Demographic aspects of human wellbeing
Wittgenstein centre conference 2019, Vienna

# Union dissolution(s) and multidimensional well-being

## Evidence from the Health and Professional Itineraries Survey

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# Introduction

- Increasing diversity and complexity of family trajectories

    → Decreasing marriage rates

    → Increasing divorce and remarriage rates

    → More and more people face the consequences of union dissolutions for wellbeing in terms of health, financial resources, social network (Amato 2010)

    → More and more people experience multiple transitions over their life-course

# Previous studies

- Evidence of impact of family trajectories and critical events on individuals' wellbeing

  → Married individuals usually found with better physical and mental health (Umberson et al 2010) and life satisfaction (Stutzer and Frez 2006)

  → Experience of divorce and lone parenthood negatively affects health and life satisfaction (Amato 2010; Biotteau et al 2018; Gardner et al 2006)

  → Individuals who remarry show better adjustment to dissolutions (Wang and Amato 2004)

# Previous studies

- Heterogeneity of effects depending on gender and socio-economic characteristics
    - → Women are usually affected more negatively by critical family transitions because of loss of financial resources and lone parenthood (Lacey et al 2016; Bonnet 2015; Biotteau et al 2018)
    - → However, men experience decrease in well-being due to loss of social network
    - → Individuals with less resources are more likely to experience critical events and suffer more their consequences (Burgard et al 2007; Mc Donough et al., 2015 ), while education, employment, income, social networks may help people cope with divorce-related stress (Wang and Amato 2004)

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# Previous studies

- Evidence on multiple dissolutions:

  → "serial marriers" women show higher levels of psychological distress (Brody et al 1988)

  → married women who had multiple divorces have higher levels of distress (Kurdek 1990) and increased risk of developing a serious health condition (Dupre and Meadows 2007)

  → accumulation vs adaptation processes (Luhman and Eid 2008)

  → Negative health effects of divorce transitions diminish with time (Dupre and Meadows 2007)

# Multidimensional wellbeing

- Importance of considering different dimensions of well-being
  - →Little consensus on how to define and measure wellbeing (e.g. Pollard and Lee 2003)
  - →Multidimensionality of wellbeing (Cronin de Chavez et al 2005): considering one unidimensional notion leads to the loss of valuable information (Keyes 2007)
  - →Differential effects of critical family events on domain-specific wellbeing (Hughes and Waite 2009; Infurna and Luthar 2017, Bernardi et al 2017)

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# This study

- Are past union dissolutions associated with different dimensions of well-being?

  → Does the association vary depending on the number of dissolutions experienced and the time from last dissolution?

  → Does the association vary depending on gender and resources?

# Data and Methods

- *Santé et itinéraire professionnel* (SIP):

  → representative sample of French population aged 20-74

  → Collected in 2006 and 2010

  → Our sample: 9,037 individuals aged 25-65 with retrospective information on partnership histories and current well-being

- Well-being:

  → General self-reported health (1-5 scale, dichotomised)

  → Experience of depressive symptoms in the last 2 weeks

  → Sleep disorders (1-4)

  → Satisfaction with professional career (1-10)

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# Data and Methods

- Dissolutions: end of a union that lasted at least 1 year, or less but with children

  → Categorised by number and timing before 2006

  → One dissolution, <5 years before; one dissolution, >5 years; 2+ dissolutions of which last one <5 years; 2+ dissolutions of which last one >5 years

- Controls: age, education, father's education, number of kids; household income; employment and partnership status in 2006

- Linear regression and logistic models

- Resources: educational level, income, employment status, social network (*does the individual has anyone to rely on, yes/no*), current partnership status

# Descriptive characteristics, by number of dissolutions

| | No dissol | One dissol, <5 years | One dissol, >5 years | 2+ dissol, <5 years | 2+dissol, >5 years | Never partnered |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age (years) | 46.3 | 42.7 | 49.1 | 44.2 | 49.7 | 39.7 |
| Female | 52.5 | 59.9 | 62.4 | 54.8 | 65.2 | 47.3 |
| Lower secondary educ | 56.2 | 53.7 | 58.6 | 54.0 | 65.4 | 45.3 |
| Upper secondary educ | 16.3 | 19.4 | 16.5 | 15.3 | 14.6 | 14.5 |
| Tertiary educ | 27.4 | 26.8 | 24.8 | 30.6 | 20.0 | 40.20 |
| Father high educ | 8.4 | 9.6 | 9.6 | 11.7 | 9.4 | 11.4 |
| Mother high educ | 5.9 | 5.3 | 4.9 | 6.3 | 5.0 | 9.9 |
| Low HH income (<1350 E) | 10.8 | 44.10 | 32.5 | 48.5 | 41.3 | 40.9 |
| Middle  HH income | 48.9 | 41.4 | 41.1 | 40.6 | 36.5 | 39.7 |
| High  HH Income (>3500 E) | 36.5 | 12.1 | 23.6 | 9.6 | 19.7 | 12.7 |
| Employed | 72.8 | 71.2 | 67.5 | 69.4 | 65.4 | 77.0 |
| Student | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 1.4 |
| Unemployed | 4.8 | 9.9 | 8.0 | 12.5 | 12.9 | 9.6 |
| Retired | 12.1 | 7.7 | 15.5 | 6.2 | 11.2 | 5.2 |
| Has someone to rely on | 80.1 | 81.8 | 74.3 | 75.7 | 71.3 | 78.8 |
| Number of kids | 2.1 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 0.2 |
| Single in 2006 | 0.0 | 8.5 | 5.0 | 8.2 | 5.7 | 100 |
| N | 5438  (61.2%) | 549 (6.7%) | 1594 (17.9%) | 239 (2.7%) | 339 (3.8%) | 684 (7.7 %) |

# Results: dissolutions and wellbeing, by gender
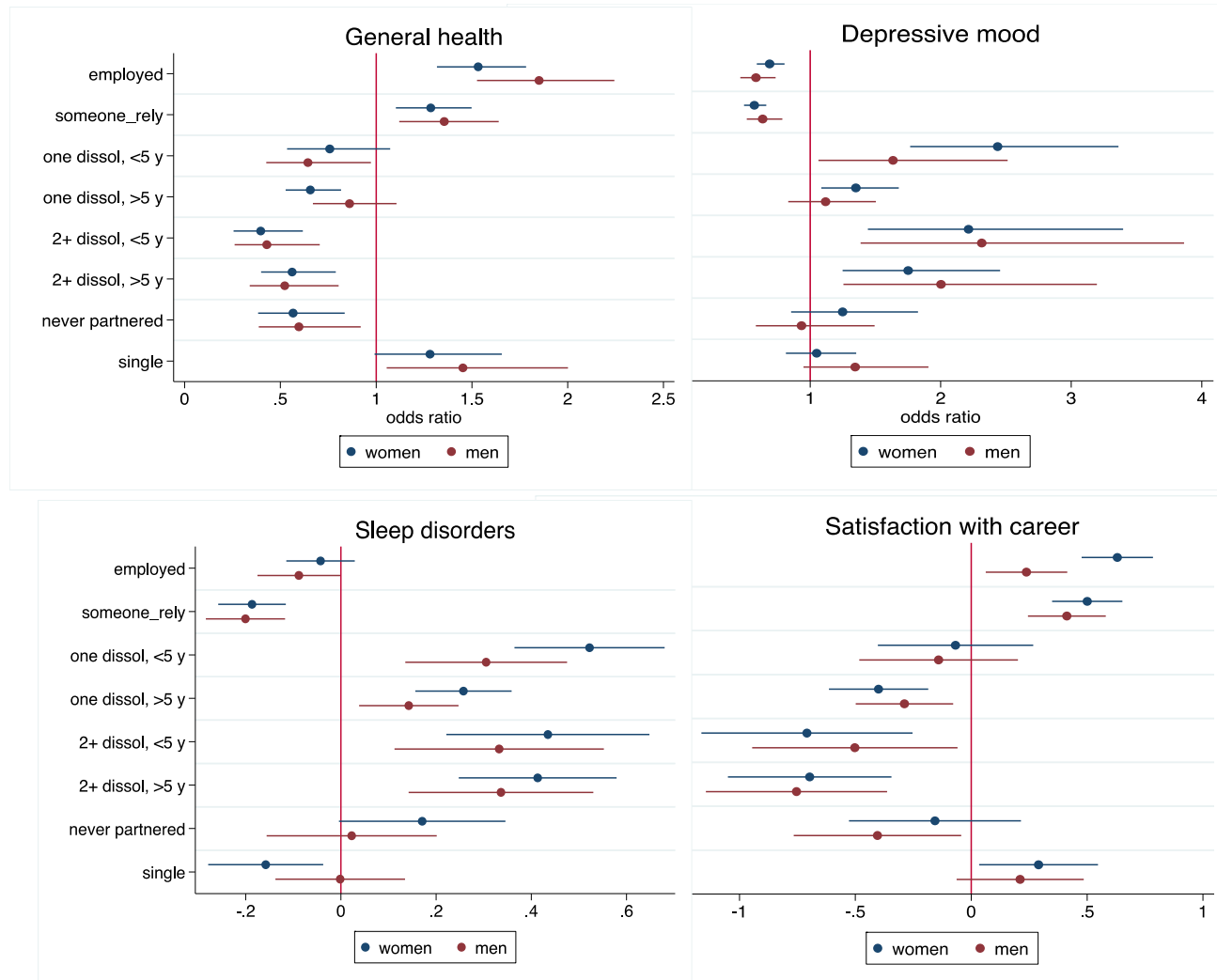
# Results: Dissolutions and wellbeing, by education

**Self-perceived health**
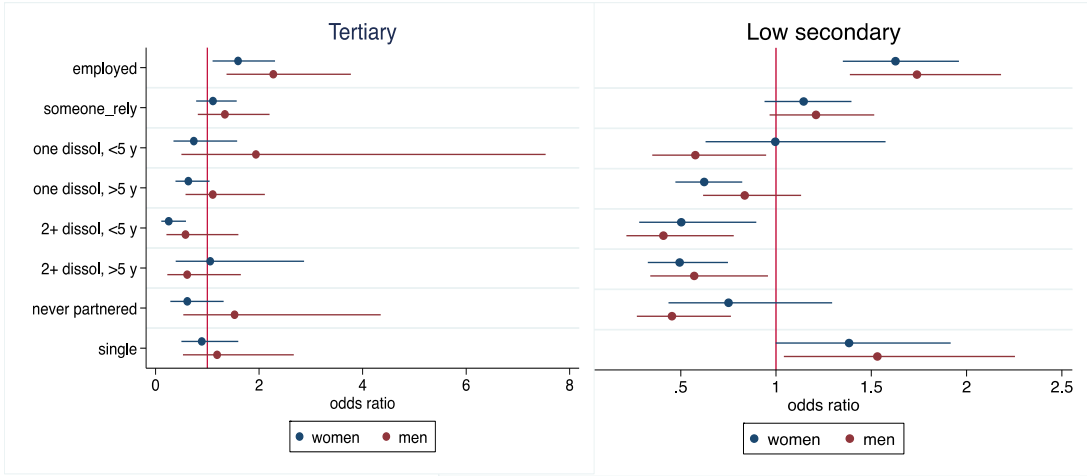


**Depressive symptoms**
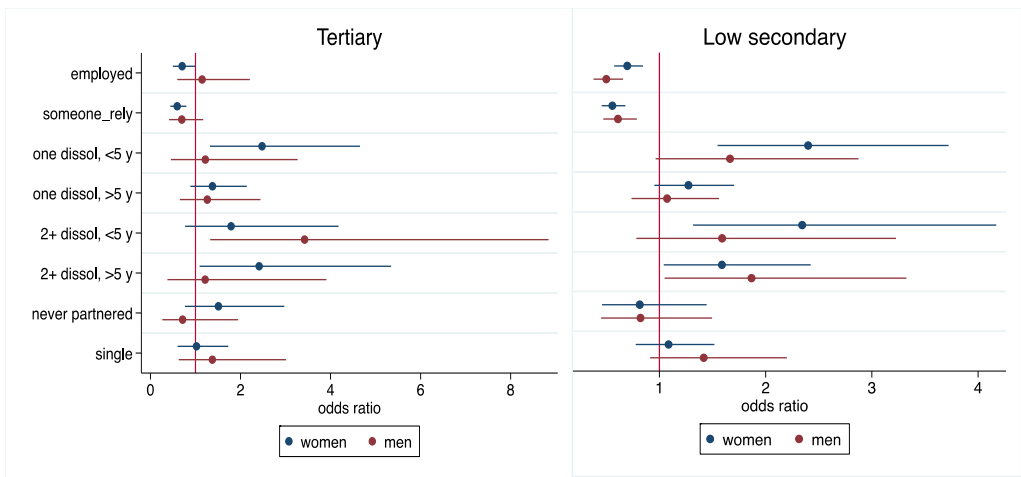
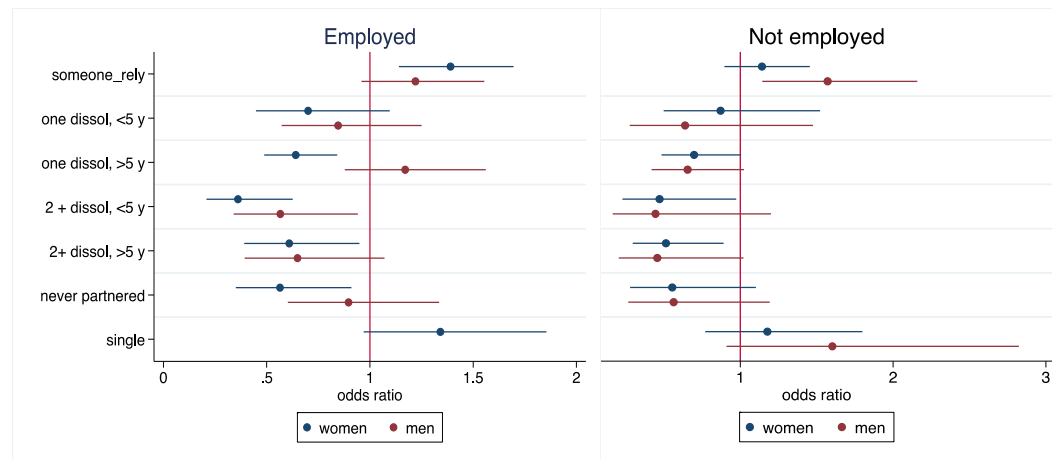# Results: Dissolutions and wellbeing, by education



**Sleep disorders**
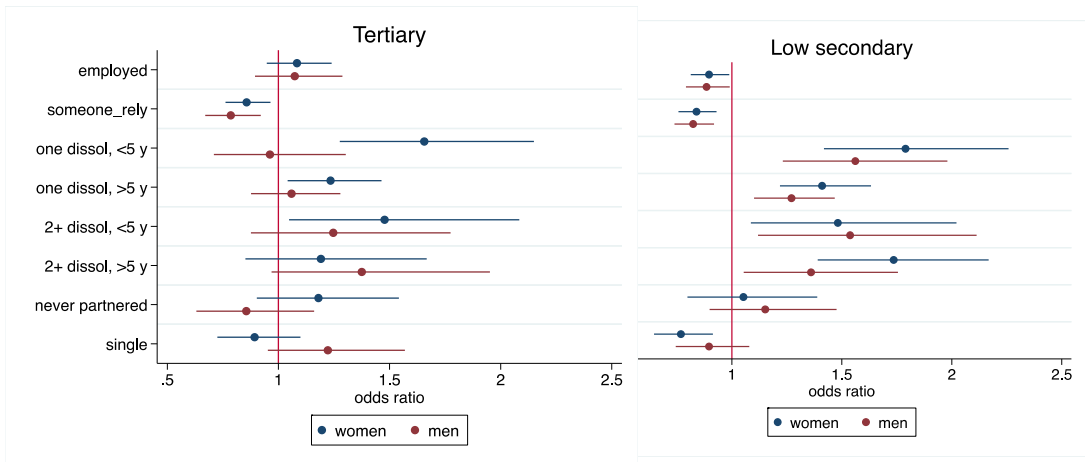
**Satisfaction with career**
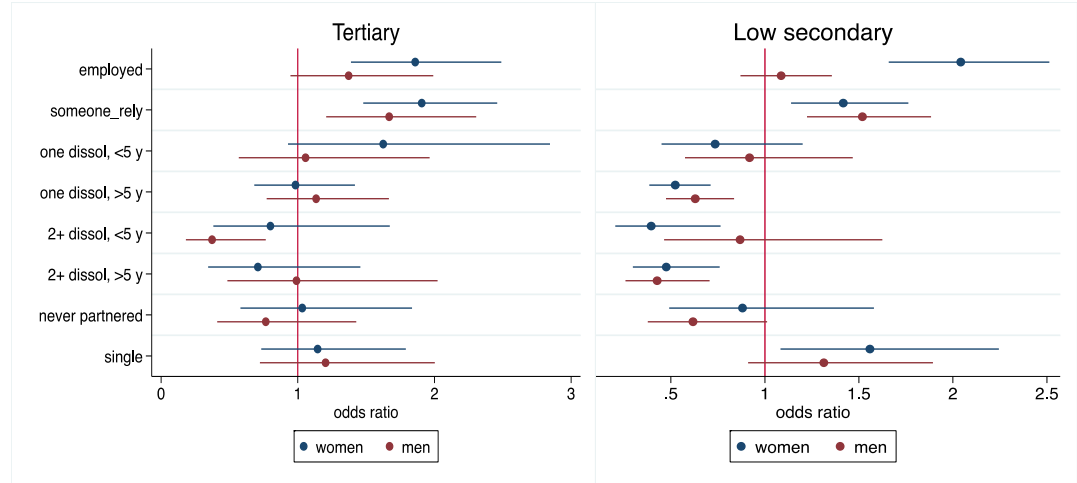
# Dissolutions and wellbeing, by employment status
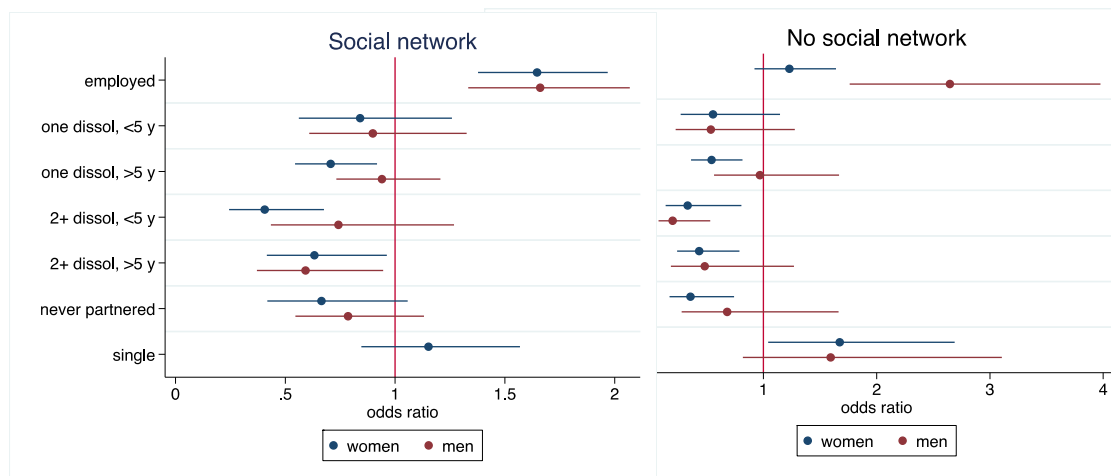


**Self-perceived health**

**Sleep disorders**

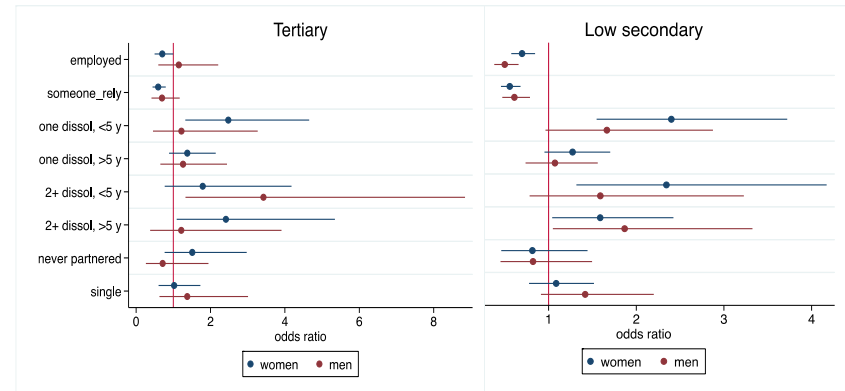Demographic aspects of Human Wellbeing , Wittgenstein centre conference 2019
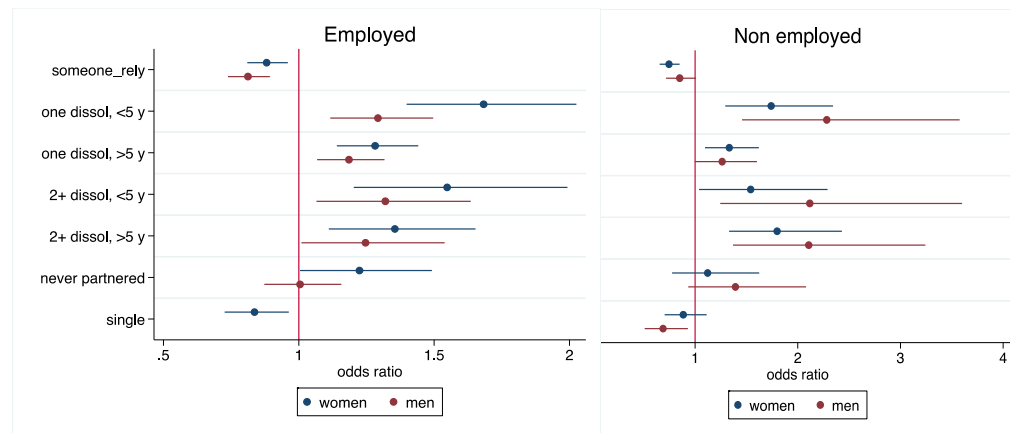
# Dissolutions and wellbeing, by social network



**Self-perceived health**

**Sleep disorders**
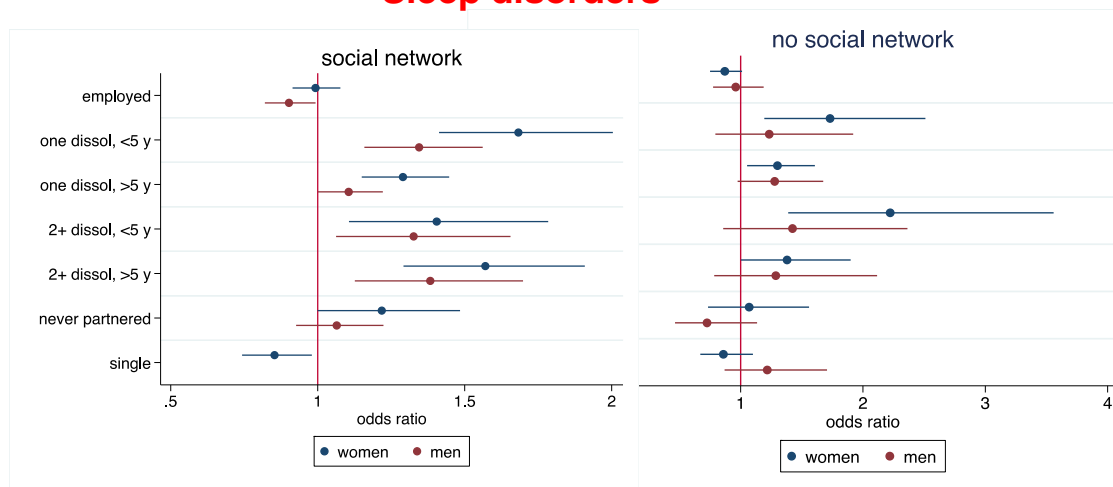
# Preliminary conclusions

- Past dissolution(s) and well-being associated net of current partnership status

- Associations vary depending on the number of dissolutions and the dimension of well-being considered

  → Experiencing more than one dissolutions is negatively associated with all dimensions of well-being

  → Experiencing one dissolution is associated to mental health in the short term. More varied is the association with physical health

- The associations vary by the socio-economic status of individuals

# Next steps

- Analysis of union dissolutions occurring between 2006 and 2010 and change in wellbeing

- Consider separately number of events and timing (with interactions)

- Interactions btw dissolutions and gender and SES to test if differences are significant

- Inclusion of measures of the time spent by the individuals in a union

# Thank you!

# Dissolutions and well-being, by education



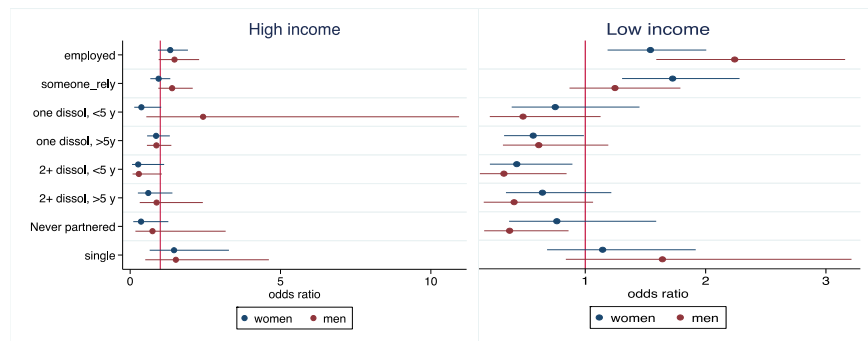**Self-perceived health**
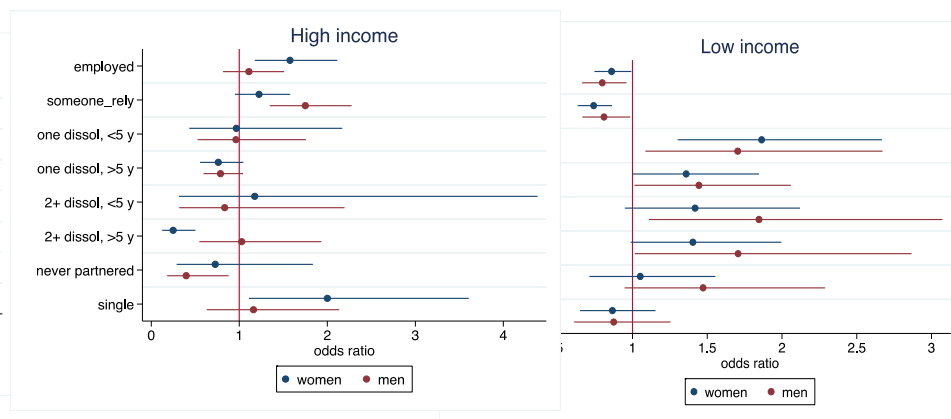
**Depressive symptoms**

**Sleep disorders**

**Satisfaction with career**

# Results: Dissolutions and well-being, by income



**Self-perceived health**
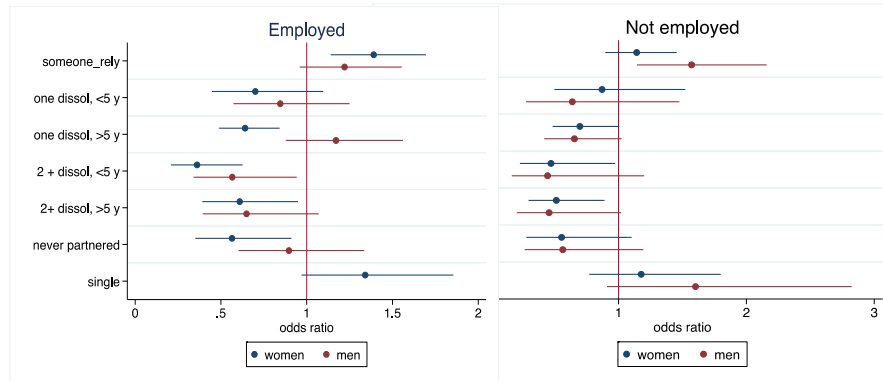
**Depressive symptoms**

**Sleep disorders**
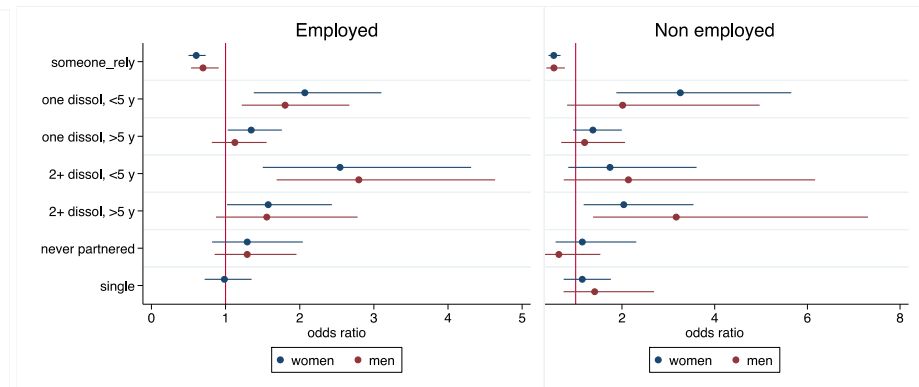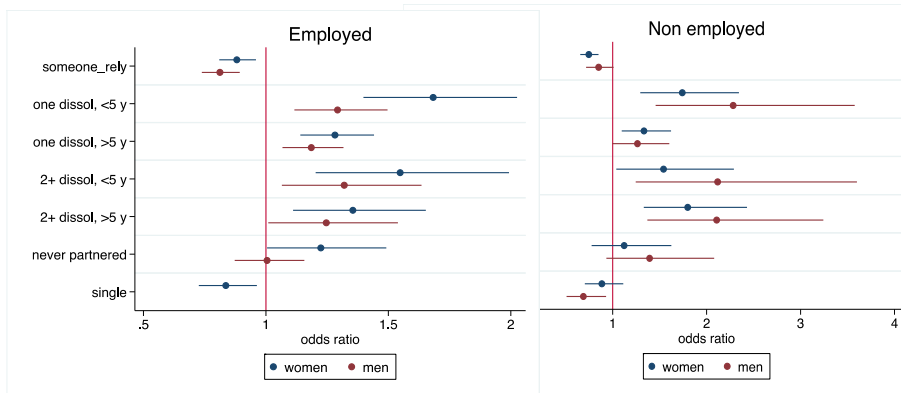
**Satisfaction with career**

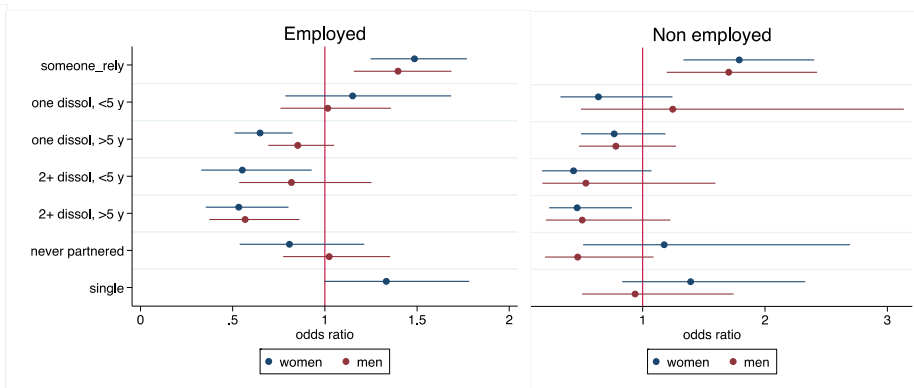# Dissolutions and well-being, by employment status



**Self-perceived health**
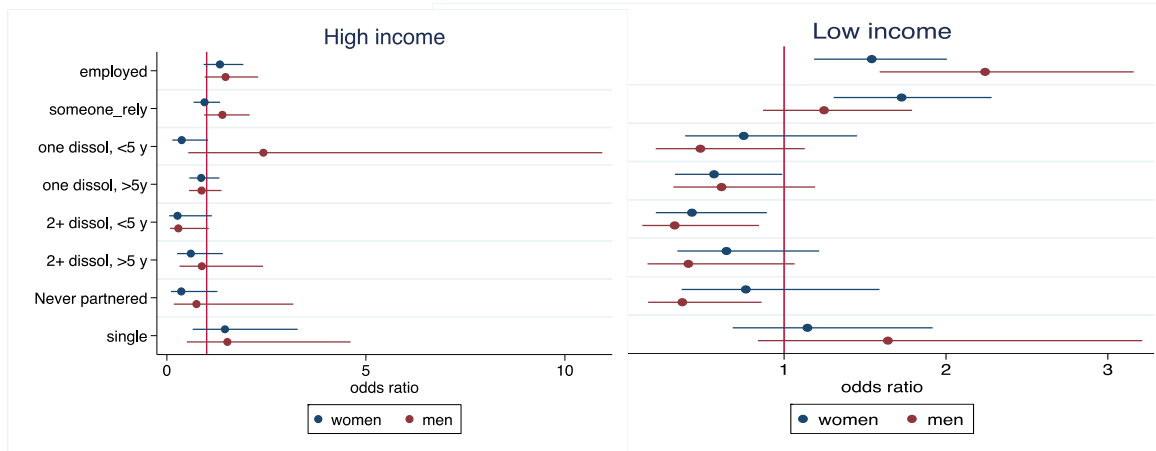
**Depressive symptoms**

**Sleep disorders**

**Satisfaction with career**

# Results: Dissolutions and well-being, by income



**Self-perceived health**

**Sleep disorders**