

IBS WORKING PAPER 01/2026
FEBRUARY 2026

What explains the East–West gap in part-time employment in Europe?

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Abstract

I investigate differences in the incidence of part-time employment between Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries that have joined the EU since 2004 and Western European countries. I estimate employees' probabilities of working part time based on observable characteristics, including capital income and market hourly wages. While labour force structure and economic development help explain more than half of the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment, the remaining unexplained gap amounts to 10.6 percentage points for women and 1.0 percentage point for men. I find that progressivity in personal income taxation is a significant predictor of voluntary part-time employment, but has a limited impact on the unexplained East-West gap, reducing it by 0.7 percentage points for women and by 0.3 percentage points for men. The perceived importance of work and leisure time also have predictive power overall, but these social values do not explain the East-West gap. Moreover, full-time employees in CEE countries do not report stronger preferences for part-time employment than their Western European counterparts, suggesting that differences in working hours norms may play a more important role than hours constraints imposed by firms. Finally, evidence from German reunification supports the view that informal institutions may play a more important role than formal institutions, as the unexplained East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment gradually narrowed over time.

Keywords: Part-time employment, Labour supply, Working hours, Working hours norms

JEL: J22, O52, P30

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1. Introduction

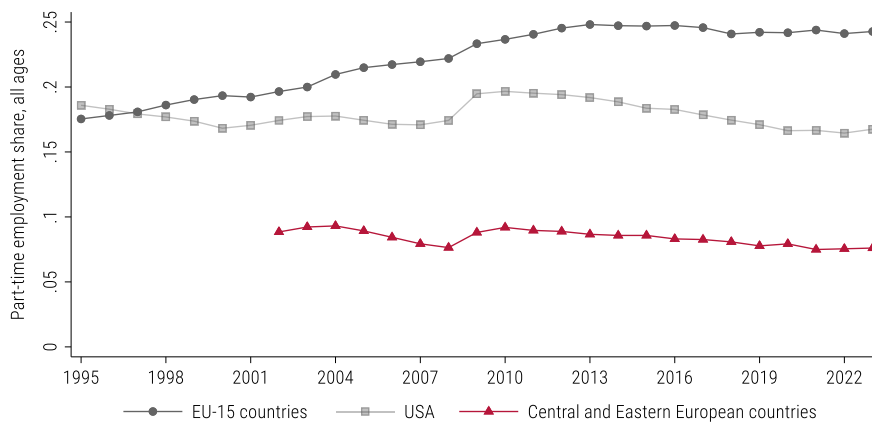
The prevalence of part-time employment contracts has substantial consequences for a number of socio-economic outcomes. Part-time jobs are conducive to work-life balance (Beham et al., 2019; Booth and van Ours, 2013) and employees' health (Baumann et al., 2022; Cho, 2018). Consequently, a labour market with extensive part-time employment opportunities is more inclusive, enhancing the participation of women (Blázquez Cuesta and Moral Carcedo, 2014; Thévenon, 2013), older workers (Albinowski, 2024; Ameriks et al., 2020; Gielen, 2009), and persons with disabilities (Schur, 2003; Ye et al., 2023). On the negative side, shorter working hours not only affect aggregate output, but may also decrease the productivity and hourly wages of part-time workers (Bick et al., 2022a; Garnero et al., 2014; Nightingale, 2020).

While in the neoclassical model of the labour market the number of hours worked is determined by households seeking to maximise utility, the real-world setting is more complex. Employers may not allow part-time employment due to the characteristics of the production function (Deardorff and Stafford, 1976; Goldin, 2014; Labanca and Pozzoli, 2023; Lang and Kahn, 2001) or market imperfections (Landers et al., 1996; Sousa-Poza and Ziegler, 2003). In contrast, some job offers involve short working hours, which may result in involuntary part-time employment (Bell and Blanchflower, 2021). Moreover, employees' preferences may reflect not only their intrinsic utility from consumption and leisure, but also the influence of social norms and peer effects (Collewet et al., 2017; Grodner and Kniesner, 2008). Ultimately, the number of hours worked is the outcome of employer-employee bargaining, which may be influenced by labour market regulations (OECD, 2010) and the role of trade unions (Hutchens and Grace-Martin, 2006).

In this paper, I investigate the reasons for the low incidence of part-time employment in post-communist Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries that have joined the EU. In 2023, the average part-time employment rate in 11 CEE countries was just 7.6%, compared with 24.3% in 14 Western European countries that were EU members before 2004. Furthermore, the East-West gap in part-time employment is widening over time (Figure 1), in contrast to many other economic indicators for which a rapid process of convergence can be observed. The part-time employment rate in CEE countries is also much lower than that in the US, where it was 16.8% in 2023.

Given the potential consequences of the low incidence of part-time employment for the inclusiveness of the labour market and the well-being of employees, it is important to understand the factors driving this East-West gap. Although there is a large body of literature examining cross-country differences in part-time employment rates and hours worked (see Antal et al., 2024, for a review), the East-West gap in Europe has not been the subject of quantitative research.

Figure 1. Part-time employment rates in the USA, EU-15 countries, and CEE countries



Note: The lines for EU-15 countries and CEE countries represent averages with equal weight assigned to each country. Source: Own elaboration based on EU-LFS data and Federal Reserve Economic Data.

I use harmonised microdata from 22 European countries over the 2006-2022 period. Focusing on employees aged 25-54, I estimate individual probabilities of working part time conditional on a rich set of economic characteristics. I assess how much of the East-West gap in part-time employment can be accounted for by differences in economic structure and levels of development, including variation in hourly wages and capital income. I then calculate counterfactual part-time employment rates for CEE countries, holding the observed characteristics of employees in these countries constant while assuming the institutional setting of Western Europe. Finally, I examine which institutional factors may explain the remaining East-West gap in part-time employment that is not accounted for by economic structure and development.

While I report the main results for both part-time employment and voluntary part-time employment, the analysis focuses primarily on the latter. Western European countries are characterised by higher levels of involuntary part-time employment, which increased particularly after the global financial crisis. Underemployment, resulting from a combination of structural and cyclical factors (Valletta et al., 2020; van Doorn and van Vliet, 2024), is a serious economic problem, and it need not influence the benchmark levels of part-time employment to which CEE countries might converge.

I find that the major part of the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment can be accounted for by economic variables, in particular market hourly wages specific to each country, gender, and sub-major occupational group. In contrast, I observe that adding information on individual capital income and net imputed rents has virtually no additional effect on the unexplained East-West gap. On average over the sample period, this unexplained East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment amounted to 10.6 pp for women and 1.0 pp for men.

The difference between the actual rate of voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries and the rate predicted based on the observable characteristics of their labour force and their level of economic development has increased over time. That is, actual voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries has

been rising more slowly than would be expected given their economic development. However, this pattern is not uniform across all CEE countries, as voluntary part-time employment does not lag behind its expected level in Estonia and Czechia.

I find that while the progressivity of personal income taxes is a significant explanatory variable for voluntary part-time employment, it plays only a limited role in explaining the East-West gap, accounting for up to 0.7 percentage points for women and up to 0.3 percentage points for men. In contrast, I show that taking social values into account does not reduce the unexplained East-West gap, and that it may even widen it. I further find that full-time employees in CEE countries are less likely to prefer part-time employment than their counterparts in Western Europe. Although these differences vanish after controlling for observable characteristics and hourly wages, this analysis suggests that the East-West differences in voluntary part-time employment cannot be attributed to more rigid hours constraints imposed by firms in CEE countries.

Lastly, I apply my empirical framework to the case of Germany and compare its eastern regions, which were formerly part of a socialist state, with its western regions. I find that in Germany, the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment not explained by economic structure and development has been narrowing very gradually. For men, full convergence was attained 30 years after reunification, while a large gap still remains for women. Importantly, this gap is also substantial among single women without children, and therefore cannot be explained by East-West differences in the availability of childcare services. The evidence from Germany supports the view that informal institutions, such as working hours norms, may play a more important role than formal institutions in explaining the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 briefly reviews the related literature on the determinants of part-time employment and working hours. Section 3 introduces the data and presents the main descriptive statistics. Section 4 outlines the empirical strategy. Section 5 reports the econometric results, and Section 6 concludes.

2. Related literature

An important related strand of the literature analyses how the prevalence of part-time employment (or hours worked per employee) changes with economic development. Huberman and Minns (2007) document long-term downward trends in both annual hours worked per worker and weekly hours worked per full-time worker over the 1870-2000 period. These trends were more pronounced in European countries than in the US. Aguiar and Hurst (2007) complement this picture by showing that leisure time in the US increased significantly over the 1965–2003 period, partly due to a decline in home production working hours. Boppart and Krusell (2020) demonstrate that falling working hours are consistent with a utility function, in which the income effect of higher wages is slightly stronger than the substitution effect. Bick et al. (2018) document that both hours worked per worker and home production working hours are lower in high-income countries than in middle-

income countries. Furthermore, they find that in most countries (except for the richest ones), hours worked per worker decrease with the individual wage. Velasquez (2025) shows that the increase in real wages induced by international trade led to significant reductions of hours worked per worker, but had no significant effects on employment rates.

Economic development affects hours worked not only through the channel of higher wages. An individual's probability of working part-time is closely linked to their sector of employment and occupation group (Albinowski and Franaszek, 2025; ILO, 2022). Therefore, sectoral changes in the economy may influence the prevalence of part-time employment. A channel that may be more important for low- and middle-income countries is the shift from a traditional self-employment sector to a modern wage-employment sector, which is associated with an increase in hours worked per worker (Bick et al., 2022b).

There is a notable literature on the institutional differences between post-communist Central and Eastern European countries and Western European countries that may influence the current differences in the prevalence of part-time employment. The socialist system encouraged high levels of female labour market participation, often at the cost of lower well-being (Wolchik, 1981). Compared to women in Western Europe, women in socialist countries were more likely to work, while their levels of part-time employment were lower. Buckley (1981) highlights the diverging incentives for part-time employment in the Soviet Union. The state officially encouraged part-time employment as a means to increase fertility. However, working part-time required permission from a manager, which was a significant obstacle given the widespread labour shortages.

Campa and Serafinelli (2019) provide evidence that the socialist system increased the perceived importance of work, especially among women. Work norms evolved differently in socialist countries than in Western Europe, and these differences persisted after the fall of socialism. Relatedly, Fuchs-Schündeln and Schündeln (2020) show that there are long-lasting effects of the socialist system on people's preferences, including on their levels of support for the market economy, democracy, and redistribution. Cohorts that were more exposed to the socialist system are more likely to express views in line with its ideology.

It is also worth mentioning papers that examine the role of work norms in facilitating part-time employment in a broader European context. Chung and Seo (2024) investigate differences in flexibility stigma, that is, the negative perception of employees utilising flexible working arrangements, including part-time work. Based on data from the Eurobarometer survey, they do not find a clear East-West divide. Although the advantage of this survey is its cross-country comparability, its limitation is the small sample size (on average, 260 respondents per country were asked about flexibility stigma). Focusing on the Netherlands, Bosch et al. (2010) find that cohort effects explain almost half of the growth in part-time employment over the 1992-2005 period. As these cohort effects are estimated after controlling for a range of socio-economic variables, they are interpreted as reflecting social norms and attitudes among successive cohorts.

The prevalence of part-time employment is also known to be influenced by formal institutions, most importantly tax-and-transfer systems, childcare availability, and labour market regulations. The effects of labour market regulations are perhaps the most difficult to identify as the introduction of certain regulations may be a response to already existing preferences (Bosch et al., 2010). Carry (2022) provides causal evidence of how the introduction of a minimum 24-hour week in France reduced the prevalence of part-time employment following reallocations of employment to firms that relied less on part-time employment. I am not aware of any papers providing evidence on the effects of regulations that increase employees' rights to demand part-time schedules.

Country-specific studies confirm that reductions in marginal tax rates increase the hours worked for affected workers (Bastian and Lochner, 2022; Herget and Riphahn, 2025). Bick and Fuchs-Schündeln (2018) highlight the role of non-linear labour income taxes in explaining the differences in the hours worked of married couples across 17 European countries over the 2001-2008 period. In particular, joint taxation of married couples reduces the hours worked of married women. While their structural model captures broad regional patterns, the Central and Eastern European countries in the sample tend to exhibit higher actual working hours than those predicted by the model. For example, the predicted hours for Poland are very close to those for the Netherlands or Ireland, and the predicted hours for Czechia mirror those for the UK and Austria. Harding et al. (2022) provide recent evidence that the average tax rates for part-time workers are generally higher in Central and Eastern Europe than in Western Europe. However, the differences between the tax rates of full-time workers and part-time workers are typically larger in Western Europe, which may incentivise Western European workers to stay in part-time employment.

The availability of formal childcare is expected to increase the total hours worked by parents, but it may have various effects on the prevalence of part-time employment. On the one hand, it may induce part-time employment among mothers who would otherwise remain inactive. Such an effect has been identified, for example, in Germany (Müller and Wrohlich, 2020) and in Switzerland (Ravazzini, 2018). On the other hand, access to childcare services may allow some parents to switch from part-time employment to full-time employment. Positive effects of the availability of extended childcare on the labour supply at the intensive margin have been identified in the Netherlands (Bettendorf et al., 2015).

3. Data and Descriptive Statistics

The main data used in this study come from the EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS), which is the largest labour market survey harmonised across all EU countries. It is a highly reliable source of cross-country annual data on the hours worked of employees across all economic sectors and occupations. It also contains detailed information on the socio-demographic characteristics of individuals, including on their educational attainment and household composition. Since 2006, the survey has also included a question on whether the

respondent would like to work more than their current number of hours. As this is a crucial variable differentiating between voluntary and involuntary part-time employment, I do not use pre-2006 data.

The main sample comprises 11 CEE countries¹ that have joined the EU since 2004, and 11 Western European countries² that formed the EU before 2004. In the latter group, I do not include Denmark, Finland, and Sweden due to missing data on household composition and working hours preferences. I also exclude Luxembourg, which is an outlier due to its small population and large share of cross-border workers. In all estimations, I use the transformed weights that give each country in the sample the same weight.

As I investigate the probability of working part time conditional on being employed, my sample consists solely of employed individuals. The sample is further narrowed by excluding members of the armed forces and workers in occupations in which self-reported working hours are prone to large measurement errors. Therefore, I exclude agricultural workers, teachers, and other employees in the agriculture and education sectors. Following Bick and Fuchs-Schündeln (2018), I focus on individuals aged 25-54, which allows abstracting from early retirement programs and the employment patterns among students.

The first outcome variable of interest, part-time employment, is a binary variable indicating whether an individual usually works fewer than 35 hours per week. The second variable adds the condition that the employee does not want to work more hours, which I refer to as voluntary part-time employment. These two variables follow somewhat different trends, mainly due to the rise in underemployment after the global financial crisis.

In my sample, there is a significant discrepancy in the rate of female part-time employment between Western Europe and CEE countries (Figure 2). While the share of women in voluntary part-time employment decreased from 27.7% in 2006 to 25.8% in 2022 in Western Europe, it increased systematically in CEE countries, from 3.5% in 2006 to 5.5% in 2022. In both Western Europe and CEE countries, the peak of underemployment was observed in 2014, resulting in an elevated rate of overall female part-time employment.

While male part-time employment is much less common than female part-time employment, the relative differences in the rate of male part-time employment between Western Europe and CEE countries are also substantial. There was a systematic increase in male voluntary part-time employment (Figure 3) in both Western Europe (from 3.6% in 2006 to 5.1% in 2022) and CEE countries (from 1.4% in 2006 to 2.1% in 2022). In contrast, overall part-time employment among men decreased after 2014, reflecting an improved situation in the labour market and lower underemployment.

¹ Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, and Slovakia.

² Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.

Figure 2. Female part-time employment in the sample

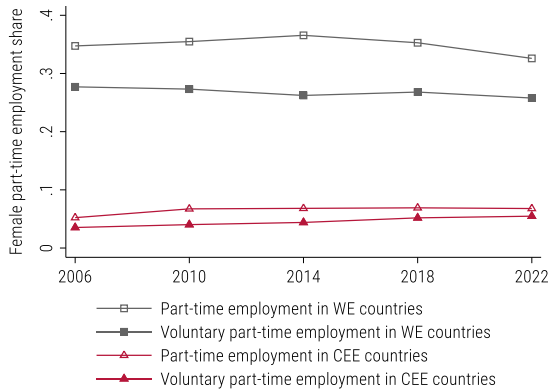
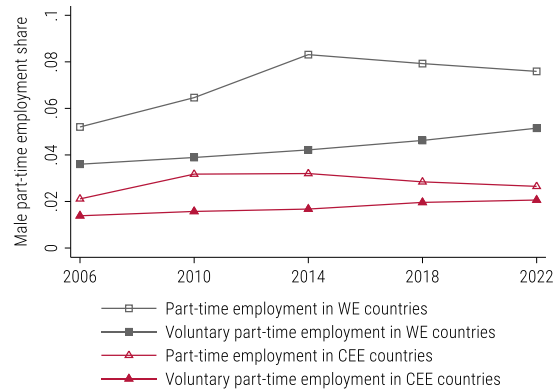


Figure 3. Male part-time employment in the sample



Note: Croatia and the UK are excluded due to missing data in some years. Source: Own elaboration based on EU-LFS data.

Another crucial variable is the occupation- and gender-specific average hourly wage, which is expected to have important effects on working time decisions (Bick et al., 2018). This variable is derived from the European Structure of Earnings Survey (EU-SES)³, which is a harmonised large-scale survey conducted among employers. The EU-SES is carried out every four years, which narrows my sample to the years 2006, 2010, 2014, 2018, and 2022. I convert nominal wages to 2010 constant purchasing power standard (PPS) so that their real value is comparable across countries and time. CEE countries recorded substantial convergence of hourly wages with respect to Western Europe, where average real wages were stagnant (Figure 4). In 2006, there was a large gap between the two regions, while by 2022, wage levels in CEE countries had already caught up with those in Portugal, Greece, and Spain, and were much closer to those in other Western European countries (Figure 5).

Figure 4. Convergence of hourly wages, 2006 - 2022

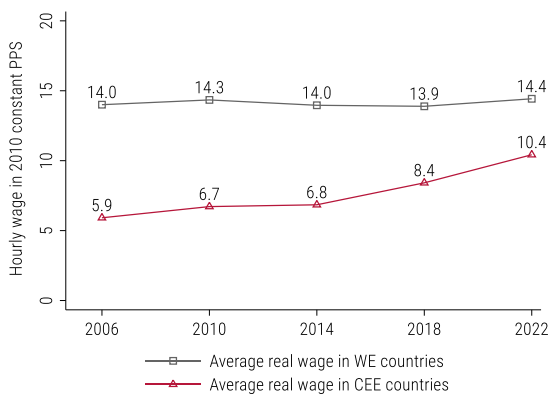
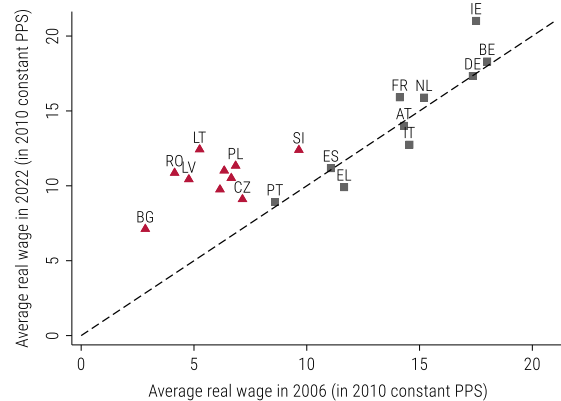


Figure 5. Hourly wages across countries, 2006 - 2022



Note: Croatia and the UK are excluded due to missing data in some years. Source: Own elaboration based on EU-SES, EU-LFS, and Eurostat data.

³ I use data at the level of 36 sub-major occupation groups. When data at the level of sub-major occupation groups are not available, I use hourly wages calculated for eight major occupation groups. This is particularly the case for Austria and Ireland, for which SES microdata are not available.

For each gender, I define four demographic groups, based on the interaction between living with a partner and living with a child under age 10. While the EU-LFS data do not distinguish between formal and informal unions, for brevity, I refer to persons living with a partner as married. Part-time employment is much more strongly related to living with a partner in Western Europe than in CEE countries (Table 1). For example, among women without children under age 10, married women in Western Europe are more than 10 pp more likely to work part time than single women (and almost 12 pp more likely to be in voluntary part-time employment). In contrast, in CEE countries, the probability of working part time is virtually the same for these two groups. While marital status differentiates the probability of part-time employment among men in CEE countries, these differences are still less pronounced than those in Western Europe.

Table 1. Part-time employment status across detailed demographic groups

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Women				Men			
	Without young children Single	Married	With children aged<10 Single	Married	Without young children Single	Married	With children aged<10 Single	Married
Part-time employment								
Mean value in WE	0.243	0.347	0.452	0.463	0.101	0.057	0.124	0.061
Mean value in CEE	0.054	0.053	0.084	0.086	0.037	0.024	0.032	0.023
Voluntary part-time employment								
Mean value in WE	0.155	0.274	0.318	0.384	0.058	0.036	0.070	0.038
Mean value in CEE	0.034	0.036	0.053	0.065	0.022	0.015	0.018	0.013

Source: Own elaboration based on EU-LFS data.

To assess the potential role of accumulated wealth, I use data from the European Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). This survey provides detailed information on individual and household income. However, its limitation is the lack of data on working hours preferences, making it impossible to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary part-time employment. For comparability purposes, I apply cleaning procedures analogous to those used for the EU-LFS data. I also exclude Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Luxembourg from the analysis utilising the EU-SILC data. Results including the Nordic countries are available in the Appendix.

The relevant forms of capital income in the EU-SILC data include financial income (interest, dividends, and profits from capital investments in unincorporated businesses) and rental income from property or land. Since these are reported at the household level, I allocate them to individuals by dividing them by the household's equivalised size. Importantly, the capital income refers to the whole previous year, while working hours reflect the respondent's current situation.

There are significant differences in levels of capital income between Western European and CEE countries, reflecting the relatively short period of economic prosperity in the latter. In the Western European sample, 48.5% of individuals have some financial income, compared to only 14.0% of individuals in CEE countries. Employees in Western Europe also have higher incomes (Figure 6), which suggests that the underlying capital might be substantial. Notably, much of our sample was observed during a period of very low interest

rates in the Eurozone, which reduced financial income relative to invested capital. The prevalence of rental income is much lower than that of financial income, but for those who report it, the average value is an order of magnitude higher (Figure 7). Only 4.3% of individuals in the CEE sample have rental income, compared to 8.1% of individuals in the Western European sample.

Figure 6. Distribution of annual financial income in CEE vs Western Europe, 2006 - 2022

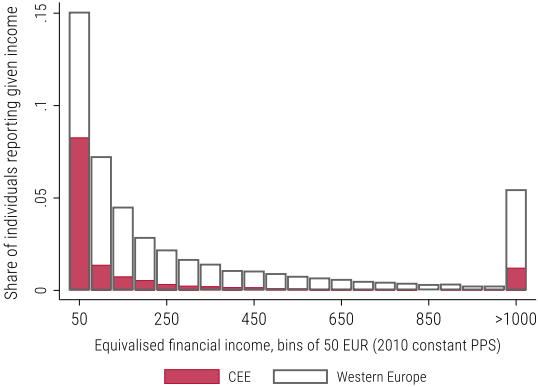
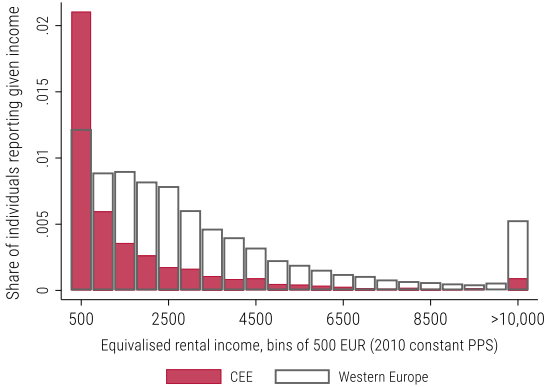


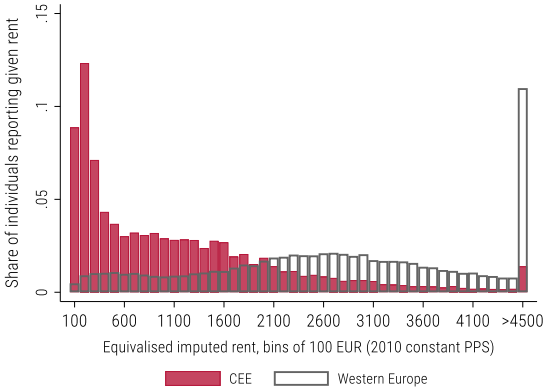
Figure 7. Distribution of annual rental income in CEE vs Western Europe, 2006 - 2022



Source: Own elaboration based on EU-SILC data.

To fully assess the financial situations of employees, the role of home ownership should be considered. Households that own their homes incur lower housing costs, with this benefit measured by net imputed rent. This measure of rent can also account for living in a dwelling rented below market price, such as one rented from family or through social housing programs. The EU-SILC sample containing net imputed rent is limited as the variable is missing for 2022, and the values for the Netherlands are unreliable (Törmälehto and Sauli, 2013). Positive values of imputed rent are more common in the CEE sample (90.2%) than in the Western European sample (71.4%). However, the imputed rents in the CEE sample are often very low, while higher values are more prevalent in the Western European sample (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Distribution of annual net imputed rent in CEE countries vs EU-15 countries, 2006 - 2018



Source: Own elaboration based on EU-SILC data.

Table 2 reports the main summary statistics for both the EU-SILC and the EU-LFS datasets. These two samples are very consistent, especially in terms of part-time employment prevalence. Slight differences may arise because some years are excluded for certain countries in one of the datasets due to data issues. Systematic differences are only present in the case of self-employment status, which is more often reported in the LFS survey. Details on data cleaning are reported in Appendix A.

Table 2. Summary statistics, 2006 - 2022

Gender Countries	Women		Men	
	CEE	EU-15	CEE	EU-15
EU-LFS sample				
Number of observations (in thousands)	721.1	1140.8	858.7	1420.6
Share of part-time employees	0.063	0.355	0.027	0.072
Share of voluntary part-time employees	0.043	0.274	0.017	0.044
Mean age	39.8	39.7	39.2	39.9
Share of married individuals	0.686	0.688	0.683	0.697
Share of individuals with a child under age 10	0.297	0.315	0.320	0.327
Share of tertiary-educated individuals	0.354	0.372	0.254	0.322
Share of individuals employed in industry	0.235	0.118	0.312	0.238
Share of self-employed (including unpaid family workers)	0.082	0.115	0.141	0.179
Average hourly wage (in 2010 constant PPS)	7.2	12.8	8.4	15.7
EU-SILC sample				
Number of observations (in thousands)	98.1	134.7	113.4	156.7
Share of part-time employees	0.064	0.355	0.025	0.072
Mean age	40.2	40.0	39.5	40.3
Share of married individuals	0.688	0.686	0.678	0.691
Share of individuals with a child under age 10	0.277	0.295	0.306	0.310
Share of tertiary-educated individuals	0.347	0.411	0.244	0.357
Share of individuals employed in industry	0.230	0.117	0.312	0.237
Share of self-employed (including unpaid family workers)	0.072	0.098	0.126	0.154
Average hourly wage (in 2010 constant PPS)	7.2	12.8	8.4	15.6
Mean equivalised financial income (in 2010 constant PPS)	103	308	123	362
Mean equivalised rental income (in 2010 constant PPS)	70	291	67	307
Mean equivalised imputed rent (in 2010 constant PPS)	999	2042	942	2052

Source: Own elaboration based on EU-LFS, Eurostat, and EU-SILC data.

To assess the role of social values, I use data from the European Values Study surveys conducted in 1999, 2008, and 2017. I focus on two variables: the share of respondents stating that leisure is very important in their lives, and the share agreeing with the statement that "work should always come first, even if it means

less spare time”.⁴ Focusing on respondents aged 25-54, I derive country- and gender-specific indicators for each wave of the survey and use linear interpolation and extrapolation to match them with the main dataset up to 2018.

There has been a notable East-West convergence in these values, in contrast to a weak convergence in the prevalence of part-time employment. In 1999, there was a large gap in the perceived role of leisure between Western Europe and the CEE countries (Figure 9). In Western Europe, 38% of respondents considered leisure very important, compared with just 24% of respondents in CEE countries. This gap decreased systematically, shrinking to 48% versus 46% by 2017. There was also substantial convergence in views on whether work should always come first. In CEE countries, the share of respondents supporting this view declined steadily (from 57% in 1999 to 37% in 2017), whereas in Western Europe, it increased slightly between 1999 and 2008 and then decreased to 30% in 2017 (Figure 10).

Figure 9. Declarations that leisure is very important in life

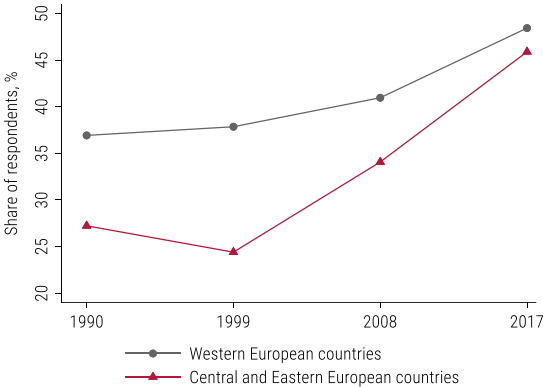
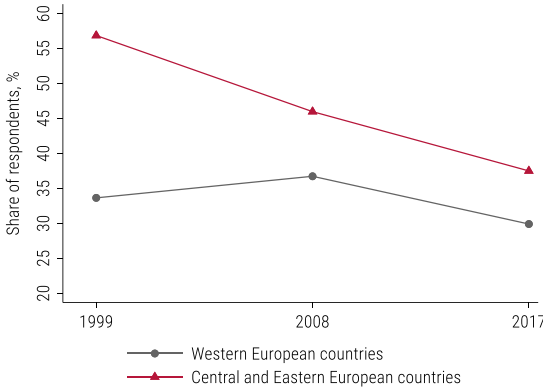


Figure 10. Declarations that work should always come first, even if it means less spare time



Source: Own elaboration based on European Values Study data.

To account for the potential role of tax progressivity, I use two alternative measures based on the OECD *Taxing Wages* indicators. This dataset provides internationally comparable measures of the average and the marginal tax wedge for representative households of a given demographic type, expressed as a percentage of total labour costs. Its main limitation is the lack of data on three CEE countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, and Romania. My baseline measure is the difference between the marginal and the average tax wedge for a single worker earning 67% of the average wage. A marginal tax wedge exceeding the average tax wedge indicates that additional earnings are taxed more heavily than average earnings at this income level, reflecting tax progressivity. Tax wedge values are adjusted for household composition using the closest available benchmarks in the OECD data. For employees living in households with children under age 15, I

⁴ I also considered the role of gender norms, represented by the share of respondents agreeing that “when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women”. However, this view is more prevalent in CEE countries than in Western Europe, and therefore cannot be expected to explain a large East–West gap in female part-time employment. Other potentially useful questions in the EVS survey do not have a consistent definition throughout my sample period.

use tax wedges calculated for households with two children. In countries with joint taxation of married couples, I rely on tax wedges for married couples, with the marginal tax wedge referring to the principal earner.

As a second measure, I use the difference between the average tax wedge at 100% and 67% of the average wage, capturing the increase in effective labour taxation as earnings rise from low to average levels. This measure is constructed using tax wedges for single individuals without children, as data at 100% of average earnings are not available for all household types in the OECD *Taxing Wages* database. By extending the analysis beyond 67% of the average wage, this approach captures tax progressivity that starts at higher earnings levels, which may be relevant for transitions from part-time to full-time employment, and would not be captured by a point-specific measure at lower earnings.

Western European countries exhibit higher tax progressivity than CEE countries, with average baseline values of the progressivity measure amounting to 16.1 pp and 8.2 pp in 2022, respectively. At the same time, Figure 11 shows no clear trade-off between the level of the average tax wedge and tax progressivity. In 2022, the average tax wedge at 67% of the average wage was lower in CEE countries than in Western Europe, but this pattern did not hold in earlier years, despite a similarly sized East-West gap in tax progressivity. The two alternative measures of tax progressivity are strongly correlated, although for some countries they yield noticeably different relative positions (Figure 12).

Figure 11. Tax progressivity and average tax wedge, 2022

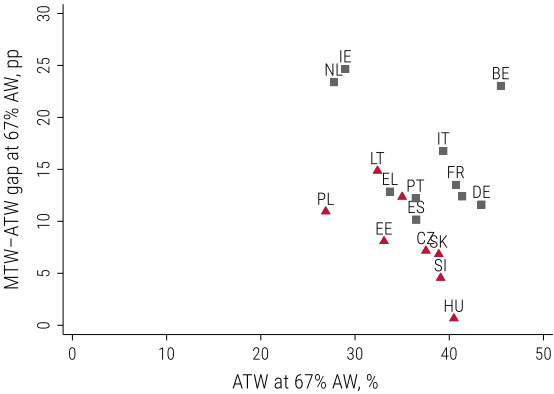
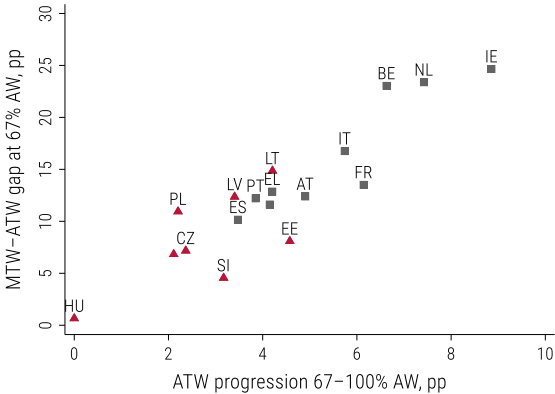


Figure 12. Comparison of alternative measures of tax progressivity, 2022



Note: In Figure 11, tax progressivity is measured as the difference between the marginal and the average tax wedge, at 67% of the average wage. In Figure 12, an alternative measure of tax progressivity is defined as the change in the average tax wedge between 67% and 100% of the average wage. Tax wedges are expressed as a percentage of total labour costs. Source: Own elaboration based on OECD *Taxing Wages* data.

In an additional analysis, I examine differences in part-time employment prevalence between East Germany (formerly the communist GDR) and West Germany (formerly the democratic FRG). The analysis utilises EU-LFS data on individuals and occupation- and gender-specific hourly wages that are derived from EU-SES

microdata.⁵ The female part-time employment rate in East Germany aligns with the Western Europe average, but remains significantly lower than that in West Germany, where it is exceptionally high (Table 3). In contrast, East-West differences in male part-time employment are less pronounced. Moreover, wage disparities between East and West Germany are smaller than those observed between CEE and Western European countries.

Table 3. Summary statistics for the German regional sample, 2006 - 2022

Gender Region	Women		Men	
	East	West	East	West
Number of observations (in thousands)	27.2	143.8	30.7	169.2
Share of part-time employees	0.339	0.502	0.070	0.071
Share of voluntary part-time employees	0.222	0.418	0.037	0.050
Mean age	41.1	40.6	40.7	40.4
Share of married individuals	0.718	0.690	0.653	0.671
Share of individuals with a child under age 10	0.268	0.237	0.242	0.266
Share of tertiary-educated individuals	0.277	0.230	0.262	0.318
Share of individuals employed in industry	0.131	0.155	0.273	0.338
Share of self-employed (including unpaid family workers)	0.074	0.070	0.119	0.113
Average hourly wage (in 2010 constant PPS)	12.4	14.9	14.0	19.8

Source: Own elaboration based on EU-LFS and EU-SES data.

4. Empirical strategy

The primary goal of my analysis is to assess whether the East-West gap in the prevalence of part-time employment can be explained by objective characteristics of the respective economies, such as sectoral and occupational structures, demographic and educational characteristics of the labour force, wage levels, and accumulated wealth of households. An alternative hypothesis is that the institutional characteristics of CEE countries account for a substantial part of that gap. I conduct the analysis at the individual level, pooling observations from the EU-LFS surveys across countries and over time. For each gender separately, I estimate a series of the following logit regressions:

$$P(y_i = 1|x_i) = \Lambda(\alpha_0 + \beta \times CEE_i + \gamma \times controls_i) \quad (1)$$

Where y_i is the dummy variable denoting either part-time employment or voluntary part-time employment of individual i ; x_i is the set of explanatory variables for the individual i , Λ is the logistic cumulative distribution function, and CEE is a dummy variable taking the value of one for the CEE countries.

⁵ I do not use the EU-SILC data, as they do not include regional variables for Germany before 2021.

The vector of control variables differs across specifications. In the first specification, no control variables are included; thus, the coefficient on the CEE dummy reflects the raw difference in the prevalence of part-time employment between CEE countries and Western Europe. In the second specification, I include several dummy variables capturing the socio-demographic characteristics of employees: five-year age groups, four household types (defined by the interaction of having a partner and having a child under age 10), and three levels of educational attainment. The third specification adds information on the type of job performed by an individual. I include 36 dummy variables representing sub-major occupation groups⁶, 10 dummy variables denoting broad economic sectors, and dummy variables representing self-employment and unpaid family work. In the final specification utilising EU-LFS data, I add the log of gender- and occupation-specific hourly wages, expressed in 2010 constant PPS.

I am interested in how the average marginal effect of the CEE dummy changes with the addition of subsequent groups of control variables. If the control variables exhaust the key characteristics of employees and the jobs they perform, then the remaining effect of the CEE dummy most likely reflects the institutional characteristics of CEE countries that influence part-time employment patterns. It is important to note that some effects of institutional factors may already be captured by coefficients pertaining to economic variables that are correlated with certain institutional characteristics. For example, a relatively prosperous society may focus more on the well-being of employees by enforcing regulations that give employees more control over their working hours.

Equation (1) does not include country or time fixed effects, and the relationship between control variables and part-time employment is estimated using variation across individuals, countries, and time. As a robustness check, I report in the Appendix the results of the main specification estimated separately for each year. I further estimate equation (1) separately for eight demographic groups to provide a better understanding of the heterogeneities in the East-West gap in the prevalence of part-time employment. For the group of single individuals without young children, this approach allows for abstracting from the role of the joint taxation of couples and the role of childcare services. In these regressions, the baseline weights are transformed so that each country still has an equal weight in each regression.

Next, I aim to answer the question of what the part-time employment rate in CEE countries would be, given the actual characteristics of employees and observed wage levels, but assuming that the institutional and macro-economic environment was similar to that of Western Europe. For all employees in CEE countries, I generate predicted probabilities of working part time using the coefficients from the full specification of equation (1) and setting the CEE dummy equal to zero. The individual probabilities are then aggregated to

⁶ For the years 2006 and 2010, I recode occupation codes from the ISCO-88 classification to the closest sub-major occupation groups under the ISCO-08 classification. The crosswalk is based on the 2010 European Working Conditions Survey, which reports respondents' occupation codes in both classifications.

the country level and compared with the actual part-time employment rates in a given year. As a robustness check, predicted probabilities of working part time are derived from the full specification of equation (1) estimated using only the Western European sample.

To consider the role of households' financial situations, I utilise the EU-SILC data. In this dataset, the dependent variable is part-time employment status, without distinguishing voluntary part-time employment. I re-estimate equation (1), adding logs of financial income and rental income (both equivalised, i.e., divided by an equivalised size of a household) as additional control variables. Furthermore, on a restricted sample for which net imputed rent is available, I also examine the effects of including this variable on the size of the average marginal effect of the CEE dummy. I winsorise all capital income values at the 99th percentile of their distribution in the whole sample, and replace zeros with ones prior to applying the log transformation.

Next, I examine the role of specific institutional factors. I test whether the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment can be explained by differences in tax progressivity. I add country- and year-specific indicators of tax progressivity (defined separately for different family types) to the full specification of model (1), which explains individual voluntary part-time employment and is estimated on the EU-LFS sample. If the average marginal effect of the CEE dummy moves closer to zero after these indicators are included, this would suggest that tax progressivity may explain part of the East-West gap.

I assess the potential role of social values in a similar way. I add to the full specification of model (1) two indicators that measure the country- and gender-specific importance of leisure time and work.

Among the other institutional factors that may play a role in explaining the East-West gap are organisational practices and hours constraints imposed by firms. To some extent, these constraints are related to the objective economic factors that I control for, such as the occupational and sectoral characteristics of the production structure (Deardorff and Stafford, 1976; Lang and Kahn, 2001). However, they may also reflect organisational culture and managerial attitudes (Albinowski and Franaszek, 2025). Furthermore, labour market regulations may relax these constraints by limiting the ability of employers to reject employees' requests to reduce their working hours (OECD, 2010).

I aim to shed light on this channel by analysing whether the CEE dummy predicts the probability of preferring to work less than 35 hours per week while actually working above this threshold. I therefore re-estimate equation (1) with the overemployment status defined in this way as the dependent variable. The sample for this analysis comprises only full-time employees. However, while potentially useful, overemployment is not an ideal measure of hours constraints. Its main limitation is that overemployed individuals are more likely to leave the labour market. Individuals not in employment are not asked in the EU-LFS survey about the number of hours they would be willing to work. Thus, rigid hours constraints can coexist with moderate overemployment if their effects on employment are strong.

To gain additional insight into the relative roles of informal and formal institutions, I also re-estimate equation (1) on the German LFS sample. The CEE dummy is then replaced with the East dummy denoting one of the five NUTS-1 regions belonging to the former GDR (Berlin is omitted). Since reunification in 1990, employees in both parts of Germany have been subject to the same labour market regulations and tax-and-transfer systems. However, a gap in childcare services remains, with eastern regions characterised by higher coverage rates (Zoch, 2020). There is also evidence of a gradual convergence of social norms and work attitudes between East and West Germany (Campa and Serafinelli, 2019), but some East-West differences may continue to shape labour market outcomes (Schnabel, 2016).

5. Results

In this section, I report the results of the econometric investigation of the factors explaining the East-West gap in the prevalence of part-time employment. First, I test whether this gap can be explained by East-West differences in labour force structures and economic development. Second, I show what the rate of part-time employment in CEE countries would be if their institutional setting resembled that of Western Europe, given the objective characteristics of their labour force and wage levels. Third, I investigate the role of selected institutional factors. Fourth, I use evidence from the reunification of Germany to shed light on the relative roles of formal and non-formal institutions.

5.1 The role of economic development

The raw East-West gap in part-time employment in my sample amounts to 29.2 pp for women (Table 4, column 1) and 4.4 pp for men (column 5). These differences are consistent with the descriptive statistics reported in Table 2. Adding demographic and educational variables virtually does not affect this gap (columns 2 and 6). Taking occupation, sector of employment, and professional status (employee, self-employed, or family worker) into account reduces the East-West gap by 2.1 pp for women and by 0.7 pp for men (columns 3 and 7). Adding hourly wages (specific for each country, year, gender, and one of 36 sub-major occupation groups) helps to account for a further large part of the gap: 12.3 pp for women and 1.1 pp for men (columns 4 and 8). Overall, differences in economic structure and development may account for around 50% of the gap in female part-time employment and 43% of the gap in male part-time employment.

Similar patterns are observed for voluntary part-time employment (Table 4, Panel B). However, the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment is substantially smaller, amounting to 23.1 pp for women and only 2.7 pp for men. Moreover, a majority of these differences can be accounted for by economic variables: approximately 54% for women and 63% for men. As a result, the remaining East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment amounts to 10.6 pp for women and only 1.0 pp for men.

Table 4. Economic structure and development: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Women				Men			
Panel A: Part-time employment								
CEE dummy	-0.292*** (0.023)	-0.291*** (0.023)	-0.270*** (0.022)	-0.147*** (0.026)	-0.044*** (0.004)	-0.043*** (0.004)	-0.036*** (0.004)	-0.025*** (0.005)
Panel B: Voluntary part-time employment								
CEE dummy	-0.231*** (0.021)	-0.232*** (0.021)	-0.216*** (0.020)	-0.106*** (0.022)	-0.027*** (0.004)	-0.027*** (0.004)	-0.022*** (0.003)	-0.010* (0.004)
Demographic variables?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Education dummies?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Occupation dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Sector dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Self-employment and family worker dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Log of hourly wages?	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
No. of observations	1,861,834				2,279,316			

*Note: This table reports average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable from logit models with part-time employment status as the dependent variable. Panel A reports results for part-time employment, while Panel B reports results for voluntary part-time employment. Columns 1-4 are estimated on the sample of women, and columns 5-8 are estimated on the sample of men. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.*

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

In the Appendix, I report the results of robustness checks for the full specification shown in columns 4 and 8 of Table 4. The analysis conducted separately for each year relaxes the assumption that the effects of all explanatory variables are constant throughout the sample period. The CEE dummy is negative and statistically significant in all years, but its effect size, in absolute terms, is largest in 2022 (Figures B1 - B4 in the Appendix). The results are not driven by any single country, as excluding each country in turn does not change the interpretation of the results (Figures B5 - B8). An exception is voluntary part-time employment among men, in which case excluding the Netherlands lowers the absolute value of the CEE dummy effect from -0.010 to -0.005. By contrast, excluding Portugal or Greece increases the absolute value of this effect to -0.014 or -0.015.

I now zoom in on eight detailed demographic groups (Table 5). The raw East-West difference in part-time employment is larger in demographic groups that have a higher prevalence of part-time employment in Western Europe (Table 1). This is particularly the case for married women with children under age 10, for whom the East-West gap in part-time employment amounts to 37.7 pp, while the corresponding gap in voluntary part-time employment is 31.8 pp. Structural and economic variables account for the majority of the gap in voluntary part-time employment across all demographic groups, except for single men with young children, who constitute a very small group. For married men without young children, these variables account for over three-quarters of the raw gap in voluntary part-time employment. The remaining difference is very small (0.5 pp) and not statistically significant. For the other demographic groups, a significant East-West gap remains even after controlling for a wide range of structural and economic characteristics.

Table 5. Economic structure and development: analysis across detailed demographic groups

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Women				Men			
	Without young children Single	Married	With children aged<10 Single	Married	Without young children Single	Married	With children aged<10 Single	Married
Panel A: Part-time employment								
Overall difference between CEE and WE	-0.189***	-0.294***	-0.368***	-0.377***	-0.064***	-0.033***	-0.092***	-0.038***
Adjusted for all control variables	-0.096***	-0.152***	-0.165***	-0.183***	-0.037***	-0.015***	-0.065***	-0.021***
Panel B: Voluntary part-time employment								
Overall difference between CEE and WE	-0.120***	-0.239***	-0.265***	-0.318***	-0.036***	-0.021***	-0.052***	-0.025***
Adjusted for all control variables	-0.049***	-0.114***	-0.108***	-0.149***	-0.013*	-0.005	-0.028**	-0.011*
No of observations	493,432	844,421	75,627	448,354	647,085	923,212	22,616	686,403

*Note: This table reports average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable from logit models with part-time employment status as the dependent variable. Panel A reports results for part-time employment, while Panel B reports results for voluntary part-time employment. The top row in each panel represents the specification with no control variables, while the bottom row includes all control variables considered in equation (1). Each column is estimated on the sample of a different demographic group. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.*

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

Next, I examine whether the East-West gap in part-time employment prevalence can be explained by lower accumulated capital in CEE countries. In the EU-SILC data, the gap unexplained by structural and economic variables amounts to 15.9 pp for women and 3.0 pp for men (Table 6, column 4), compared to 14.7 pp for women and 2.5 pp for men in the EU-LFS data (Table 2). Taking individual financial and rental income into account (column 5) reduces the East-West gap for women by 0.7 pp, but widens the gap for men by 0.2 pp. Furthermore, controlling for imputed rent does not affect the East-West gap (Table B1 in the Appendix). Overall, accumulated capital does not appear to be an important factor explaining East-West differences in part-time employment.

The EU-SILC data also allow for the inclusion of three Nordic countries, for which some important variables are missing in the EU-LFS data. In Table B2 in the Appendix, I report estimation results that include Denmark, Finland, and Sweden. While the raw East-West gaps are slightly smaller than those reported in Table 4, the gaps unaccounted for by economic variables are slightly larger. The qualitative implications are not affected by the inclusion of these countries.

Table 6. Capital income: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable (EU-SILC data)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Panel A: Women					
CEE dummy	-0.291*** (0.024)	-0.294*** (0.024)	-0.276*** (0.023)	-0.159*** (0.030)	-0.152*** (0.030)
No. of observations			232,816		
Panel B: Men					
CEE dummy	-0.048*** (0.005)	-0.046*** (0.005)	-0.040*** (0.005)	-0.030*** (0.007)	-0.032*** (0.007)
No. of observations			270,063		
Demographic variables?	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Education dummies?	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Occupation dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Sector dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Self-employment dummy?	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Log of hourly wages?	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Log of financial income?	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Log of rental income?	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES

*Note: This table reports average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable from logit models with part-time employment as the dependent variable. Panel A reports results for women, while Panel B reports results for men. Column 4 includes all control variables considered in the full specification reported in Table 4, while Column 5 adds variables representing capital income. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.*

Source: Own estimations based on EU-SILC, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

5.2 Counterfactual part-time employment rates

In this subsection, I address the question of what the prevalence of part-time employment in CEE countries would be given their economic structure and level of development, but assuming that their institutional and macroeconomic environment resembled that of Western Europe. The analysis relies on the full specification of model (1); however, predictions for employees in CEE countries are generated with the CEE dummy variable set to zero. For a linear model, the difference between predicted and actual part-time prevalence, averaged over observations in CEE countries, would be very close to the average marginal effect of the CEE dummy. This equivalence does not generally hold when the underlying model is nonlinear, such as a logit specification.

The discrepancy between counterfactual and actual female voluntary part-time employment rates increased substantially over the 2014–2022 period (Figure 14). Given the dynamic wage growth in CEE countries during this time (Figure 4), this pattern suggests that the actual female part-time employment rate did not increase in line with economic development, as would be predicted by the model estimated on a broader European sample. In 2022, the actual female voluntary part-time employment rate was 10.8 pp lower than the counterfactual rate (Figure 14). For overall part-time employment, the pattern is similar, although the difference between the predicted and the actual rate is larger, amounting to 16.0 pp in 2022 (Figure 13).

The differences relative to the counterfactual part-time employment rates are smaller when the regression is estimated exclusively on the Western European sample (Figures B9 and B10 in the Appendix). In this case, the difference in the female voluntary part-time employment rate amounted to 9.0, while the corresponding difference for the overall female part-time employment rate was 13.3 pp in 2022.

Figure 13. Female part-time employment in CEE countries: predicted vs actual

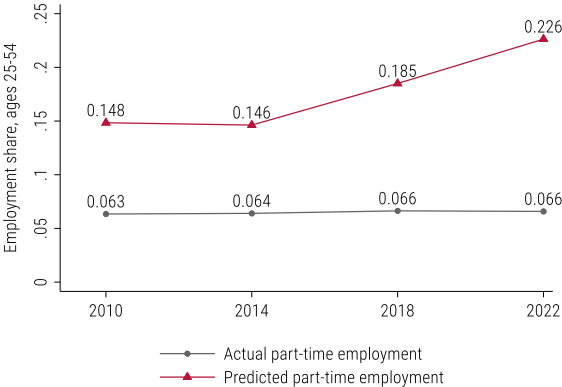


Figure 14. Female voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries: predicted vs actual

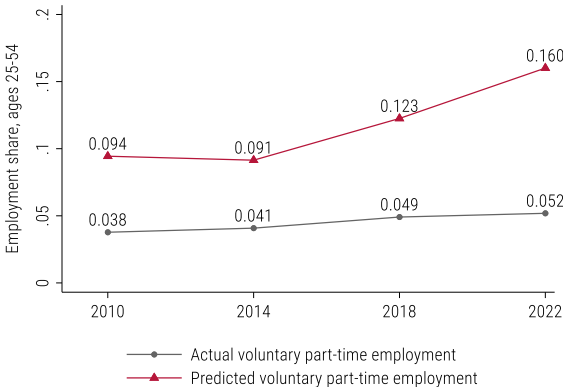


Figure 15. Male part-time employment in CEE countries: predicted vs actual

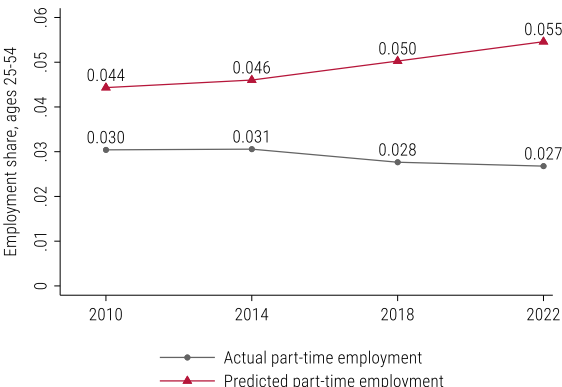
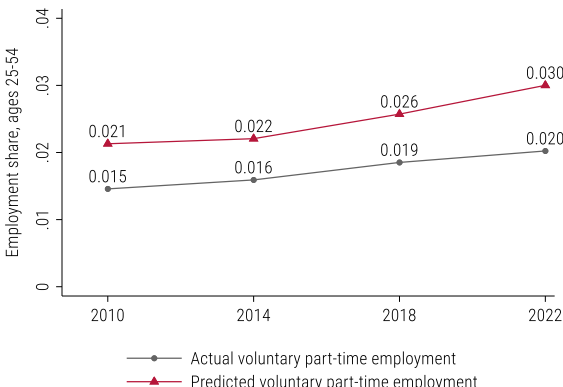


Figure 16. Male voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries: predicted vs actual



Note: The figures compare actual and counterfactual part-time employment rates for employees aged 25–54 in CEE countries. Counterfactual rates are obtained by first predicting individual probabilities from the baseline logit specification with the CEE indicator set to zero and then aggregating these probabilities at the country level. Aggregate rates are computed giving equal weight to each country. Results for 2006 are not reported due to missing data for Croatia. Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

The analysis of the male voluntary part-time employment rate shows that the difference relative to the counterfactual rate was relatively stable over the 2010-2014 period, at around 0.6 pp (Figure 16), before increasing to 1.0 pp in 2022. However, estimation based solely on the Western European sample (Figure B12) indicates that the male voluntary part-time employment rate in CEE countries was close to its predicted value up to 2014. In 2022, this alternative approach yields a gap of 0.7pp. For the total part-time employment rate, the difference between the predicted and the actual values was strongly influenced by increased

underemployment following the global financial crisis. In 2022, the difference relative to the counterfactual indicator amounted to 2.7 pp (Figure 15).

The differences between counterfactual and actual voluntary part-time employment rates are not uniform across countries. Estonia and Czechia are the two countries in which the actual voluntary part-time employment rates are not significantly lower than the counterfactual rates (Figures 17 and 18). In the case of male voluntary part-time employment, the actual value is even substantially above the counterfactual value in Estonia. In the remaining countries (with the exception of Lithuanian men), the actual voluntary part-time employment rates are well below the predicted rates. Interestingly, while the actual male voluntary part-time employment rate appears to be related to its predicted counterpart, no such visible relationship emerges for the female voluntary part-time employment rate. In other words, cross-country variation in the female voluntary part-time employment rate within the CEE region is not well explained by the variables included in equation (1).⁷

Figure 17. Female voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries (2022): predicted vs actual

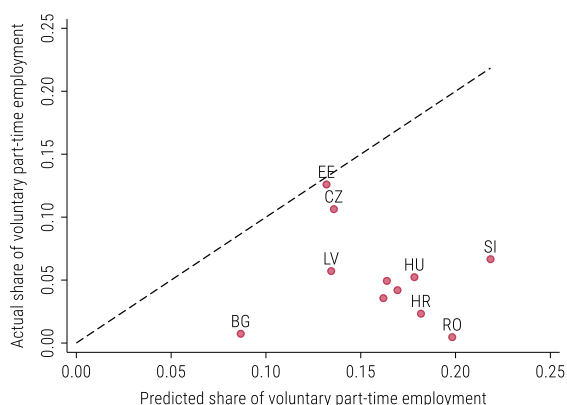
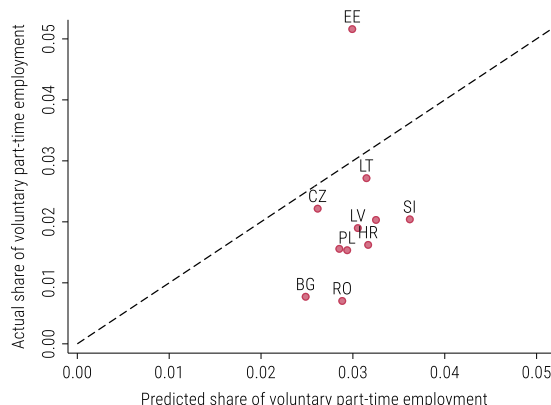


Figure 18. Male voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries (2022): predicted vs actual



Note: The figures compare actual and counterfactual voluntary part-time employment rates for employees aged 25–54 in CEE countries in 2022. Counterfactual rates are obtained by first predicting individual probabilities from the baseline logit specification with the CEE indicator set to zero and then aggregating these probabilities at the country level. Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

5.3 The role of institutional factors

Now, I examine the potential role of institutional factors in explaining the East-West gap in the prevalence of part-time employment. Given that both tax systems and social values are expected to influence employees' preferences, I focus on voluntary part-time employment as the dependent variable.

⁷ Results for overall part-time employment, as well as those obtained using estimates based on the Western European sample, are reported in Figures B13 - B18 in the Appendix.

For the analysis of the role of tax progressivity, the sample excludes three non-OECD countries, which results in the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment being somewhat smaller than in the main analysis. The inclusion of the baseline measure of tax progressivity reduces the East-West gap by 0.6 pp for women and by 0.2 pp for men (Table 7). A one percentage point increase in the difference between the marginal tax wedge and the average tax wedge (measured at 67% of the average wage) is associated with a 0.24 pp higher probability of voluntary part-time employment among women and a 0.05 pp higher probability among men. Using an alternative measure of tax progressivity yields a similar picture, with a smaller reduction in the East-West gap among women and a slightly larger reduction among men. However, the indicator based on the difference between the average tax wedge at 100% and 67% of the average wage for single taxpayers without children is not a statistically significant explanatory variable for women.

Overall, while tax progressivity appears to be an important factor shaping part-time employment choices (in line with Bick and Fuchs-Schündeln 2018), it is not a major factor behind the East-West gap. A similar picture emerges in the analysis across detailed demographic groups (Table B3 in the Appendix), in which the introduction of tax progressivity measures does not substantially reduce the East-West difference for any group.

Table 7. Estimation results: the role of tax progression in explaining voluntary part-time employment

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Women				Men			
CEE dummy	-0.218*** (0.021)	-0.091*** (0.024)	-0.085*** (0.024)	-0.089*** (0.025)	-0.024*** (0.004)	-0.007 (0.005)	-0.005 (0.004)	-0.004 (0.005)
MTW-ATW gap at 67% AW			0.242** (0.077)				0.050* (0.024)	
ATW progression 67-100% AW				0.254 (0.640)				0.251* (0.125)
Demographic variables?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Education dummies?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Occupation dummies?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Sector dummies?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Self-employment and family worker dummies?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Log of hourly wages?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
No. of observations		1,681,019				2,073,057		

*Note: This table reports average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable from logit models with voluntary part-time employment as the dependent variable. Columns 1-4 report results for women, while Columns 5-8 report results for men. Columns 2 and 6 include all control variables considered in the full specification reported in Table 4. Columns 3 and 7 add an indicator of tax progressivity defined as the difference between the marginal tax wedge and the average tax wedge, measured at 67% of the average wage, taking the household composition into account. Columns 4 and 8 use an alternative indicator based on the difference between the average tax wedge at 100% and 67% of the average wage for single taxpayers. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.*

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, OECD Taxing Wages, and Eurostat data.

Now, I turn to the analysis of the role of social values. The sample size is limited by the fact that the country- and gender-level indicators of social values are not available for 2022. First, I repeat the baseline results on this shortened sample (Table 8). Both the size of the raw East-West gap (columns 1 and 4) and the scale of its reduction after taking observable factors into account (columns 2 and 5) are similar to the baseline results.

I find that social values are significant predictors of voluntary part-time employment. A 10 percentage point higher share of women stating that “work should come first” is associated with a 1.7 percentage point lower probability of voluntary part-time employment. For men, this effect amounts to nearly 0.5 percentage points. Similarly, a 10 percentage point higher share of women declaring that leisure is very important is associated with a 2.3 percentage points higher probability of voluntary part-time employment. For men, the corresponding effect is 0.3 percentage points, but it is not statistically significant.

However, the East-West gap in the prevalence of part-time employment cannot be attributed to country- and time-specific valuations of work and leisure. Including these indicators slightly increases the average marginal effect of the CEE dummy, meaning that a larger share of the East-West gap remains unexplained by observable factors. This pattern is found for both women and men. The addition of a gender norm indicator – the share of respondents agreeing that “when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women” – does not change the results, and the coefficients on this variable are statistically insignificant (results available upon request).

Table 8. Estimation results: the role of social values in explaining voluntary part-time employment

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Women			Men		
CEE dummy	-0.258*** (0.027)	-0.105*** (0.027)	-0.109*** (0.026)	-0.029*** (0.004)	-0.013** (0.005)	-0.014** (0.004)
Work should come first			-0.174** (0.068)			-0.049** (0.015)
Leisure is very important			0.233* (0.110)			0.032 (0.017)
Demographic variables?	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Education dummies?	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Occupation dummies?	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Sector dummies?	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Self-employment and family worker dummies?	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Log of hourly wages?	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
No. of observations		1,404,983			1,714,618	

*Note: This table reports average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable from logit models with voluntary part-time employment as the dependent variable. Columns 1-3 report results for women, while Columns 4-6 report results for men. Columns 2 and 5 include all control variables considered in the full specification reported in Table 4. Columns 3 and 6 include two indicators of social values, measured at the country-gender-year level. The sample covers the years 2006-2018. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, European Values Study, and Eurostat data.*

The important role of social values in explaining voluntary part-time employment, as well as the lack of importance of social values in explaining the East-West gap, are confirmed across detailed demographic groups (Table B4). The results show that in all of the eight groups, the average marginal effect of the CEE dummy does not become lower when social values are included.

Given that the importance of work and leisure time in CEE countries has been converging to the levels observed in Western Europe, persistent differences in part-time employment could reflect more rigid hours constraints being imposed by employers in CEE countries relative to employers in Western Europe. If this were the case, full-time employees in CEE countries would be more likely to be overemployed, that is, to report a willingness to work fewer hours at the same hourly wage. However, rigid hours constraints may not be fully captured by measures of overemployment, as some workers may exit paid employment altogether due to a mismatch between their hours preferences and available jobs. In the analysis below, overemployment is defined as reporting a preference to work fewer than 35 hours per week while being employed full time.

It turns out that employees in CEE countries are actually less likely than their Western European counterparts to be overemployed, by 3.4 pp for women and by 1.2 pp for men (Table 9). However, when controlling for the full set of structural and economic variables, these differences vanish. For men, the adjusted East-West difference in the probability of being overemployed becomes positive, amounting to 0.6 pp. Yet, the associated standard error is relatively large, which precludes a claim that the unexplained East-West gap in voluntary male part-time employment can be largely explained by more rigid hours constraints in CEE countries.

Table 9. Estimation results: overemployment among full-time employees as the dependent variable

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Women		Men	
CEE dummy	-0.034*** (0.009)	-0.002 (0.014)	-0.012* (0.005)	0.006 (0.009)
Demographic variables?	NO	YES	NO	YES
Education dummies?	NO	YES	NO	YES
Occupation dummies?	NO	YES	NO	YES
Sector dummies?	NO	YES	NO	YES
Self-employment and family worker dummies?	NO	YES	NO	YES
Log of hourly wages?	NO	YES	NO	YES
No. of observations	1,200,575		1,834,632	

*Note: This table reports average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable from logit models with overemployment status as the dependent variable. Overemployment is defined as wishing to work fewer than 35 hours per week while working at least 35 hours per week. The sample comprises only individuals working at least 35 hours per week with non-missing data on hours preferences. Columns 1 and 2 report results for women, while Columns 3 and 4 report results for men. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.*

The analysis by detailed demographic groups (Table B5 in the Appendix) shows that full-time employees in CEE countries are less likely to report a preference for part-time employment across all demographic groups. Once adjusted for the full set of control variables, this East-West difference becomes positive for all groups of men, though it is not statistically significant.

These findings suggest that the lower incidence of voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries primarily reflects employees' preferences rather than hours constraints. It would also be difficult to argue that the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment is directly linked to labour market regulations that give employees in some Western European countries more rights to reduce their working hours. Full-time employment appears to remain a norm to which employees in most CEE countries continue to adhere. Although the valuation of leisure time relative to work has increased, this shift does not seem to translate into a higher share of employees preferring to work fewer than 35 hours per week in CEE countries. It might instead have reduced the share of employees willing to work very long hours, but examining this margin lies beyond the scope of the present paper.

5.4 Evidence from the reunification of Germany

I now zoom in on differences between the post-socialist eastern regions of Germany and the western regions of Germany, which operated under capitalist institutions after the Second World War. In contrast to the broader European evidence, the East-West gaps in the probability of part-time employment in Germany are not reduced when economic variables are controlled for (Table 10). The exception is voluntary part-time employment for women, with the adjusted East-West gap amounting to 18.3 pp, compared with a raw gap of 19.6 pp. For men, there is also a statistically significant East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment, amounting to 1.4 pp.

The East-West gaps in overall part-time employment are lower, implying a higher incidence of underemployment in Western Germany. In particular, there are no significant East-West differences in part-time employment probabilities for men. The analysis by detailed demographic groups in Germany (Table B6 in the Appendix) reveals patterns that are similar to those observed in Europe as a whole. For women, the East-West gap is smallest among singles without young children, whereas for men, the gap is largest among singles.

While my findings for Europe suggest that the difference between the expected and the actual voluntary part-time employment rate has been widening over time, the opposite is the case for Germany. For women, this difference has been systematically narrowing, from 23.6 pp in 2006 to 12.5 pp in 2022 (Figure 19). For men, the increase in the actual voluntary part-time employment rate over the 2010–2022 period resulted in the actual value being higher than the predicted value for 2022 (Figure 20).

Table 10. Estimation results for Germany

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Women				Men			
Dep var: part-time employment								
East dummy	-0.163*** (0.005)	-0.169*** (0.005)	-0.170*** (0.005)	-0.169*** (0.006)	-0.001 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)	0.002 (0.004)
Dep var: voluntary part-time employment								
East dummy	-0.196*** (0.004)	-0.202*** (0.004)	-0.201*** (0.004)	-0.183*** (0.006)	-0.013*** (0.002)	-0.012*** (0.002)	-0.013*** (0.002)	-0.014*** (0.003)
Demographic variables?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Education dummies?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Occupation dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Sector dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Self-employment and family worker dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Log of hourly wages?	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
No of observations	171,050				199,844			

Note: This table reports average marginal effects of a binary variable indicating residence in the eastern regions of Germany from logit models with part-time employment status as the dependent variable. Panel A reports results for part-time employment, while Panel B reports results for voluntary part-time employment. Columns 1-4 are estimated on the sample of women, and columns 5-8 are estimated on the sample of men. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS and EU-SES data.

Figure 19. Female voluntary part-time employment in East Germany: predicted vs actual

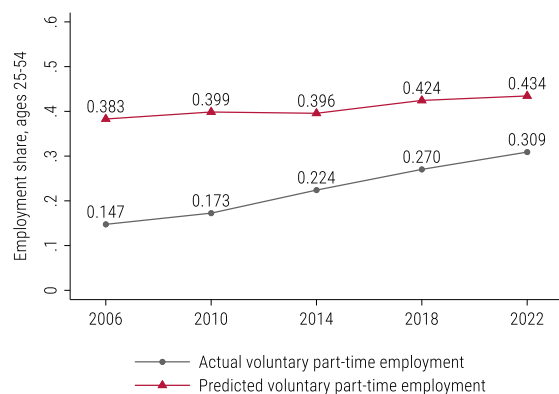
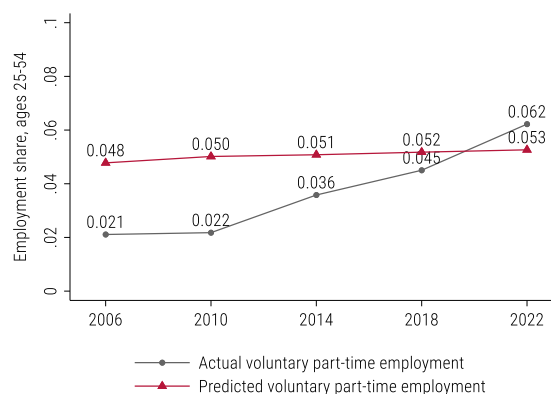


Figure 20. Male voluntary part-time employment in East Germany: predicted vs actual



Note: The figures compare actual and counterfactual voluntary part-time employment rates for employees aged 25-54 in the eastern regions of Germany. Counterfactual rates are obtained by first predicting individual probabilities from the baseline logit specification with the East indicator set to zero and then aggregating these probabilities at the region level. Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS and EU-SES data.

These findings suggest that informal institutions might have played a more important role than formal institutions in explaining the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment in Germany that is not accounted for by economic structure and development. The reunification of Germany went into effect in 1990, and thus more than 15 years before the start of my sample. If formal institutions such as labour

market regulations or tax-and-transfer systems were the main drivers of the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment, one might expect the gap to have largely closed over 15 years. A different interpretation may apply to childcare provision, but such institutions should not affect singles without young children, for whom I also find a significant East–West gap in voluntary part-time employment rates. The pattern emerging from Figures 19 and 20 can be more plausibly explained by slowly converging work norms. Importantly, the convergence within one state may be stronger than the convergence between different countries that have separate cultures.

6. Concluding remarks

This paper examined differences in the prevalence of part-time employment among employees aged 25–54 between Central and Eastern European countries that joined the EU after 2004 and the older EU member states. I investigated whether the substantial East-West differences can be accounted for by disparities in economic structure and levels of development between the two regions. The analysis focused primarily on voluntary part-time employment, and thus excluded underemployment, which is particularly prevalent in some Western European countries.

While voluntary part-time employment increased in CEE countries over the 2006–2022 period, the increase was much smaller than would be expected given the levels of economic development experienced in these countries. As a result, in 2022, the prevalence of voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries was 10.8 pp lower for women and 1.0 pp lower for men than would be expected based on their economic structure, assuming the institutional setting of Western Europe. Similar conclusions emerge when the expected probabilities of part-time employment are derived using only the sample of Western European countries. Under this approach, the difference between the counterfactual and the actual voluntary part-time employment rate in 2022 amounted to 9.0 pp for women and 0.7 pp for men. Importantly, there is some cross-country heterogeneity, with the actual prevalence of voluntary part-time employment not lagging behind the expected level in Estonia and Czechia.

I investigated the potential role of institutional factors in explaining the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment. I found that social values, namely the perceived importance of work and leisure time, are important predictors of voluntary part-time employment. However, cross-country differences in these social values do not help explain the East-West gap. I also find no statistically significant evidence of full-time employees in CEE countries being more likely to prefer part-time employment. Therefore, the East-West gap in voluntary part-time employment is more likely to reflect differences in employees' preferences rather than more rigid hours constraints imposed by employers in CEE countries.

While the perceived importance of leisure time has increased substantially in CEE countries, full-time employment may still be a dominant norm to which employees adhere. The evidence from the reunification

of Germany is also consistent with work norms being a major factor in explaining differences in voluntary part-time employment between post-socialist countries and Western European countries. In the case of East Germany, I observe a very gradual convergence of voluntary part-time employment to the levels expected based on the economic structure and wage levels. For men, the East-West gap was closed 30 years after reunification, while for women, a large gap still remains.

The widespread norm of full-time employment has clear economic advantages, but it also comes at the cost of lower labour market inclusivity and a suboptimal work-life balance for some employees. Policy interventions aimed at increasing the availability and social acceptability of part-time jobs should therefore take into account both the benefits and the social costs of part-time employment. Ideally, such policies would encourage part-time work among the socio-demographic groups who would benefit from it the most, including parents of young children, older workers, and individuals with significant health limitations. Policies that could help achieve these goals include labour market regulations granting certain groups of employees the right to reduce their working hours, greater availability of flexible working arrangements in the public sector, and educational campaigns aimed at reducing the stigma associated with flexible work.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Detailed information on data

Below, I report the number of observations used in the main analyses based on EU-LFS data (Table A1) and EU-SILC data (Table A2), broken down by country and year. These observations correspond to employed individuals with non-missing information for all variables included in the full specification of equation (1).

Denmark and Sweden are omitted from the EU-LFS sample due to missing information on household composition. For the majority of observations in these countries, household identifiers are not available. Finland is excluded because a large share of part-time employees have missing information on the variable measuring whether they wish to work more hours. Some exclusions from the EU-SILC sample result from missing occupation codes at the two-digit level. This applies to Slovenia in 2014-2022, Germany in 2018, and Slovakia in 2018. In addition, for France, Italy, and Portugal there is a lack information on household capital income in 2006. The remaining country exclusions are due to specific microdata not being collected or disseminated by Eurostat.

Table A1. Number of observations in the EU-LFS sample, by country and year

Country	2006	2010	2014	2018	2022	Total
Austria	62,398	58,027	55,779	55,402	53,380	284,986
Belgium	33,277	30,326	28,734	12,291	10,213	114,841
Bulgaria	32,721	8,561	8,200	8,596	7,786	65,864
Czechia	76,537	67,809	11,989	11,673	10,399	178,407
Germany	14,525	14,017	144,422	158,510	55,462	386,936
Estonia	5,809	5,114	6,973	8,339	7,124	33,359
Greece	71,080	69,159	42,975	44,528	5,444	233,186
Spain	29,328	29,426	26,175	25,584	20,604	131,117
France	29,816	41,789	20,962	19,871	16,351	128,789
Croatia	n/a	8,467	8,048	7,974	8,182	32,671
Hungary	76,400	65,004	62,438	55,061	58,993	317,896
Ireland	23,458	62,917	53,450	36,107	5,485	181,417
Italy	170,583	157,965	133,940	126,067	108,951	697,506
Lithuania	11,691	16,130	16,044	16,536	14,290	74,691
Latvia	4,787	8,356	9,781	3,900	2,295	29,119
The Netherlands	35,148	24,927	22,385	22,836	38,792	144,088
Poland	46,081	92,930	80,220	64,279	65,268	348,778
Portugal	47,565	40,177	41,717	39,250	8,167	176,876
Romania	56,998	52,208	49,693	58,196	55,960	273,055
Slovenia	21,978	19,661	17,699	18,676	18,975	96,989
Slovakia	31,629	28,252	26,420	23,831	20,560	130,692
United Kingdom	33,987	24,330	23,137	22,023	n/a	103,477
Total	915,796	925,552	891,181	839,530	592,681	4,164,740

Source: Own elaboration based on EU-LFS data.

Table A2. Number of observations in the EU-SILC sample, by country and year

Country	2006	2010	2014	2018	2022	Total
Austria	4,159	4,074	3,602	3,116	3,166	18,117
Belgium	3,870	3,960	3,501	3,318	3,641	18,290
Bulgaria	n/a	4,021	2,874	4,073	3,992	14,960
Czechia	4,967	5,859	5,020	5,284	4,589	25,719
Germany	8,613	7,794	6,880	n/a	16,484	39,771
Denmark	2,048	1,697	1,414	2,359	1,395	8,913
Estonia	3,895	2,921	3,675	3,645	2,920	17,056
Greece	n/a	3,912	3,695	10,511	4,221	22,339
Spain	8,856	8,903	6,913	7,662	14,699	47,033
Finland	3,516	3,295	6,452	5,616	2,628	21,507
France	n/a	6,689	5,712	5,848	8,906	27,155
Croatia	n/a	1,898	2,630	4,104	3,698	12,330
Hungary	4,940	5,914	5,236	3,347	3,789	23,226
Ireland	2,998	2,212	2,913	2,590	2,481	13,194
Italy	n/a	12,232	11,574	11,543	9,480	44,829
Lithuania	2,845	2,912	2,570	2,536	2,598	13,461
Latvia	n/a	3,104	3,043	2,720	2,648	11,515
The Netherlands	3,559	3,632	3,200	3,514	3,346	17,251
Poland	9,098	7,886	7,410	7,305	9,502	41,201
Portugal	n/a	2,835	3,903	8,331	7,066	22,135
Romania	n/a	4,004	3,721	4,145	4,380	16,250
Sweden	2,266	2,359	1,701	1,800	2,530	10,656
Slovenia	9,608	8,613	n/a	n/a	n/a	18,221
Slovakia	4,638	5,122	4,657	n/a	3,147	17,564
United Kingdom	5,686	3,822	5,841	5,913	n/a	21,262
Total	85,562	119,670	108,137	109,280	121,306	543,955

Note: Data for Denmark, Finland, and Sweden are used only for the estimations reported in Table B2.

Source: Own elaboration based on EU-SILC data.

Appendix B. Additional results

Figure B1. Female part-time employment: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable estimated separately for each year

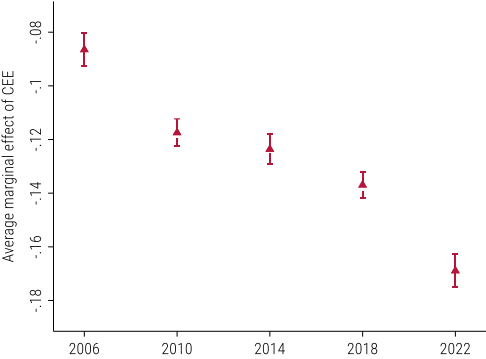


Figure B2. Female voluntary part-time employment: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable estimated separately for each year

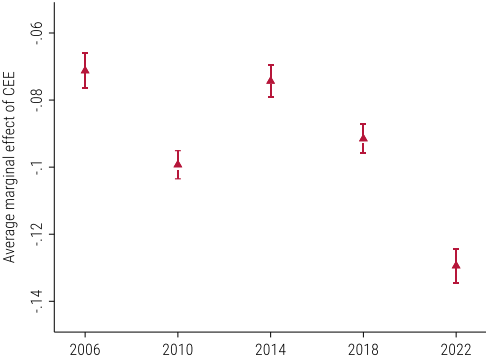


Figure B3. Male part-time employment: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable estimated separately for each year

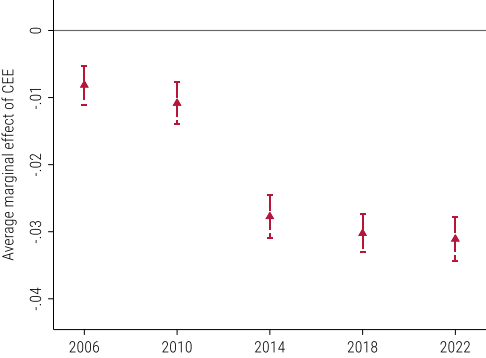
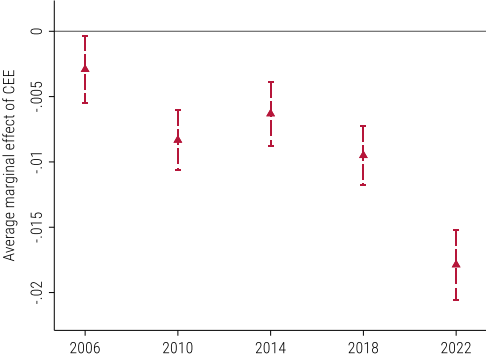


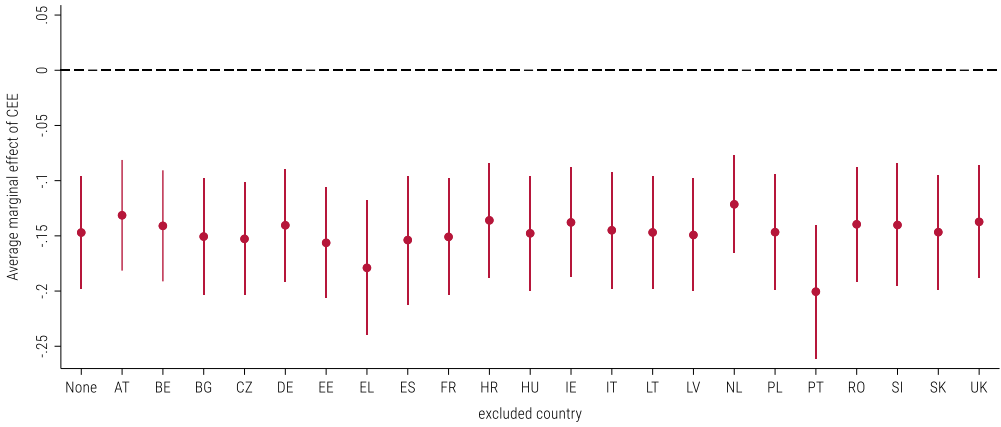
Figure B4. Male voluntary part-time employment: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable estimated separately for each year



Note: The figures report average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable from logit models estimated separately for each year. The dependent variable is part-time employment in Figures B1 and B3, and the dependent variable is voluntary part-time employment in Figures B2 and B4. Estimates are based on the baseline specification, with standard errors clustered at the country-year level. Points denote average marginal effects, and vertical bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

Figure B5. Female part-time employment: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable in the main specification with individual countries excluded from the sample



Note: Figures B5-B8 report average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable from the baseline logit specification, estimated while repeatedly excluding one country at a time from the sample. Points denote average marginal effects, and vertical bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.
 Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

Figure B6. Female voluntary part-time employment: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable in the main specification with individual countries excluded from the sample

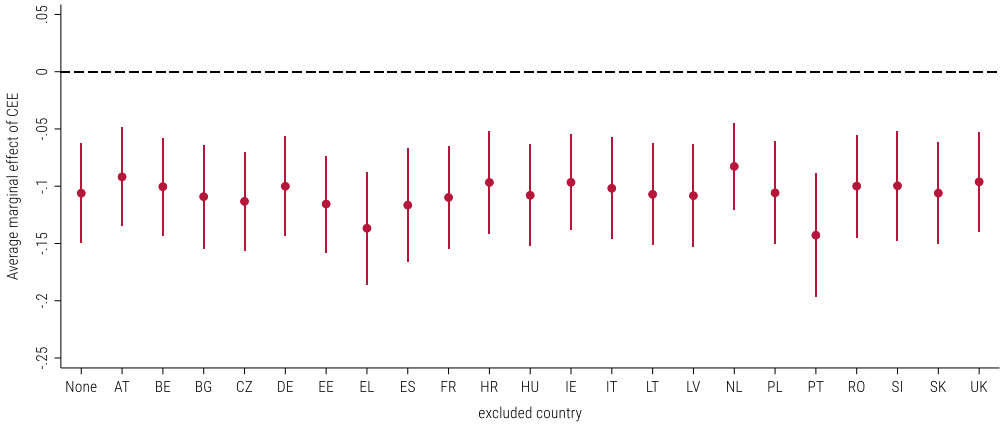


Figure B7. Male part-time employment: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable in the main specification with individual countries excluded from the sample

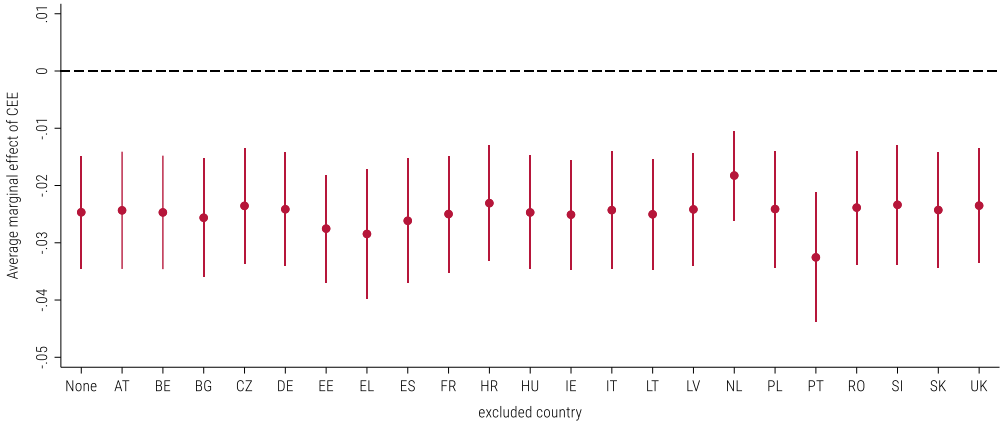


Figure B8. Male voluntary part-time employment: average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable in the main specification with individual countries excluded from the sample

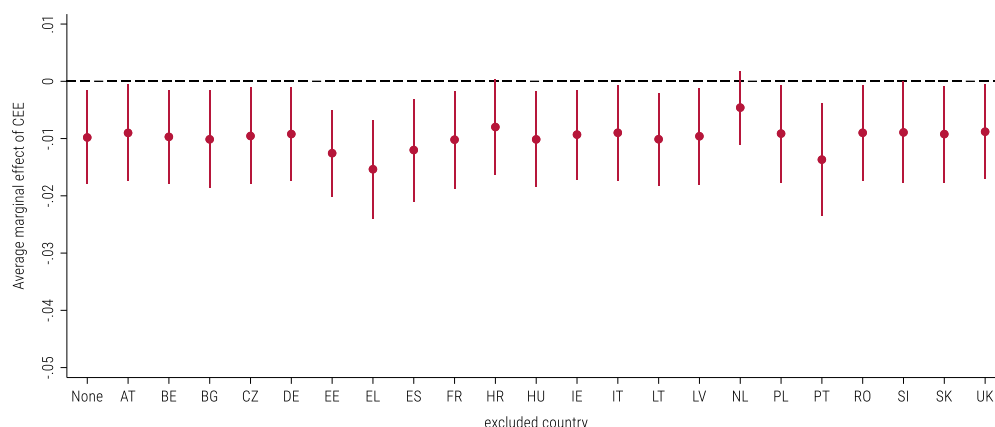


Table B1. The role of imputed rent in explaining part-time employment (EU-SILC data)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A: Women						
CEE dummy	-0.269*** (0.025)	-0.270*** (0.025)	-0.254*** (0.025)	-0.126*** (0.035)	-0.122*** (0.035)	-0.123*** (0.036)
No. of observations	144,624					
Panel B: Men						
CEE dummy	-0.043*** (0.006)	-0.041*** (0.006)	-0.035*** (0.005)	-0.021** (0.008)	-0.024** (0.008)	-0.023** (0.008)
No. of observations	168,203					
Demographic variables?	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Education dummies?	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Occupation dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Sector dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Self-employment dummy?	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Log of hourly wages?	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Log of financial income?	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Log of rental income?	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Log of imputed rent?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES

Note: This table reports average marginal effects of the CEE binary variable from logit models with part-time employment as the dependent variable. Panel A reports results for women, while Panel B reports results for men. Column 4 includes all control variables considered in the full specification reported in Table 4, while Column 5 adds variables representing capital income. Column 6 adds the log of imputed rent. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Source: Own estimations based on EU-SILC, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

Table B2. Analysis including Nordic countries (EU-SILC data)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Panel A: Women					
CEE dummy	-0.261*** (0.020)	-0.264*** (0.020)	-0.248*** (0.020)	-0.166*** (0.029)	-0.158*** (0.029)
No. of observations			252,323		
Panel B: Men					
CEE dummy	-0.046*** (0.004)	-0.045*** (0.004)	-0.039*** (0.004)	-0.031*** (0.006)	-0.033*** (0.006)
No. of observations			291,632		
Demographic variables?	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Education dummies?	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES
Occupation dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Sector dummies?	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Self-employment dummy?	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES
Log of hourly wages?	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Log of financial income?	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Log of rental income?	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES

Note: This table replicates the analysis reported in Table 6, but additionally includes three Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden, that are not covered in the main paper.

Figure B9. Female part-time employment in CEE countries: predictions based on the estimations using the Western European sample

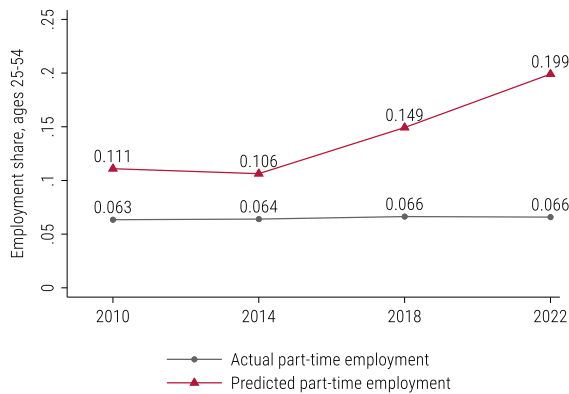


Figure B10. Female voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries: predictions based on the estimations using the Western European sample

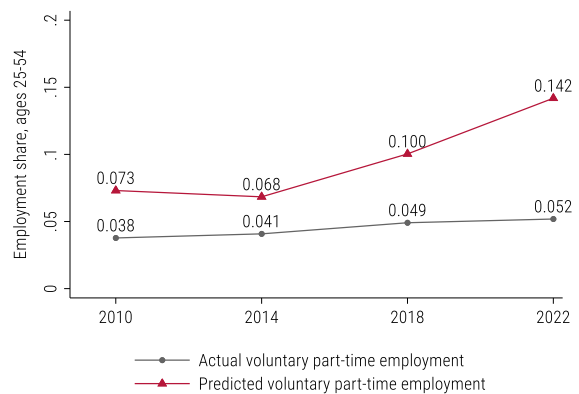


Figure B11. Male part-time employment in CEE countries: predictions based on the estimations using the Western European sample

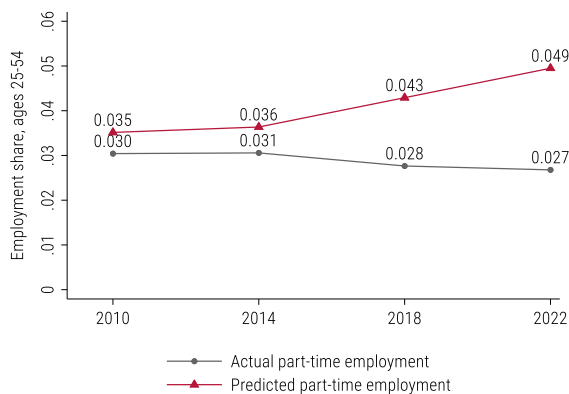
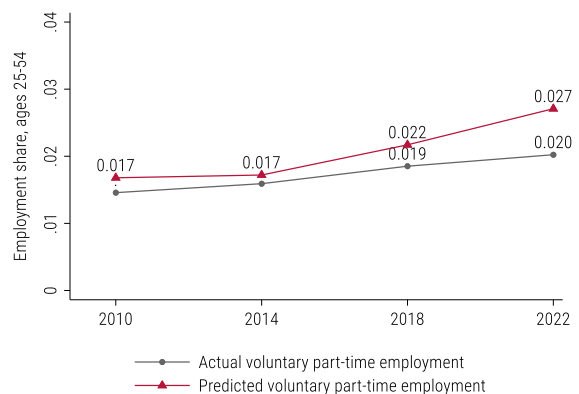


Figure B12. Male voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries: predictions based on the estimations using the Western European sample



Note: The figures compare actual and counterfactual part-time employment rates for employees aged 25–54 in CEE countries. Counterfactual rates are obtained by first predicting individual probabilities from the baseline logit specification estimated on the Western European sample only and then aggregating these probabilities at the country level. Aggregate rates are computed while giving equal weight to each country. Results for 2006 are not reported due to missing data for Croatia.

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

Figure B13. Female part-time employment in CEE countries: predicted vs actual

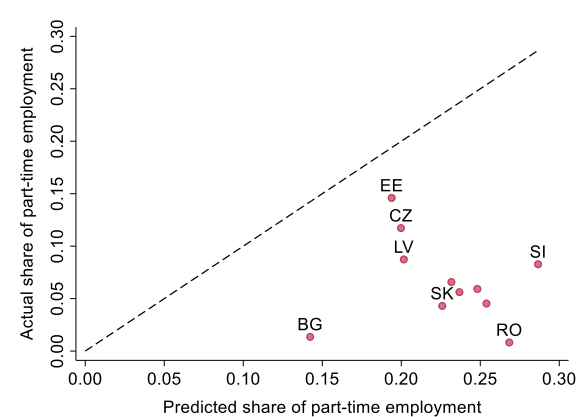
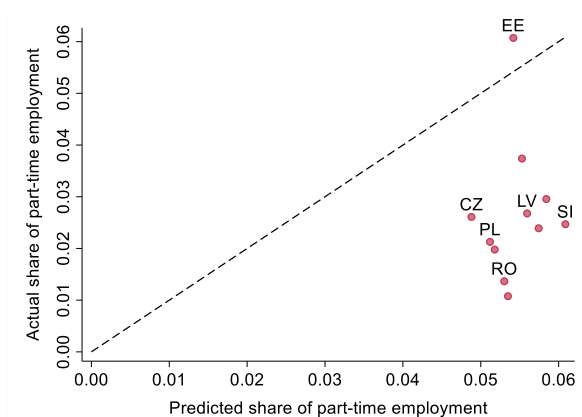


Figure B14. Male part-time employment in CEE countries: predicted vs actual



Note: The figures compare actual and counterfactual part-time employment rates for employees aged 25–54 in CEE countries in 2022. Counterfactual rates are obtained by first predicting individual probabilities from the baseline logit specification with the CEE indicator set to zero and then aggregating these probabilities at the country level. Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

Figure B15. Female part-time employment in CEE countries (2022): predictions based on the estimations using the Western European sample

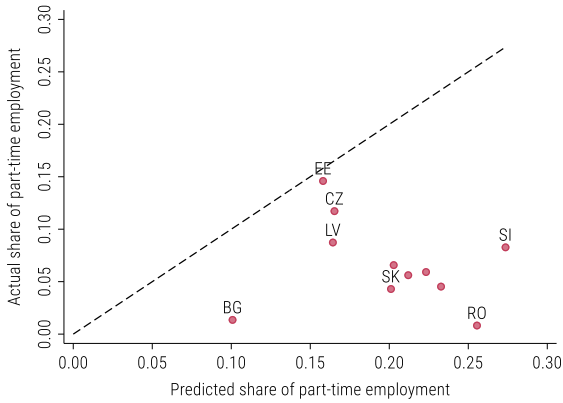


Figure B16. Female voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries (2022): predictions based on the estimations using the Western European sample

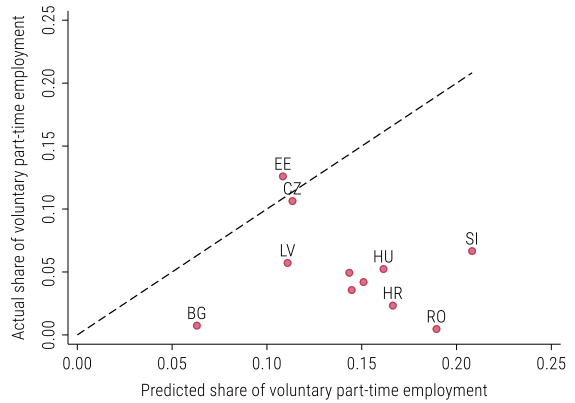


Figure B17. Male part-time employment in CEE countries (2022): predictions based on the estimations using the Western European sample

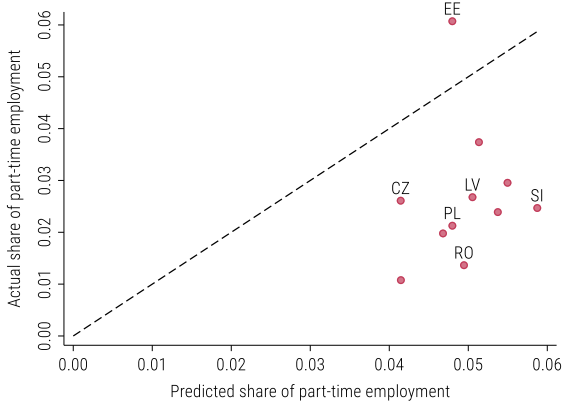
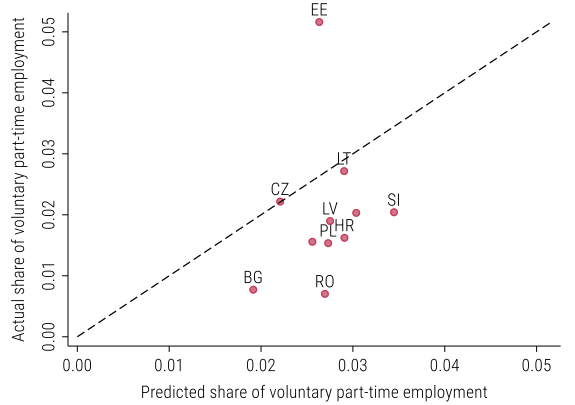


Figure B18. Male voluntary part-time employment in CEE countries (2022): predictions based on the estimations using the Western European sample



Note: The figures compare actual and counterfactual part-time employment rates for employees aged 25–54 in CEE countries in 2022. Counterfactual rates are obtained by first predicting individual probabilities from the baseline logit specification estimated on the Western European sample only. Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

Table B3. Estimation results across detailed demographic groups, the role of tax progression in explaining voluntary part-time employment

	Women				Men			
	(1) Without young children Single	(2) Married	(3) With children aged<10 Single	(4) Married	(5) Without young children Single	(6) Married	(7) With children aged<10 Single	(8) Married
Panel A: Baseline specification								
CEE dummy	-0.039** (0.015)	-0.103*** (0.023)	-0.094** (0.030)	-0.121** (0.038)	-0.009 (0.006)	-0.003 (0.004)	-0.024* (0.010)	-0.009 (0.005)
Panel B: Specification with preferred tax variable								
CEE dummy	-0.034* (0.015)	-0.093*** (0.023)	-0.107*** (0.027)	-0.123** (0.039)	-0.007 (0.006)	-0.001 (0.004)	-0.028** (0.010)	-0.007 (0.004)
MTW-ATW gap at 67% AW	0.202*** (0.044)	0.384** (0.148)	0.266** (0.082)	-0.034 (0.231)	0.044 (0.033)	0.062* (0.028)	0.067*** (0.020)	0.056 (0.033)
Panel C: Specification with alternative tax variable								
CEE dummy	-0.033* (0.015)	-0.097*** (0.023)	-0.080* (0.034)	-0.129*** (0.038)	-0.006 (0.006)	0.000 (0.004)	-0.018 (0.011)	-0.006 (0.005)
ATW progression 67-100% AW	0.588 (0.441)	0.612 (0.599)	1.065 (0.953)	-0.645 (0.894)	0.208 (0.149)	0.250* (0.104)	0.486 (0.295)	0.275* (0.133)
No of observations	448,328	747,922	64,086	420,683	591,344	816,451	19,002	646,260

Note: This table reports average marginal effects from logit models with voluntary part-time employment as the dependent variable, estimated separately by gender and demographic group. Columns 1-4 report results for women and columns 5-8 report results for men. Panel A reports results from the baseline specification. Panel B adds the preferred measure of tax progressivity, defined as the difference between the marginal tax wedge and the average tax wedge at 67% of the average wage. Panel C uses an alternative measure of tax progressivity, defined as the difference in the average tax wedge between 67% and 100% of the average wage. All specifications include the full set of control variables described in equation (1). Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, OECD Taxing Wages, and Eurostat data.

Table B4. The role of social values in explaining voluntary part-time employment, results across detailed demographic groups

	Women				Men			
	(1) Without young children Single	(2) Married	(3) With children aged<10 Single	(4) Married	(5) Without young children Single	(6) Married	(7) With children aged<10 Single	(8) Married
Panel A: Baseline specification								
CEE dummy	-0.053*** (0.016)	-0.114*** (0.025)	-0.125*** (0.038)	-0.143** (0.045)	-0.017** (0.006)	-0.007* (0.004)	-0.035** (0.012)	-0.014** (0.005)
Panel B: Specification with social values								
CEE dummy	-0.059*** (0.015)	-0.117*** (0.023)	-0.132*** (0.037)	-0.145*** (0.043)	-0.019*** (0.006)	-0.009* (0.004)	-0.037** (0.012)	-0.014** (0.005)
Work should come first	-0.145*** (0.042)	-0.171* (0.068)	-0.190* (0.083)	-0.186 (0.095)	-0.058** (0.021)	-0.043*** (0.012)	-0.053 (0.031)	-0.051*** (0.014)
Leisure is very important	0.117 (0.071)	0.216 (0.111)	0.243 (0.140)	0.346* (0.149)	0.023 (0.022)	0.024 (0.015)	0.026 (0.039)	0.048** (0.018)
No of observations	365,168	651,028	57,848	330,939	472,790	710,368	17,587	513,873

Note: This table reports average marginal effects from logit models with voluntary part-time employment as the dependent variable, estimated separately by gender and demographic group. Columns 1-4 report results for women and columns 5-8 report results for men. The baseline specification includes the full set of control variables described in equation (1). The specification with social values additionally includes indicators capturing attitudes towards work and leisure. Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, European Values Study, and Eurostat data.

Table B5. Overemployment as the dependent variable, results across detailed demographic groups

	Women				Men			
	Without young children		With children aged<10		Without young children		With children aged<10	
	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married
Panel A: Unadjusted East-West difference								
CEE dummy	-0.022** (0.008)	-0.039*** (0.009)	-0.031** (0.011)	-0.045** (0.014)	-0.011* (0.006)	-0.014** (0.005)	-0.012 (0.007)	-0.011 (0.005)
Panel B: Specification with all control variables								
CEE dummy	0.006 (0.012)	-0.003 (0.014)	-0.011 (0.016)	-0.021 (0.020)	0.005 (0.008)	0.008 (0.010)	0.014 (0.013)	0.007 (0.009)
No of observations	349,774	562,379	42,544	245,719	513,066	755,057	15,791	550,710

Note: This table reports average marginal effects from logit models with overemployment as the dependent variable, estimated separately by gender and demographic group. Overemployment is defined as preferring to work fewer than 35 hours per week while working at least 35 hours per week. Columns 1-4 report results for women and columns 5-8 report results for men. In Panel A, CEE dummy is the only explanatory variable. In Panel B, regressions include the full set of control variables described in equation (1). Standard errors clustered at the country-year level are reported in parentheses.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS, EU-SES, and Eurostat data.

Table B6. Evidence from Germany: estimation results for detailed demographic groups

	Women				Men			
	Without young children		With children aged<10		Without young children		With children aged<10	
	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married
Panel A: Part-time employment								
Overall East-West difference	-0.011	-0.204***	-0.197***	-0.305***	-0.006	-0.001	-0.02	0.002
Adjusted for all control variables	-0.015	-0.208***	-0.138***	-0.292***	0.015	-0.003	0.092	-0.007
Panel B: Voluntary part-time employment								
Overall East-West difference	-0.061***	-0.241***	-0.215***	-0.306***	-0.017***	-0.014***	-0.047	-0.007*
Adjusted for all control variables	-0.049***	-0.228***	-0.112***	-0.276***	-0.007	-0.017***	-0.005	-0.017***
No of observations	46,864	82,435	5,880	35,871	64,394	82,755	1,137	51,559

Note: This table reports average marginal effects from logit models estimated on the German sample only. Panel A reports results for part-time employment, while Panel B reports results for voluntary part-time employment. The top row in each panel reports the overall East-West difference between eastern and western regions of Germany, while the bottom row reports estimates adjusted for the full set of control variables considered in equation (1). Each column is estimated on the sample of a different demographic group. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Source: Own estimations based on EU-LFS and EU-SES data.



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