0.01]	(4.0) [<0.01]
Unpaid work	29.2***	33.5***
	(5.0) [<0.01]	(4.9) [<0.01]
Unpaid care	7.0	8.3**
	(3.1) [0.20]	(2.7) [0.03]
Watching TV	0.3	12.1
	(5.7) [0.99]	(5.7) [0.22]
Leisure	−4.0	−1.7
	(6.0) [0.94]	(5.3) [0.99]
Wellbeing / fitness	12.4***	10.5***
	(2.9) [<0.01]	(2.4) [<0.01]
Social media / Internet	4.0	6.9
	(4.4) [0.90]	(5.3) [0.73]
Paid work	−21.0**	−24.6***
	(6.6) [0.02]	(6.4) [<0.01]
N (diaries)	2,351	

Notes: Difference in minutes per day between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home, graduates, estimated as in Table 1 (equation 1): for men, the coefficient on WFH; for women, the sum of the WFH and WFH×Female coefficients. Robust standard errors in parentheses; Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values in square brackets. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, based on Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values that allow for the 20 differences in the table (10,000 bootstrap replications). Full estimates are reported in Table C1b.

Figure F2: Minutes of paid work by hour of the day – Graduates, November 2022-March 2025



Notes: The figure reports the estimates of Figure 4 for graduates (2,351 diaries); see the notes to Figure 4 for the specification and sample. The critical value of the simultaneous 95% band, from 10,000 bootstrap replications, is 3.83. The difference between 8:00 and 9:00 for women is significant after the correction (Romano–Wolf adjusted p-value of 0.01), although the simultaneous band includes zero.

Table F2: Shape of the working day, working from home and working away from home, graduates (November 2022–March 2025)

	Men	Women
Length of the working day (hours)	−0.04	−0.12
	(0.15) [0.98]	(0.17) [0.98]
Number of separate blocks of paid work	0.30**	0.48***
	(0.08) [0.01]	(0.08) [<0.01]
Non-work minutes within the working day	18.7	17.6
	(6.8) [0.17]	(8.1) [0.39]
of which: unpaid work	16.3***	16.4***
	(2.0) [<0.01]	(2.4) [<0.01]
of which: care	2.1	2.5
	(1.0) [0.42]	(1.1) [0.36]
of which: personal care (incl. eating)	1.0	2.0
	(2.0) [0.98]	(1.9) [0.94]
of which: travel	−4.5	−2.7
	(1.7) [0.22]	(1.7) [0.71]
of which: on a work break	0.4	−1.0
	(1.1) [0.98]	(0.7) [0.80]
of which: other leisure	−0.4	0.6
	(0.7) [0.98]	(0.7) [0.97]
of which: sleep, TV, wellbeing and other	3.8	−0.2
	(3.5) [0.94]	(4.7) [0.98]
N (diaries)	2,351	

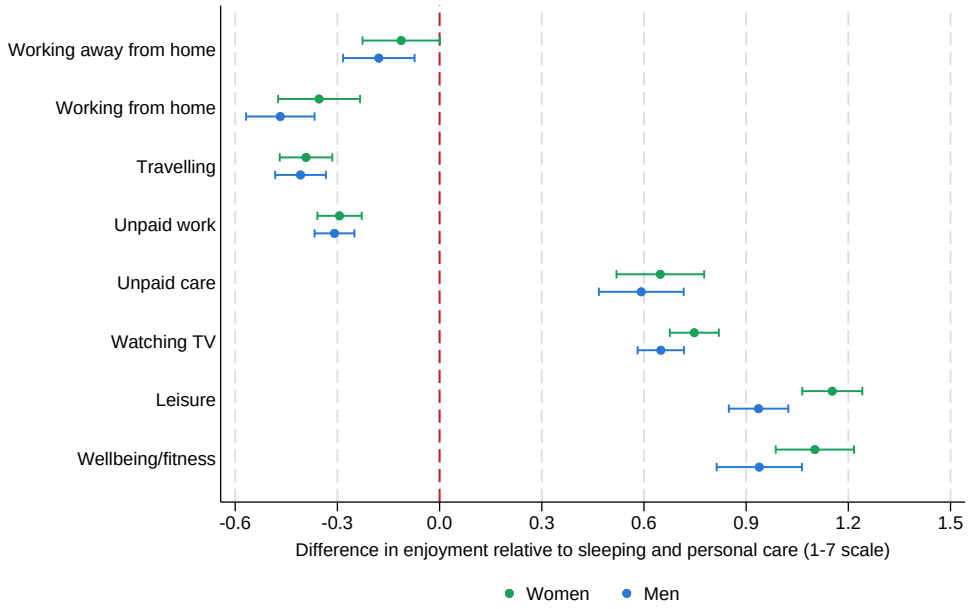
Notes: Differences between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home, graduates, estimated as in Table 2; see the notes to Table 2 for the definition of the variables. Robust standard errors in parentheses; Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values in square brackets. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, based on Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values that allow for the 20 differences in the table (10,000 bootstrap replications).

Table F3: Time in secondary activities while working, graduates (November 2022–March 2025)

	Men	Women
Rest, personal care, eating and drinking	1.4	4.3
	(2.2) [0.78]	(2.6) [0.46]
Unpaid work and care	3.7	3.9
	(2.7) [0.58]	(1.8) [0.20]
TV, leisure and wellbeing	20.4**	18.7**
	(6.2) [0.02]	(6.5) [0.04]
Internet, social media and communication	3.2	−1.7
	(3.5) [0.76]	(3.3) [0.78]
N (diaries)	2,351	

Notes: Difference in minutes of secondary activities while the primary activity is paid work, between days spent working from home and days spent working away from home, graduates, estimated as in Table 3. Robust standard errors in parentheses; Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values in square brackets. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10, based on Romano–Wolf adjusted p-values that allow for the 8 differences in the table (10,000 bootstrap replications). Listening to music, podcasts, audiobooks or the radio accounts for +19 and +18 minutes of the differences in TV, leisure and wellbeing for men and women. Full estimates are reported in Table C2.

Figure F3: Instantaneous enjoyment by activity – Graduates, November 2022–March 2025



Notes: The figure reports the estimates of Figure 5 for graduates (36,918 episodes); see the notes to Figure 5 for the specification and sample.

Table F4: Self-perceived productivity and enjoyment of work episodes, graduates (March 2024–March 2025)

	Men	Women
Productivity score (1–5)	−0.21*	0.00
	(0.11)	(0.12)
At least 80% productive (%)	−0.4	2.3
	(3.8)	(3.8)
At least 90% productive (%)	−7.7	−1.2
	(4.7)	(4.9)
100% productive (%)	−8.8**	−4.7
	(3.6)	(3.5)
Enjoyment (1–7)	−0.42***	−0.31**
	(0.13)	(0.13)
N: work episodes (diaries)	1,518 (746)	

Notes: Differences between work episodes on days spent working from home and on-site, graduates, estimated as in Table 5: productivity score (1–5) and enjoyment (1–7) by OLS, binary productivity indicators by probit models (average marginal effects in percentage points). Standard errors clustered at the diary level in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10 (conventional p-values). Average discrete changes computed separately for men and women give −8.0 and −5.0 percentage points for being fully productive. Full estimates are reported in Table C3.

Table F5: Enjoyment of the day on days spent working from home and on-site, graduates (November 2022–March 2025)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Men		Women	
	On-site mean	WFH difference	On-site mean	WFH difference
Panel A: day-level enjoyment, regression estimates				
Enjoyment of waking time (1–7)	5.06	−0.17***	5.06	−0.01
		(0.07)		(0.06)
Enjoyment of paid work (1–7)	4.86	−0.37***	4.88	−0.25***
		(0.09)		(0.08)
Enjoyment of waking time outside paid work (1–7)	5.26	0.02	5.23	0.20***
		(0.06)		(0.06)
Waking time rated 1–3 (%)	8.9	3.7**	9.5	−0.7
		(1.6)		(1.3)
N (diaries)		2,351		
Panel B: decomposition of the raw difference in the enjoyment of waking time				
Total difference (WFH – on-site)		−0.19 (0.06)		−0.02 (0.05)
Allocation of time		0.07 (0.01)		0.07 (0.01)
Enjoyment within activities		−0.26 (0.06)		−0.09 (0.05)
of which: paid work		−0.19		−0.11

Notes: As Table 4, for graduates. Including sleep, the difference in the enjoyment of the 24 hours is −0.15 (0.07) for men and −0.03 (0.06) for women. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10 (conventional p-values).