NERI Seminar

Exploring Working Hours Disparities in Europe

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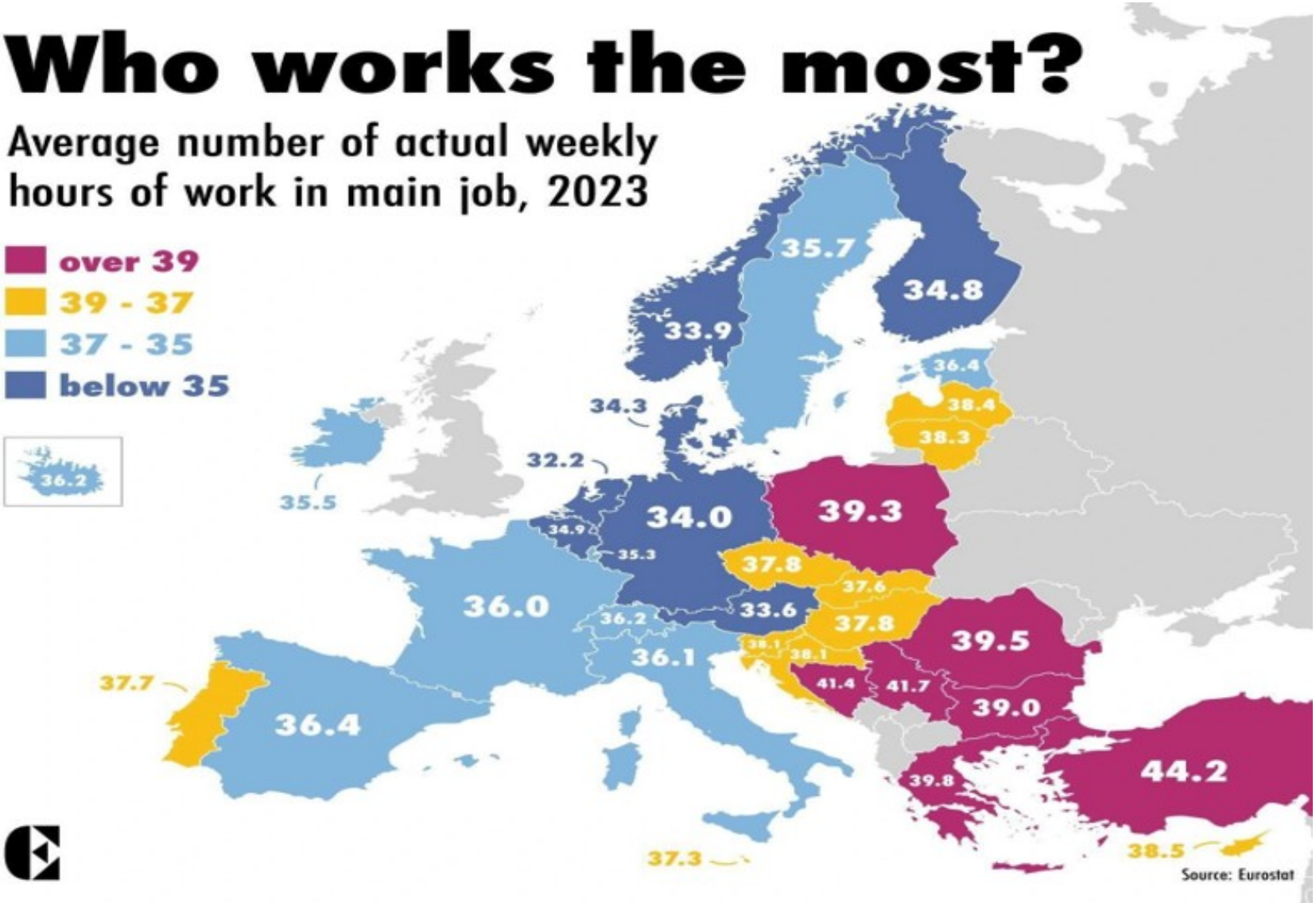
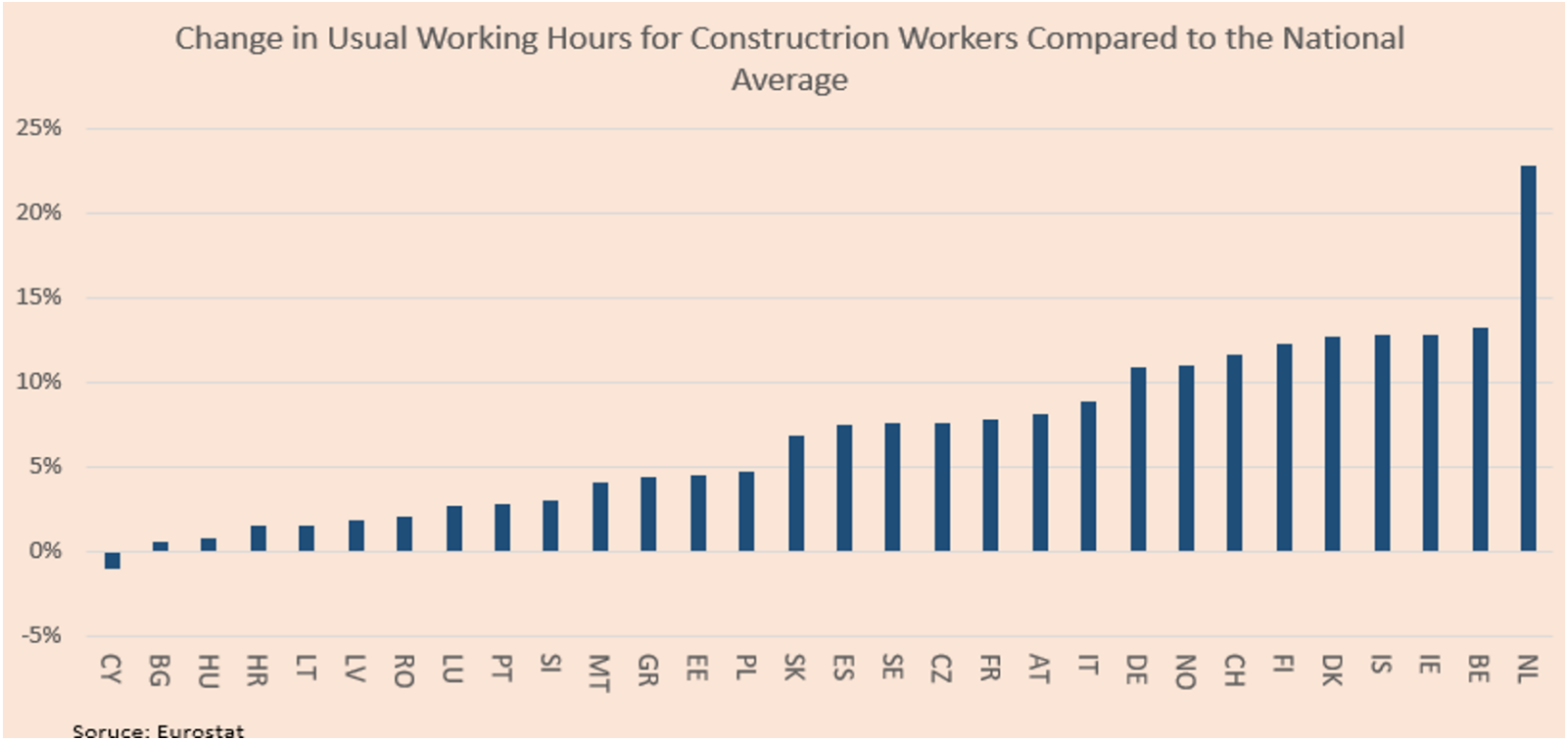
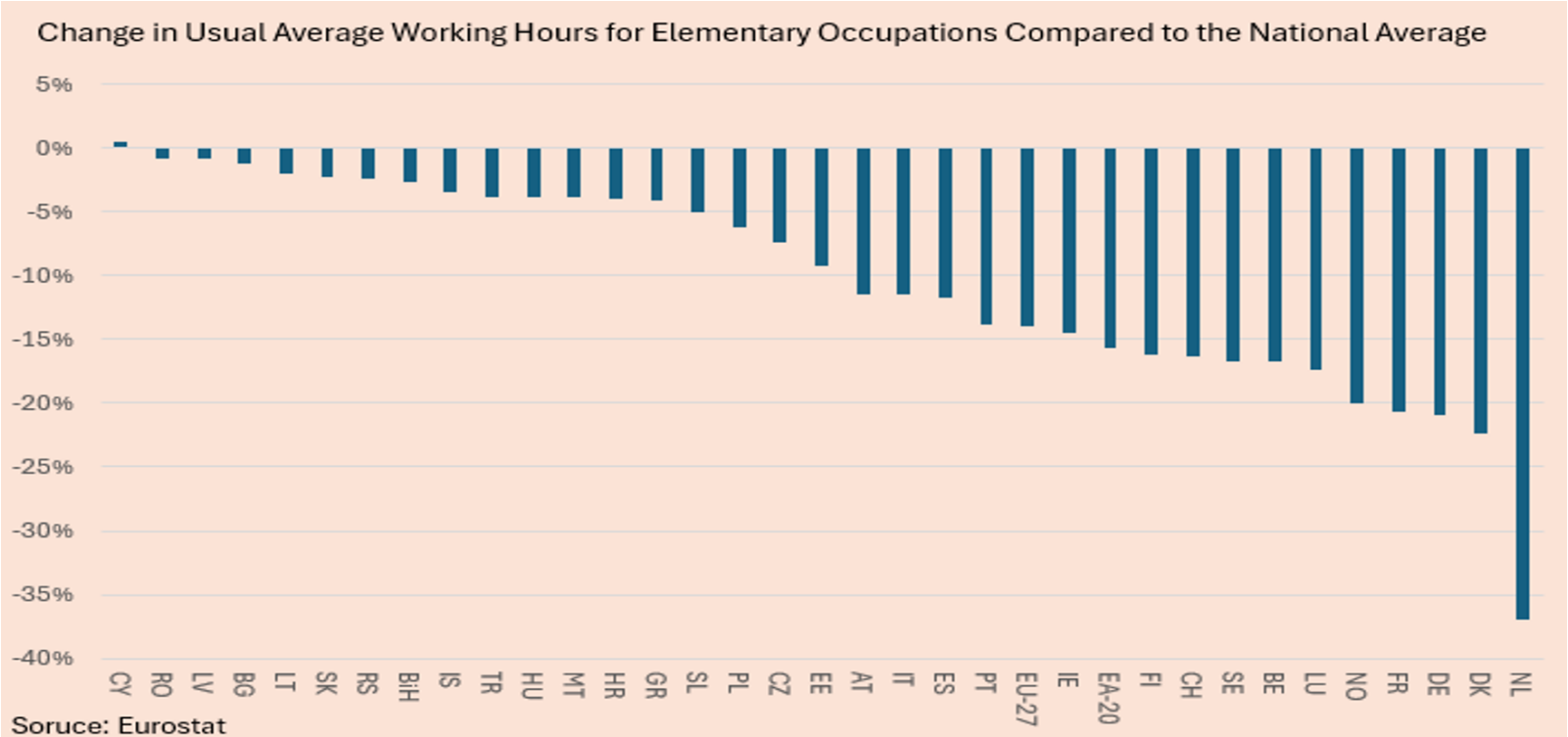

Who works the most?
Average number of actual weekly hours of work in main job, 2023
over 39
39 - 37
37 - 35
below 35
36.2
35.7
34.8
33.9
36.4
38.4
38.3
34.3
32.2
35.5
34.0
39.3
34.9
35.3
37.8
37.6
36.0
33.6
37.8
39.5
36.2
38.1
38.1
36.1
37.7
41.4
41.7
39.0
36.4
44.2
39.8
37.3
38.5
Source: Eurostat


Change in Usual Working Hours for Constructrion Workers Compared to the National Average
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
-5%
CY
BG
HU
HR
LT
LV
RO
LU
PT
SI
MT
GR
EE
PL
SK
ES
SE
CZ
FR
AT
IT
DE
NO
CH
FI
DK
IS
IE
BE
NL
Soruce: Eurostat


Change in Usual Average Working Hours for Elementary Occupations Compared to the National Average
5%
0%
-5%
-10%
-15%
-20%
-25%
-30%
-35%
-40%
CY
RO
LV
BG
LT
SK
RS
BiH
IS
TR
HU
MT
HR
GR
SL
PL
CZ
EE
AT
IT
ES
PT
EU-27
IE
EA-20
FI
CH
SE
BE
LU
NO
FR
DE
DK
NL
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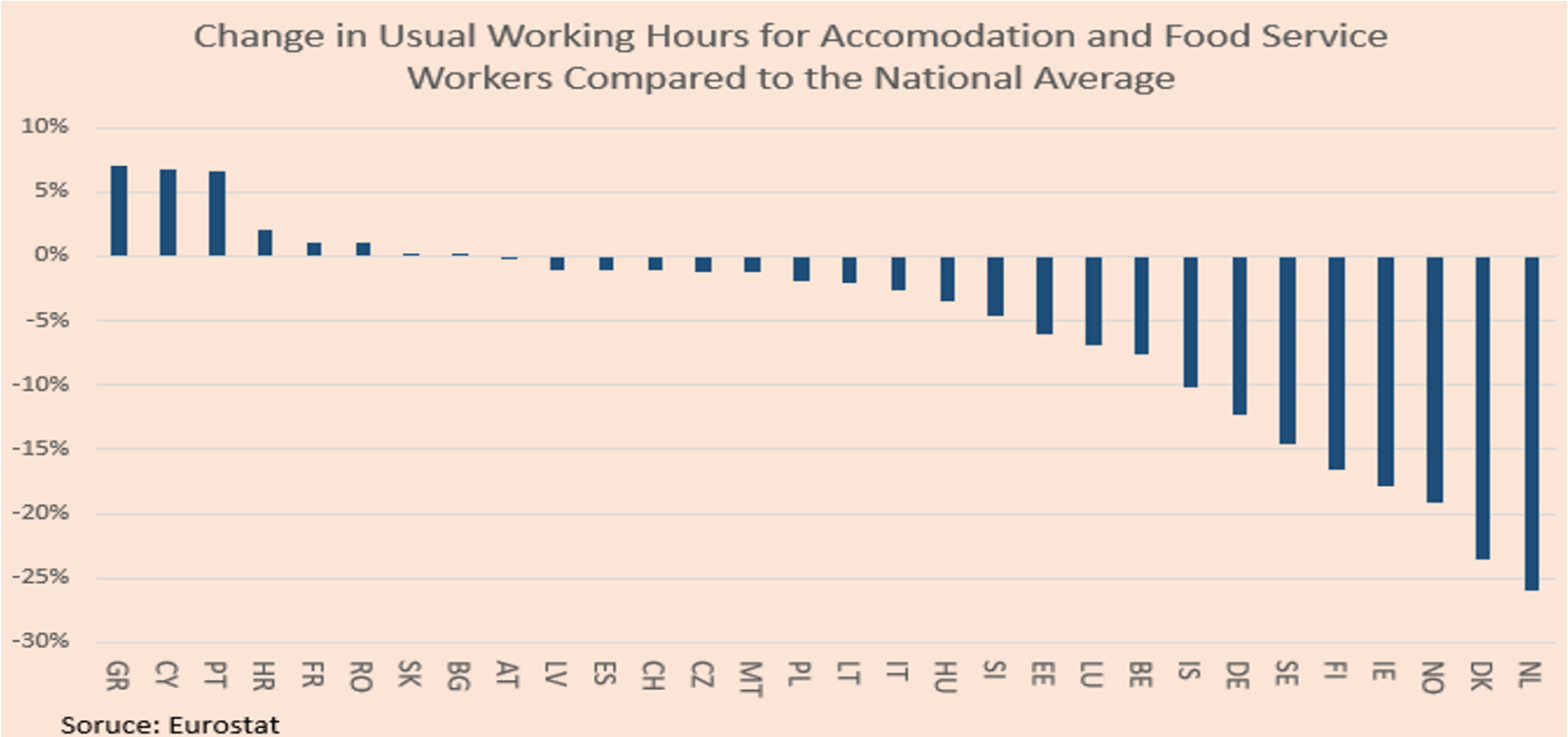
Change in Usual Working Hours for Accomodation and Food Service Workers Compared to the National Average
10%
5%
0%
-5%
-10%
-15%
-20%
-25%
-30%
GR
CY
PT
HR
FR
RO
SK
BG
AT
LV
ES
CH
CZ
MT
PL
LT
IT
HU
SI
EE
LU
BE
IS
DE
SE
FI
IE
NO
DK
NL
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Intoduction 1/2

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- To protect people from overworking and ensure welfare, most European countries have legislation that caps maximum working time (European Commission, 2003).
- Insufficient labour hours can also pose financial challenges, limiting earnings and reducing economic security (Bünning and Schult, 2016).

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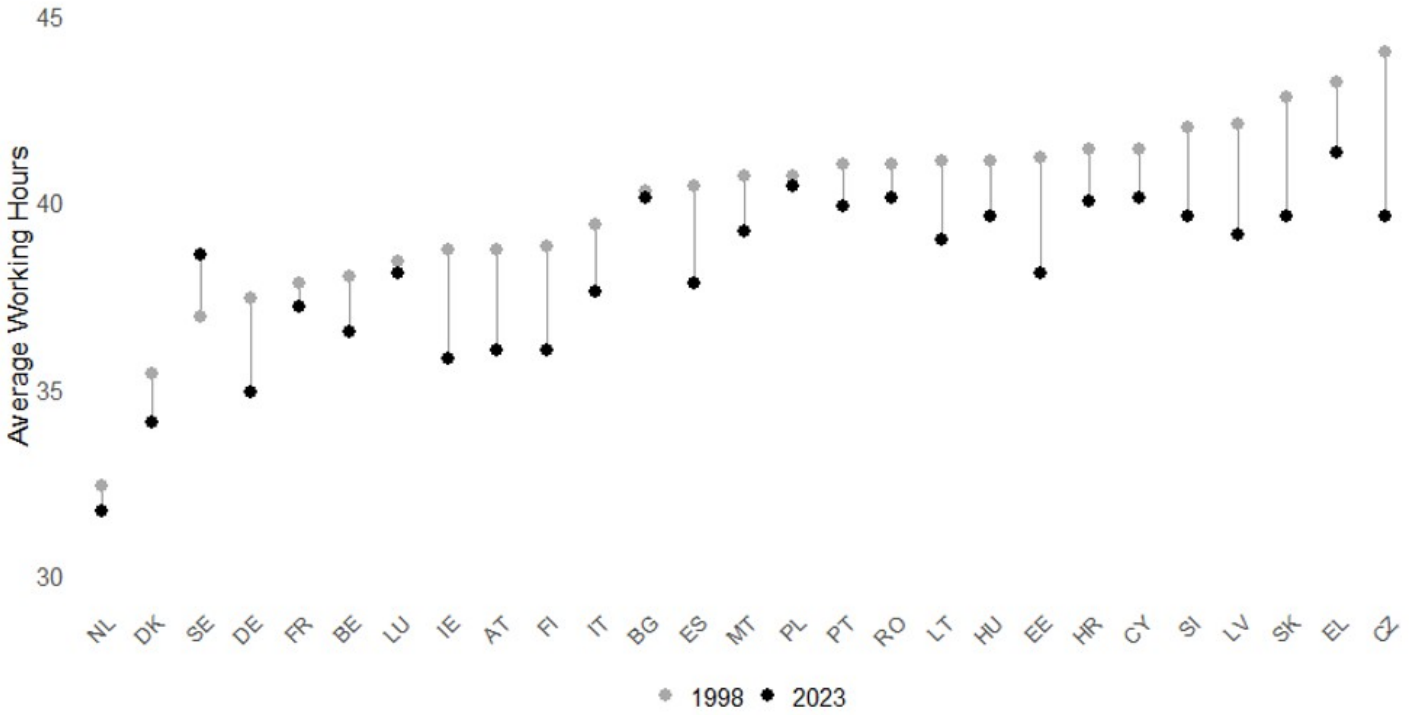
- Various economic, institutional, and social factors, including both individual worker characteristics and country-level determinants, influence this heterogeneity.
- In this study, we look at the determinants of usual working hours in Europe, combining micro and macro-level data.

Average working hours have fallen across Europe, yet there are significant differences between the East and the West



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- This practice, known as over-hiring, can reduce average salaries because the firm is hiring beyond the point of efficient allocation (Smith, 1999).
- Over-hiring also leads to a reduction in the number of hours worked per employee (Dossche et al., 2019).

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- Workers from health care, general merchandise, and retail are exposed to last-minute shift cancellations, but also frequently asked to work more when needed (Kaduk Kelly, 2015; Vargas, 2017).
- In the U.S., half of early-career workers report that their management decides on the number of labor hours, and only 41

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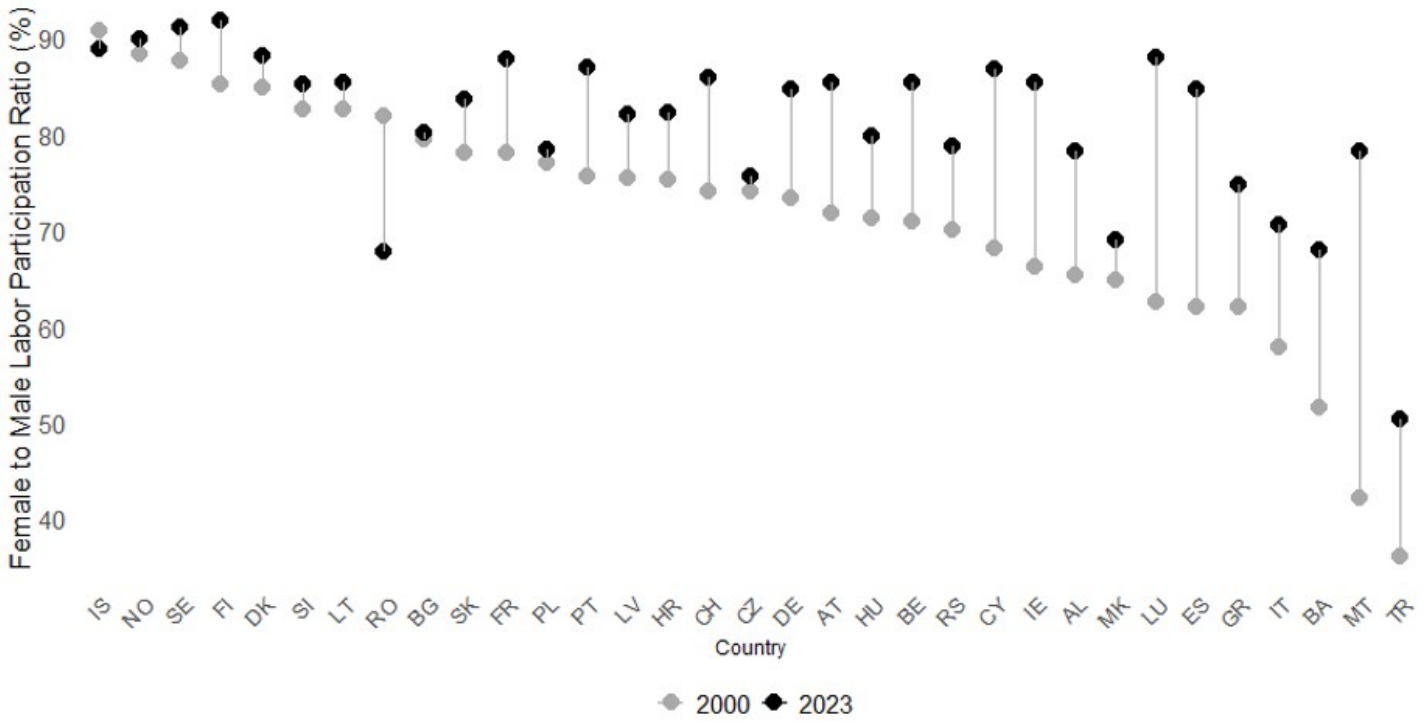
- A spouse with a higher wage is more likely to reduce their participation in household activities, as they prioritize labour market engagement (Donni Matteazzi, 2018).
- However, the country-level literature exploring the causal impact of female labour force participation on working hours remains relatively underdeveloped.

The female-to-male labour force participation ratio in Europe has shown significant improvements over the past 23 years



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- The second hypothesis implies that rich countries have more generous social transfers (Jensen, 2019); and higher income tax rates, reducing incentives to work long hours (Prescott, 2004; McDaniel, 2011).
- Testing both hypotheses, Bick et al. (2020) find that the income effect is the dominant driver of reducing the working hours in rich countries.

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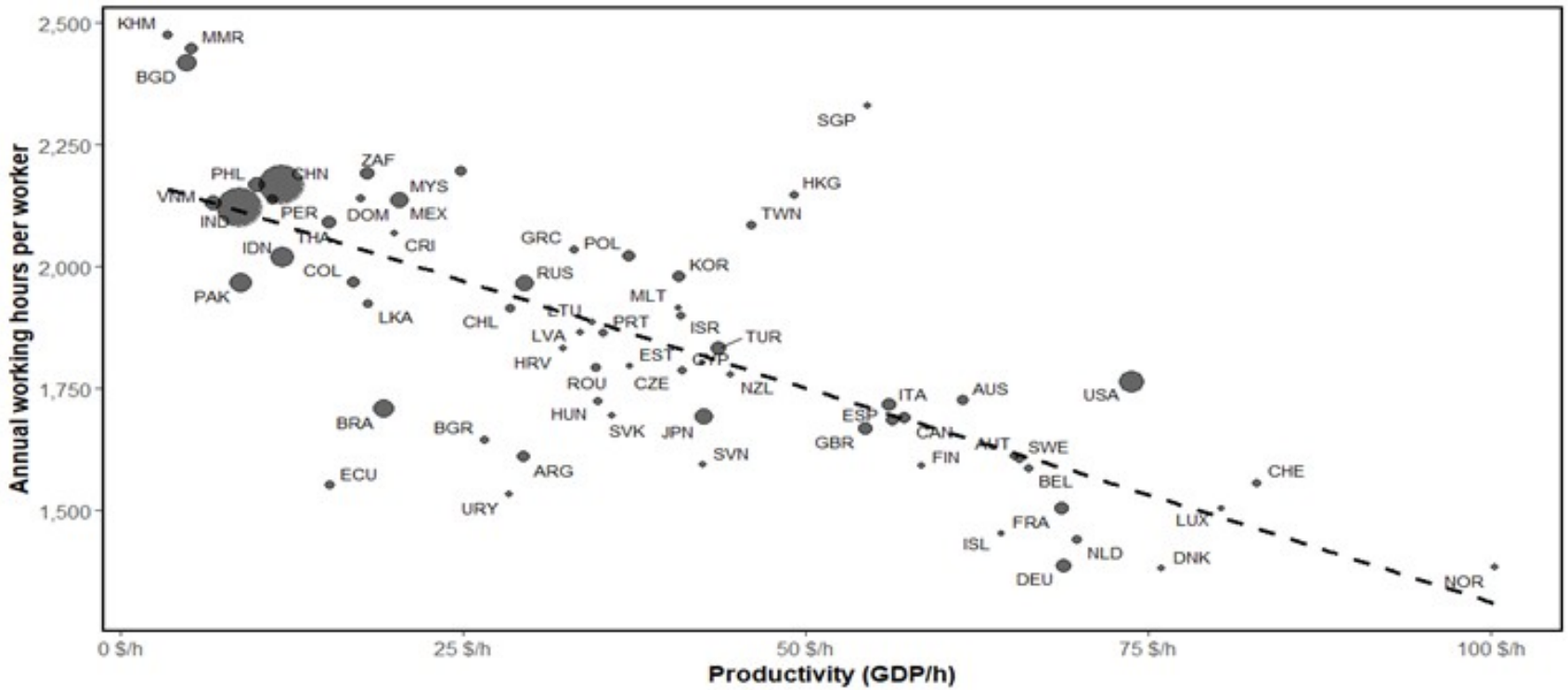
- Thus, a significant variation in average working hours in Europe may be attributed to labour productivity.

Workers in countries with higher levels of labour productivity usually tend to work fewer hours



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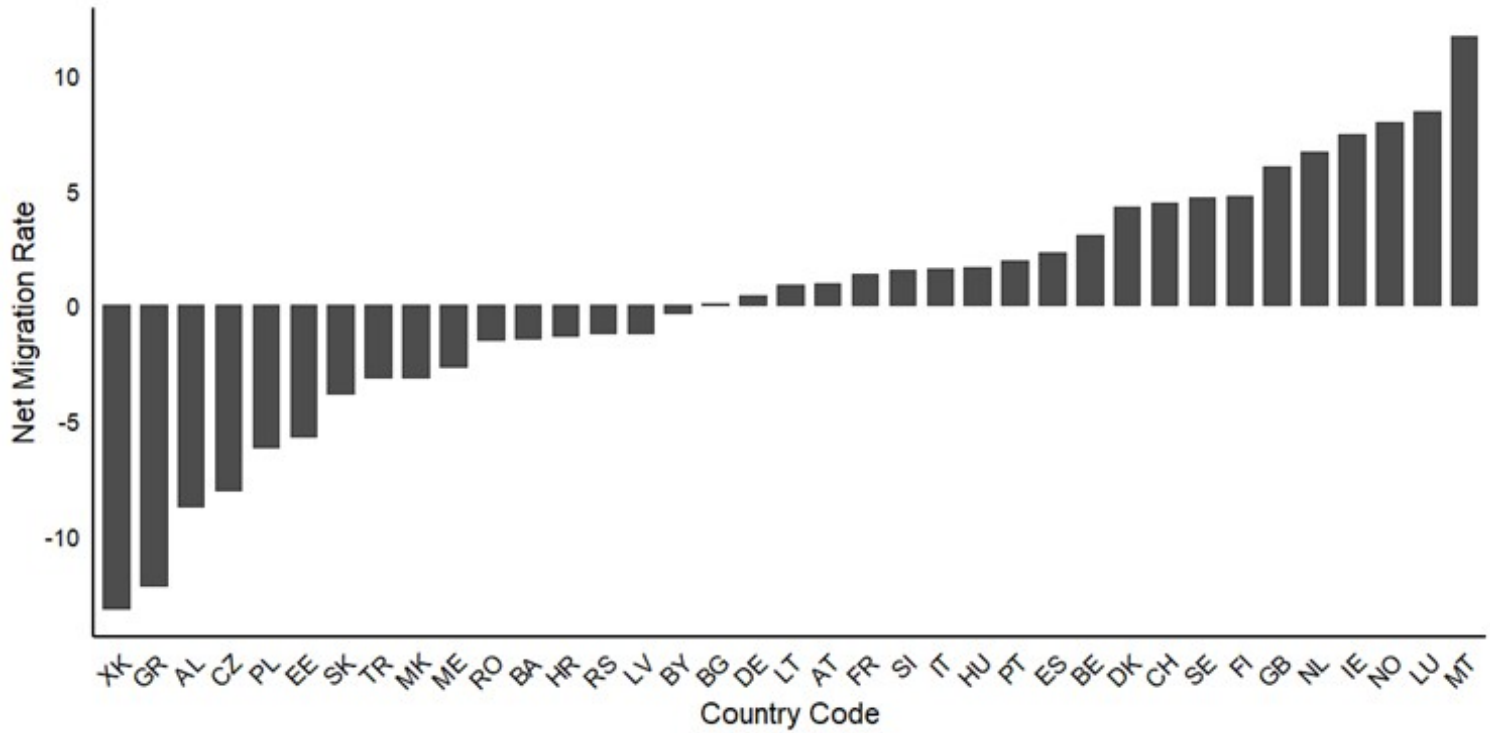
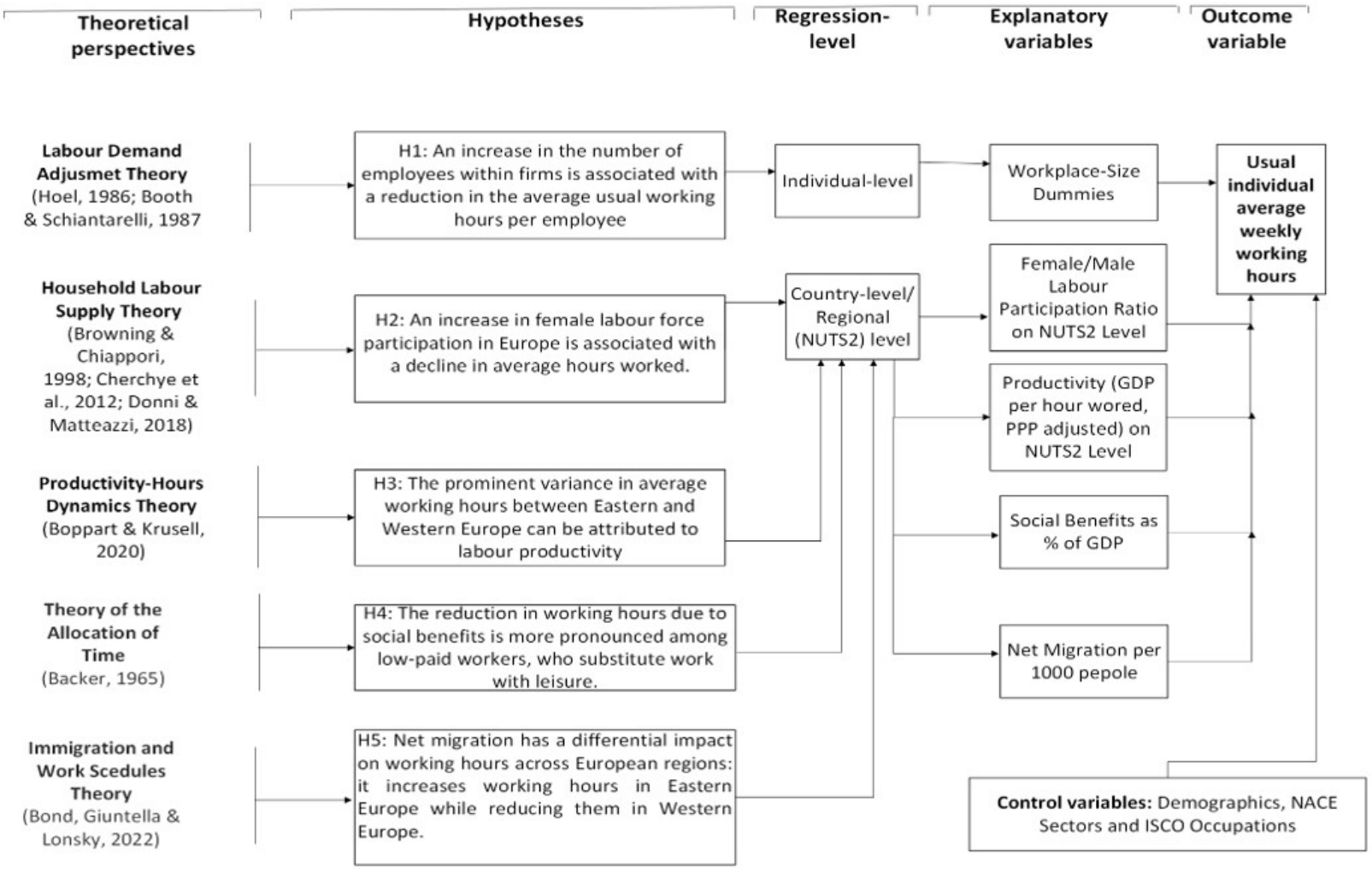
- Countries with higher rates of union coverage usually have lower average working hours (Frase Gornick, 2013).

Net migration per 1000 people in Europe, 2024



Visualisation of two-level empirical investigation



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  - A higher number of coworkers in the same workplace is associated with fewer hours worked, supporting Hypothesis 1.
- **Contract Type and UQR Estimates:**
  - A permanent contract has a positive impact on working hours up to the 50th percentile.
  - Beyond the 50th percentile, the effect turns negative.

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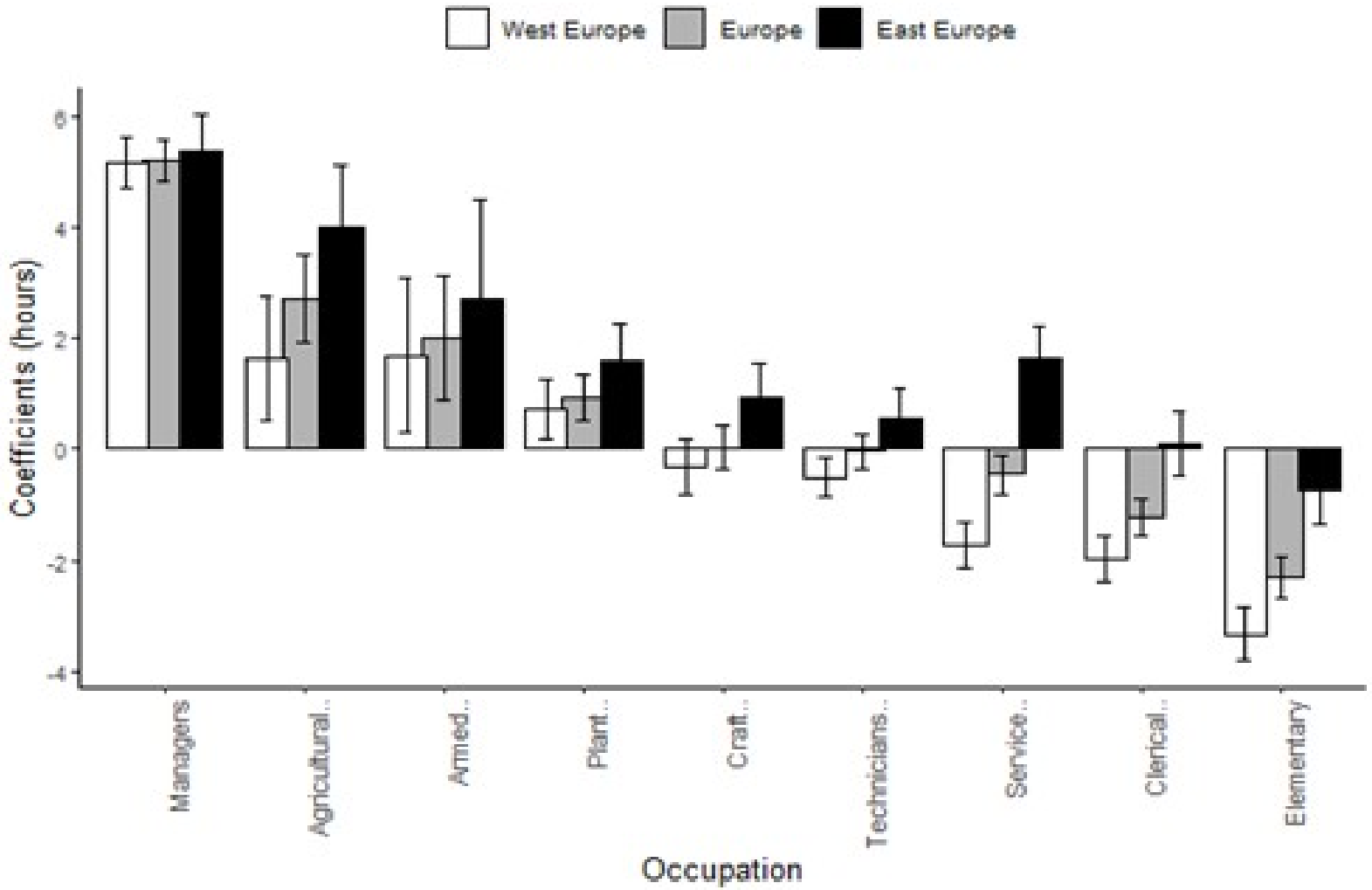
  - **Regional inequality** and **union strength** shape WH differences.

Occupations-based differences



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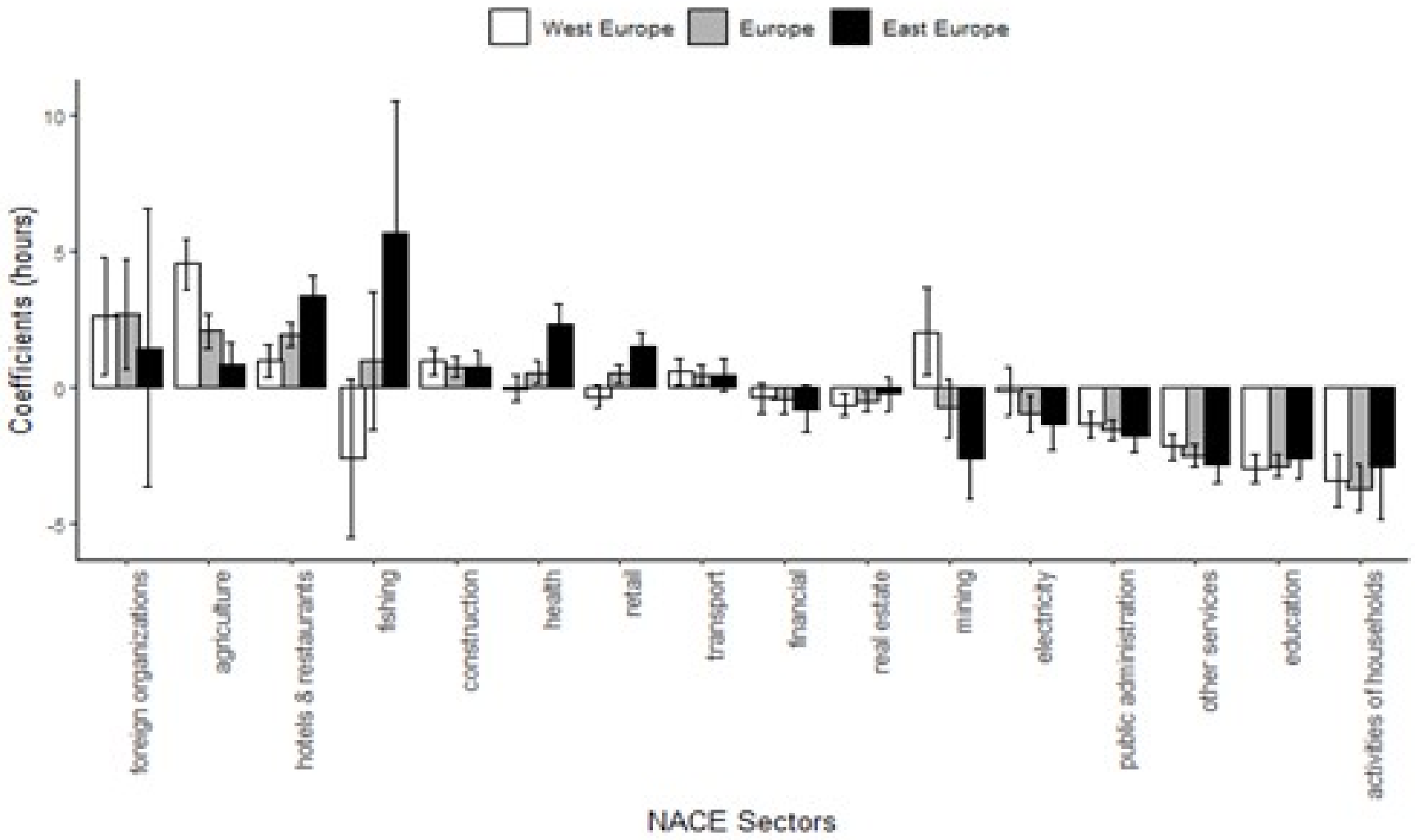

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- Emigration in EE increases managers' WH due to small firm dominance.
- Immigration in WE reduces managers' WH but increases WH (relatively) in construction, hospitality, and retail.

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