

# Women's Involuntary Part-Time Employment and Household Economic Security in Europe

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**To cite this article:** Lara Maestriperi (2023) Women's Involuntary Part-Time Employment and Household Economic Security in Europe, *Feminist Economics*, 29:4, 223-251, DOI: [10.1080/13545701.2023.2251991](https://doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2023.2251991)

**To link to this article:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2023.2251991>



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Published online: 12 Dec 2023.



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# WOMEN'S INVOLUNTARY PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC SECURITY IN EUROPE

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*Lara Maestripieri*

## ABSTRACT

The rate of involuntary part-time work among women has increased sharply. Scholars have demonstrated its links with diminished career opportunities, deteriorated working conditions, and low pay at an individual level. However, less attention has been paid to the effects of these contracts on economic security at the household level. This article investigates to what extent women being in part-time work involuntarily hinders their household's ability to attain reasonable living standards and examines whether this would be any different if women were in part-time employment voluntarily. The results show that part-time work in itself does not necessarily constitute a threat to household economic security, but when it is involuntary, part-time employment jeopardizes a household's financial well-being. This occurs in countries that deregulated peripheral corners of their labor markets, or "dualized" countries such as Italy, Spain, and France, and fully liberalized countries, such as Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

## KEYWORDS

Economic security, economic insecurity, poverty, involuntary part-time work, dualization, women and work

JEL Codes: I31, I32, J16

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Dualization refers to application of deregulation in peripheral corners of labor markets, increasing the precariousness of only certain categories of workers.
- In dualized and fully liberalized European countries, women's involuntary part-time work threatens households' economic security.
- It is the involuntary nature of part-time work, and not just reduced work hours, which lowers household economic security.

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- Countries should implement forms of monetary support for low-work-intensity households.

## INTRODUCTION

One of the long-term trends of the post-industrial transformation has been a decrease in working hours. Average annual working hours have dropped globally from the 2,600 h worked/year before WWII to the current 1,400/1,800. Before the 1970s, this drop was mainly attributed to cuts in collective working times (Maddison 2001). Since the 1970s, it can be almost entirely explained by the rise in part-time employment (Boulin, Lallement, and Michon 2006), which is primarily performed by women (Tijdens 2002; Bardasi and Gornick 2008) and is increasingly involuntary (Pech, Klainot-Hess, and Norris 2021). Focusing on the European Union average (twenty-eight countries), involuntary part-time work represented 17.2 percent of total part-time employment in 2002 and 23.6 percent in 2018, while peaking its maximum in 2014 right after the 2008–14 crises, with 29.6 percent.<sup>1</sup> Several theories have been put forward in the social sciences to explain this (Tijdens 2002): the main explanation is usually the gender-roles model, resulting from a family-work balance in which women specialize in unpaid domestic work and engage in complementary paid work (Insarauto 2021). However, more recent empirical evidence also highlights the secondary-labor market model for explaining the growth in part-time employment – at least in certain countries in Europe (Maestriperi and León 2019; Insarauto 2021). From this last perspective, part-time work is associated with job insecurity, poor wages, and poor working conditions, all more likely when the situation is not voluntary (Horemans and Marx 2013; Horemans, Marx, and Nolan 2016; Bell and Blanchflower 2019). Despite its consequences on individual poverty being clear in the literature, to date no studies exist on the specific role of women's involuntary part-time employment on household economic security.

This article focuses on involuntary part-time work, to examine its relationship with the economic security of households, hypothesizing that involuntary part-time work is more likely to have negative consequences on household economic security than voluntary part-time work. Following Joseph E. Stiglitz, Amartya Sen, and Jean-Paul Fitoussi (2009), there are two main ways of measuring economic security: one looks at the risks that a household should be able to face, the other highlights its economic consequences. In this article, we opt for the first approach. Following Lars Osberg and Andrew Sharpe, we define *economic security* as the “access to resources needed for a decent standard of living” (2005: 312). A household is economically secure when it is neither in a condition of poverty or of economic insecurity. Economic insecurity is when a household is exposed to difficulties in coping with the running expenses necessary to cover

basic needs (Western et al. 2012; Osberg 2015; Ranci et al. 2021). The concept has been widely debated in the social sciences and has been linked to similar (partially overlapping) concepts such as material deprivation, economic hardship, economic stress, or financial strain. In this article, we consider that a household is economically insecure when it has difficulties in paying bills or unexpected expenses, or feels unable to make ends meet – despite not being officially counted as in poverty, since the household's equivalized income is over 60 percent of the country's median income. Distinguishing economic insecurity from poverty is particularly relevant at a conceptual level: although these conditions are intrinsically and causally related, households that are just above the poverty line but face difficulties meeting daily living costs are very different from households that have sufficient resources to cover their basic needs. Economic insecurity affects more households than poverty does and is a growing phenomenon, especially among the middle classes (Ranci et al. 2021).

I argue that involuntary part-time work is negatively associated with household economic security. In theory, women's part-time work is not necessarily a threat for household economic security. It can be a voluntary and reversible choice on the part of a person to work part-time in order to reconcile work and home life at specific times in their life cycle (for example, illness, study, or maternity). In these cases, offering a part-time schedule can be a tactic used by employers to retain valued employees (Tijdens 2002). But this is not always the case. Especially in post-crisis periods (Maestripieri and León 2019; Insarauto 2021), part-time work might become a flexibilization strategy that women are subjected to unwillingly by employers and the only alternative to unemployment. I argue that in these cases, women's part-time work is a potential risk for their entire households, since it can threaten their economic security. The highly gendered nature of part-time work transfers its disadvantages and penalties disproportionately to women's work (Warren 2015). Although men are subject to the worst consequences of involuntary part-time employment in terms of career perspectives and occupational segregation, women are much more likely than men to work in involuntary part-time positions (Pech, Klainot-Hess, and Norris 2021). Therefore, focusing only on women makes sense: women are the primary target for part-time employment, the majority of people working part-time involuntarily, and hence the consequences of women's involuntary part-time work are greater (Tijdens 2002; Bardasi and Gornick 2008). Thus, my argument is twofold: firstly, women's involuntary part-time employment does not only negatively influence individual poverty risks, as previously assessed in the literature (Warren 2004; Bardasi and Gornick 2008; Bárcena-Martín and Moro-Egido 2013; Bell and Blanchflower 2019; Nightingale 2019), but also the economic security of the households in which they live (Horemans and Marx 2013; Warren 2015; Horemans, Marx, and Nolan 2016). Second, I

argue that the consequences of their involuntary part-time employment are harsher on their households' economic security than when it is chosen voluntarily (for whatever the reason).

Six countries were included in the study, each displaying different part-time work conditions for women: Austria, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland (countries with a prevalence of voluntary part-time work), and France, Italy, and Spain (where involuntary part-time work is prevalent). The results of the multinomial model show that compared to other types of employment contracts, women's involuntary part-time work increases the likelihood of household economic insecurity in Italy, Spain, France, and the UK. Involuntary part-time employment sharply increases the likelihood of poverty in all of the countries considered. The empirical strategy also tests the possible effects of the different compositions of voluntary and involuntary part-time workers through counterfactual analysis, measuring the difference in the likelihood of voluntary and involuntary part-time workers suffering economic insecurity. When contrasted with voluntary part-time work, involuntary part-time work is significantly affecting economic security in all countries except Austria, for which the difference between voluntary and involuntary part-time work is not significant.

## BACKGROUND

### **The ambiguous dual nature of part-time work**

Part-time work is not always the equivalent of full-time employment but for fewer hours, voluntarily chosen by workers (Nightingale 2019). Although different labels are used to identify types of part-time employment, there is a certain agreement on its dual nature (Tilly 1992; Tjzens 2002; Webber and Williams 2008; Buehler, O'Brien, and Walls 2011; Warren and Lyonette 2018; Nicolaisen, Kavli, and Jensen 2019; Nightingale 2019). "Secondary" part-time work reflects contracts made for fewer than thirty hours/week, with lower hourly pay than the equivalent full-time job (thirty-plus hours), scarce career prospects, and a concentration on manual and unskilled services. "Retention" part-time contracts are used by employers as a strategy for keeping workers who prefer not to work full time (for whatever the reason). They usually involve medium-skilled or high-skilled white-collar workers, who had been hired on a full-time basis and then negotiated fewer hours (Tilly 1992; Webber and Williams 2008). In theory, a rational worker will only accept "retention" part-time work voluntarily. However, the reality is more complex: "secondary" part-time jobs may also be taken "voluntarily" by women who cannot or do not want to work full time because of care responsibilities and preferences, personal health, or education.

As a matter of fact, one cannot assume that part-time work is a “real” preference for fewer working hours. Voluntariness can be ambiguous – especially when considering women and their relationship with part-time work to facilitate care. Several feminist and institutional research scholars have debated to what extent women have a real choice to work part time, or are just forced to do so by the highly gendered distribution of unpaid work (Ginn et al. 1996), gender arrangements (Pfau-Effinger 1993, 1998), class (Warren 2000; McRae 2003), and the institutions that regulate labor markets (Fagan and Rubery 1996).

The debate over voluntariness in women’s part-time work has been fierce ever since Catherine Hakim’s important work (1991), in which she distinguishes between *grateful slaves* (oriented to family life, with low levels of commitment to work) and *self-made women* (oriented to a continuous life-cycle work pattern) based on women’s preference for homemaker careers over commitment to work. Birgit Pfau-Effinger (1993, 1998) focuses on the dominant gender culture to explain differences in attitudes to part-time work across countries. In turn, Colette Fagan and Jill Rubery (1996) take an institutional perspective, and explain the difference in part-time working patterns as produced and reinforced by labor market institutions. Gender norms prescribing the “correct” number of working hours for women are thus determined by the interplay of gender culture and institutions (Pfau-Effinger 1998). Women are thus structurally compelled to take part-time work because labor markets are incompatible with unpaid work (Ginn et al. 1996; McRae 2003). Susan McRae (2003) demonstrates that women with similar characteristics may have different employment patterns and outcomes, depending on their work-life balance constraints – their preferences are “accommodated” and not “real” (Gash 2008). As argued by Tracey Warren (2000), class is paramount in understanding diversity in women working part time.

The fact that some people voluntarily choose part-time work does not negate a basic point: the weakest workers get the worst jobs, which is the case for many women (Crompton and Harris 1998). Indeed, the distribution of part-time work does not only depend on workers opting for it, but also on the availability of part-time work in the labor market (Fagan and Rubery 1996). Kea G. Tijdens (2002) distinguishes four regimes to explain the dual nature of part-time employment: in the supply-side driven regime, women voluntarily accepting part-time work depends on gender roles in the family. In demand-side driven regimes, firms create part-time jobs in low-wage and high-turnover sectors (the secondary labor market regime), at times in response to fluctuations in workload (the optimal staffing regime), and sometimes in response to workers’ demands for reduced hours (the responsive firm regime). Only in two of these regimes is part-time work apparently accepted voluntarily by the worker (the gender role regime and the responsive firm regime; Tijdens 2002). In sum, from a

supply-side perspective, part-time work can be an adaptive strategy, chosen by women to facilitate their work-life balance, or a detrimental strategy created at the expense of women's work by an institutional system that still consider the he-works/she-cares model as the norm (Buehler, O'Brien, and Walls 2011).

Although it is true that part-time work has expanded in many countries, its nature and status depends on what is being promoted in each one (Fagan et al. 2014). Part-time work contracts were introduced at different times across Europe and took on different meanings. In countries where the work/family balance started to be an issue in the 1960s and 1970s, such as Scandinavian countries, the favorable economic situation in that period facilitated the introduction of part-time work as a retention strategy (Ellingsaeter and Leira 2006). But in continental and southern Europe, the massive introduction of part-time contracts began in the 1980s in conjunction with deregulation processes. Especially in southern Europe, its diffusion was closely linked to broader process of dualization, making involuntary part-time work more prevalent in dualized countries (Maestripieri and León 2019). The term dualization refers to countries that applied deregulation in peripheral corners of the labor markets, with the effect of increasing the precariousness of only certain categories of workers. The protection given to insiders implied a *hyper-guaranteeism* for male adults who more frequently worked in primary sectors as full-time dependent employees, consequently marginalizing women (part-time workers) as outsiders (Emmenegger et al. 2012). Scholars from this school (Rueda 2005; Rueda, Wibbels, and Altamirano 2015; Nicolaisen, Kavli, and Jensen 2019) explicitly highlight voluntary/involuntary part-time work as the main threshold that differentiates insiders from outsiders. Dualization scholars usually classify southern and continental European countries as dualized. Conversely, countries such as the UK are classified as liberalized since in their labor markets all contracts are deregulated (Prosser 2016).

However, if no assumptions can be made from the fact that only good quality part-time jobs are accepted voluntarily by workers, involuntary part-time work is an unequivocal signal that workers are dissatisfied with their current working hours and would prefer full-time positions. Although a great deal of research has been carried out on voluntary part-time work and mothering, relatively less attention has been devoted to women's involuntary part-time work (Pech, Klainot-Hess, and Norris 2021). Distinguishing between voluntary and involuntary part-time work, as we have demonstrated, is not straightforward, but there is a certain consensus that "secondary" part-time work can be more easily identified by its involuntary nature. Already in 1992, Chris Tilly used voluntariness in part-time work as a way to distinguish between "secondary" and "retention" part-time employment, and more recent studies confirm the heuristic validity of voluntariness for assessing the nature of part-time labor (Horemans

and Marx 2013; Fagan et al. 2014; Bell and Blanchflower 2019). More recently, numerous studies have demonstrated that part-time work can be used as a flexibilization strategy to contain costs and adjust labor to the economic cycle (Buehler, O'Brien, and Walls 2011; Bredtmann, Otten, and Rulff 2018; Insarauto 2021), with workers involuntarily accepting it in the absence of better full-time positions. In terms of pay and conditions, involuntary part-time work is precarious (Nicolaisen, Kavli, and Jensen 2019). Despite recognizing and agreeing with previous studies that women's part-time work is intimately connected to the gender division of labor, the empirical evidence reviewed has also demonstrated how being employed part time despite a preference for full-time employment work (that is, involuntarily) or not (not declaring explicitly a preference for full-time work, whatever is the reason) impact workers' economic security, at least in the short term. Therefore, I hypothesize that women's involuntary part-time work has negative consequences on household economic security compared to voluntary part-time work.

### **Involuntary part-time work as a threat to economic security**

Industrial-era social protection was designed on the assumption that financial difficulties are mostly caused by exclusion from the labor market. But in the context of post-industrial society, the capacity of labor to protect people from poverty has diminished (Taylor-Gooby, Gummy, and Otto 2015; Sissons, Green, and Lee 2018). This is primarily because there is a growing number of workers in casual employment, which is insufficient to secure basic needs; and second, because the system of social protection inherited from industrial society is not designed to protect workers from the risks of insecure employment, but only from being unemployed (Ranci and Maestripieri 2022). Working part-time has been recognized as one of the factors that places people at the risk of low pay (Bardasi and Gornick 2008); and rather than unemployment, poverty and economic insecurity have been increasingly associated with the problem of low and intermittent pay (Nightingale 2019). Jeroen Horemans and Ive Marx (2013) argue that the likelihood of having contracts that increase in-work poverty risks (such as fixed-term or low-paid contracts) and of living in household settings that increase economic insecurity (such as living alone or with dependent children) is greater among women working part time, especially if they are in involuntary part time. Colette Fagan et al. (2014) argue that part-time workers are more than twice as exposed to the risk of poverty as full-time workers. This not only occurs because they have lower weekly earnings due to shorter hours, but because their jobs are less stable and have less coverage against unemployment. David Bell and David Blanchflower (2019) show that involuntary part-timers are usually also low-paid workers, with a higher risk of falling into the category



of the in-work poor. Warren (2015) focuses on underemployment in the UK, that is, people who work fewer hours than desired. She explicitly links underemployment with workers' inability to maintain decent living standards in the short and longer term. Among all categories of workers, underemployed people showed the highest propensity to live in households experiencing financial difficulty. Jeroen Horemans, Ive Marx, and Brian Nolan (2016) find that involuntary part-time workers are more likely to be poor in almost all countries in Europe and, in many cases, there is no statistical difference between their risk of poverty and that of people currently unemployed – confirming Roger Wilkins (2007) previous results on Australia. They also demonstrated that during the crisis, the increase of in-work poverty among part-time workers was mainly driven by the growth of involuntary part-time work.

The first factor that influences the relationship between economic security and involuntary part-time work is a country's institutional setting. Voluntary and involuntary part-time work coexists in all labor markets, but the prevalence of one type over the other varies between countries. Maite Blázquez Cuesta and Julián Moral Carcedo (2014) show that part-time workers have a higher probability of facing job losses or non-employment, but this is more frequent in southern Europe. Anne Green and Ilias Livanos (2017) show that involuntary non-standard employment (including fixed-term as well as part-time contracts) has been growing steadily in countries that have dualized occupational structures, such as in southern and continental Europe. They suggest that higher employment protection for primary workers increases the likelihood of being in involuntary non-standard employment (Green and Livanos 2017). Horemans, Marx, and Nolan (2016) and Lara Maestripieri and Margarita León (2019) show that the growth in involuntary part-time employment after the economic crisis has been largely concentrated in southern Europe. In Italy and Spain, the majority of part-time contracts offered to women are accepted involuntarily, unlike in northern or continental Europe (Maestripieri and León 2019). Elena Bárcena-Martín and Ana I. Moro-Egido (2013) found that in countries where women have more involuntary part-time employment than men, the risk of poverty is relatively higher for women.

A second factor influencing the relationship between economic security and involuntary part-time work is family configuration. The penalizing nature of part-time work is magnified by household composition, with the risk of poverty being higher when the part-time worker is the primary earner in the household (Fagan et al. 2014), as observed in the results of Horemans and Marx (2013). Marianna Filandri and Emanuela Struffolino (2018) highlight that there is a positive correlation between rates of involuntary part-time work and in-work poor households, confirming the interrelations between an individual's integration in the labor market and the lack of economic security suffered by their entire household.

However, previous studies – with the significant exception of Filandri and Struffolino (2018), Horemans and Marx (2013) and Horemans, Marx, and Nolan (2016) – all focus on the possible magnifying effect determined by household configuration on the individual risk of poverty prompted by involuntary part-time employment. Indeed, the literature has under-investigated the relationship between women’s involuntary part-time work and the risk of financial difficulties suffered at the household level.

I thus contend that involuntary part-time work is a threat to the economic security of the entire household, and not simply an individual problem. Although I agree with Arne L. Kalleberg that “not having a job at all is the ultimate form of work precarity” (2009: 6), I maintain that having less work than desired constitutes a significant source of risk, which plays a role in explaining the economic insecurity suffered by households. But the risk that involuntary part-time work poses to the economic security of a family depends on the institutional configuration of part-time employment in a given country, so that countries with different rates of voluntary/involuntary part-time employment will show different outcomes.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

This study analyzes the relationship between women’s involuntary part-time work and economic security measured at the household level. Following Osberg and Sharpe (2005), in this article economic security is the capacity of the household to achieve a standard of living that protects its members from financial strain. Involuntary part-time work occurs when a person works part-time for economic reasons when they would like to work full time (Pech, Klainot-Hess, and Norris 2021).

### Data and population

The analysis uses microdata from European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), wave 2016. EU-SILC is a well-established source of comparative data about household and individual income and living conditions in Europe and is representative of European households (surveying twenty-eight countries, with a minimum effective sample size of around 135,000 households in the EU as a whole). It offers extensive information and measurements about income, poverty, and economic insecurity in a comparable way across European countries. In 2016, the samples were the following: 6,000 individuals in Austria, 11,459 in France, 14,240 in Spain, 7,762 in Switzerland, 9,711 in the UK (official sample size for Italy not released, source: GESIS). I chose the 2016 dataset for the presence of the ad-hoc “Access to Service” module, in which there is a control variable included in the model that asks interviewees how many hours of care they provide personally per week.

The analysis is restricted to active women ages 25–55, as they are more likely than older and younger women to be involuntary (rather than voluntary) part-time workers (Huete-Morales and Vargas-Jiménez 2017). This is due to several reasons. First, individuals under age 25 are for the most part still inactive because they are often full-time students. Second, workers age 55 and over have already begun reducing their activity in the labor market. Quite often, there are specific incentives to favor the part-time employment of older workers to avoid earlier retirement. So, the phenomenon of involuntary part-time work is particularly relevant in prime working age, as shown in Appendix Table A2.

Women are only included in the analysis if they head the household or are the partner of the head of the household. In the Appendix, I have provided Table A1 with the weighted sample for each country.

### **The choice of countries**

In the analysis, I consider six countries included in EU-SILC: Austria, Italy, France, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK. The six countries were chosen because they have a sufficient number of women in involuntary part-time work to permit the multivariate analysis made in the results section.<sup>2</sup> The six countries differ in terms of the prevalence of voluntary and involuntary part-time work among the employed population of women.

Italy and Spain are among the countries that have the lowest rates of women's participation in the labor market, but the highest incidences of involuntary part-time work compared to women's employment as a whole (19.2 percent for Italy and 14.7 percent for Spain in 2016, see Table A2). Although France has a higher rate of women's labor market participation, it is quite similar in terms of the incidence of involuntary part-time work compared to women's employment as a whole (12.4 percent). The other three countries (Austria, the UK, and Switzerland) have a much lower incidence of involuntary part-time work compared to women's employment as a whole – around 5 percent): employed women frequently work part time, but in most cases this is voluntary (whatever the reason).

### **The dependent variable**

The dependent variable in this article includes three categories: households in situations of poverty, economically insecure households (who do not live in situations of poverty), and economically secure households – defined as households that are not suffering either poverty or economic insecurity. Poverty is measured using the at-risk-of-poverty variable, a derived variable available in EU-SILC 2016. This variable measures if the household in which the person lives has an equivalized disposable income under 60 percent of the country's median income.

The categories are mutually exclusive: households are classed as being in poverty if their income is below the poverty threshold. Economically insecure households are ones that find it difficult to maintain a decent standard of living but that have an equivalized income over 60 percent of the country's median income. Economically secure households have an equivalized income over 60 percent of the country's median income and do not experience any difficulties in maintaining a decent standard of living.

Economic insecurity is measured using an additive index of three variables: whether the household is unable to meet an unexpected expense (the amount differing depending on the country); vulnerability in making ends meet, namely whether the household makes ends meet with difficulty or great difficulty; and vulnerability to arrears in bills, that is, if the household is unable to pay current utility bills. I follow A. B. Atkinson's union approach (2003), reprised by Sabina Alkire and James Foster (2011), and consider all households suffering from at least one of the previous dimensions of instability to be economically insecure. The economic insecurity index combines subjective measures (the ability to "make ends meet") with objective measures (inability to pay for an unexpected expense and arrears in utility bills). Despite the condition of economic insecurity lying in the grey area between poverty and security, the dependent variable cannot be conceptually conceived as an ordinal variable, as distances between the three conditions are unknown: in the following analysis, it will be treated as a categorical variable.

The level of analysis is an open question in the debate on gender and poverty: poverty and economic security are concepts that concern households, while gender is an individual characteristic (Bárcena-Martín and Moro-Egido 2013). Feminist authors underline the need to focus on the individual level to correctly estimate gender differences in exposure to the phenomenon, but current measures do not always allow for a genuine analysis of economic insecurity at the individual level. In EU-SILC, the variables for measuring economic insecurity available are only at the household level: to bypass this methodological limitation, I opted to focus my analysis on the population of women alone, using the presence of partners and children in the household as a control. Second, by keeping the dependent variables measured at the household level, it was possible to explore the influence of women's involuntary part-time work at the household level, which is the particular innovation of this article.

### **Empirical strategy**

The main independent variable measures women's employment status, with a specific focus on involuntary part-timers. I categorize involuntary part-time workers as all workers who are employed for fewer than thirty hours/week and, when asked about their reasons for not working a full-time

schedule, answer that they work part time because a job with more hours was not available or in their current job they could not work more hours. I consider everyone expressing other motivations for their reduced working hours to be voluntary part-timers: care for dependent family members, illness/disability, education, or personal choice. Where the motivation is unavailable, I consider the person to be employed part time on a voluntary basis. If people state that the schedule for their full-time job consists of fewer than thirty hours/week, I consider them to be employed full time.

The empirical strategy followed two steps: a multinomial logistic regression and a counterfactual control for involuntariness. In the first step, I ran a multinomial model including only active women (employed + seeking employment) to measure the influence of women's employment on the likelihood that the household in which they live is economically secure, insecure, or in poverty. I included unemployment in the model, as the condition that exposes families most to economic insecurity or poverty. I ran a separate model for each of the countries involved, assuming that the determinants might change in relation to the context.

The main independent variable is type of employment, measured using the following categories: standard worker (full-time dependent workers), other full-time non-standard workers (self-employed + temporary workers), voluntary part-timers, involuntary part-timers, and unemployed persons. The control variables are the following. Age in years is corrected by age squared in the hypothesis that age has a non-linear effect on part-time employment (Huete-Morales and Vargas-Jiménez 2017). Regarding other ascriptive variables, there is a dummy variable for migrant origin, which measures if the person was neither born in the country nor has the nationality of the country of residence. Education is measured in three bands: low (ISCED 0-2), medium (ISCED 3-4), and high (ISCED 5-8). Additional variables control for the composition of the household: a variable measuring the employment status of the partner (categories: no partner, standard employment, non-standard employment, and unemployed) interacts with the presence of children under 10 years of age. Care issues are further controlled for by a dummy that measures if the person personally provides care to dependent relatives (cohabitating and non-cohabitating family members). This variable is included in the ad-hoc 2016 "Access to Services" module. Finally, controls were performed for the decile of household income and living in rented accommodation. Details regarding the distribution of the independent variables are given in the Appendix (Table A3).

The second step is a counterfactual analysis comparing voluntary and involuntary part-time work, to assess to what extent the difference in the likelihood of economic security might be due to the different

compositions of the two populations of involuntary and voluntary part-timers. The counter-factual technique enables adjustments to be made for the individual's estimated propensity to be in involuntary part-time employment rather than voluntary part-time employment. I used treatment effect estimations, based on a logistic regression, including living in an economic secure household as a dependent variable, involuntary versus voluntary part-time work as a treatment, and the following control variables: education, age in years and age squared, migrant background, partner's employment, presence of children, personal care provision, household income decile, and rented accommodation. The results in Table 2 show the average treatment effect on the treated (ATET). No random assignment was made to the treatment and control groups, so no evidence can be inferred about the causal mechanisms of involuntary part time over economic security – nor it is the scope of this counterfactual analysis. It only stands as an additional control against the different composition of populations in voluntary and involuntary part-time work.

## RESULTS

The objective of the study is to investigate the relationship between women's involuntary part-time work and the economic security of the households in which they live. As highlighted in Table A3 in the Appendix, poverty affects 22.4 percent of the households in Spain and 16.7 percent in Italy, compared with around 10 percent of families in the other countries in our study. Economic insecurity is more diffuse: it affects between 20 and 30 percent of families in the countries studied. The lowest percentages of economically secure households are found in Spain and in Italy (around 50 percent), followed by the UK and France (around 60 percent), while about 70 percent of households in Austria and Switzerland do not suffer from economic insecurity nor poverty.

Table 1 shows the odds ratios, their significance, and the value of the robust standard error for each of the variables included in the multinomial regression. The findings show that in all of the countries studied, involuntary part-time employment increases the relative risks of being in poverty compared to a situation of economic security. However, involuntary part-time employment only increases the odds ratio of being in a financially insecure family compared to a secure one in France, the UK, Spain, and Italy. In Austria and Switzerland, the results are not significant. Voluntary part-time employment is not a threat to economic security in any of the countries considered. Involuntary part-time employment increases the likelihood of a household being in poverty in France, the UK, Spain, and Switzerland. Robust standard errors are quite high in France and Switzerland. Confirming previous results in the literature (Kalleberg 2009), being unemployed is the condition that most increases the likelihood of

poverty, but it is not true everywhere that it also increases the economic insecurity of a household.

Figure 1 shows the marginal effect of involuntary part-time employment on economic security, taken as a reference for the multinomial regression model in the previous table. Being employed on a full-time non-standard contract is only a source of risk for a household's economic security in Spain, where the impact that temporary work (included in this category) has on economic insecurity is well known (Huete-Morales and Vargas-Jiménez 2017). In all of the other countries, having a non-standard contract does not imply a significant reduction in household economic security compared to a standard employment relationship (SER in the figure) if the woman's non-standard contract is full time. The same occurs for voluntary part-time work: when women are employed voluntarily as part-time workers there is no significant evidence of a reduction in household economic security in any of the six countries considered. It might be worth mentioning that the causal mechanism regarding voluntary part-time work is unclear, as there may be some endogeneity. In other words, where there is a positive association of voluntary part-time work with economic security, it may not be because this type of contract leads to more economic security, but because people do not voluntarily take on part-time work unless they are already economically secure (Horemans, Marx, and Nolan 2016). The same occurs for the added worker effect, in which involuntary part-time work is explained as a reaction to an unemployed partner (Bredtmann, Otten, and Rulff 2018; Sánchez-Mira and O'Reilly 2019; Insarauto 2021). The empirical evidence shows that the effect of the absence of a partner or the presence of children under 14 years old might magnify the risks connected with women's involuntary part-time employment. The association between women's work and household economic security holds strong even in the case of the factors interacting (the case of single mothers).

However, involuntary part-time work does have an impact on a household's economic security. In Spain, France, and the UK, when women are involuntarily employed in part-time work, there is a significant reduction in the economic security of the entire household. In Italy, this is only slightly significant as it includes the 0 within the confidence interval. Conversely, in Austria and Switzerland, a woman being in involuntary part-time employment does not imply a significant reduction in economic security compared to a standard worker. In Austria, part-time work is not a significant predictor of either economic insecurity or poverty, regardless of whether it is voluntary or not. In Switzerland, voluntary part-time work is only slightly significant as it includes the 0 within the confidence interval. It is also true that the sample of women employed part-time involuntarily is small in Switzerland and Austria (fewer than 100 respondents), thus



Table 1 Multinomial logistic regression on family economic security – only women, models by countries. Baseline: economic security

<i>Economic insecure</i>	<i>AT</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>UK</i>	<i>ES</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>CH</i>
Other FT non-standard	0.953 (0.242)	0.853 (0.148)	0.671 (0.223)	1.396* (0.197)	0.849 (0.102)	1.326 (0.374)
Voluntary part-time	0.843 (0.146)	1.147 (0.173)	1.000 (0.123)	0.856 (0.155)	0.896 (0.120)	1.340 (0.263)
Involuntary part-time	1.918 (1.166)	1.724* (0.414)	2.369** (0.718)	1.884** (0.395)	1.414+ (0.272)	1.844 (1.086)
Unemployed	3.972*** (1.147)	1.480 (0.277)	1.376 (0.572)	1.582** (0.222)	2.570*** (0.346)	4.032*** (1.086)
<i>Ref. standard employment relation</i>						
Low edu (ISCED 1-2)	5.053*** (1.207)	3.405*** (0.647)	2.768*** (0.417)	3.302*** (0.410)	2.719*** (0.362)	5.880*** (1.845)
Medium (ISCED 3-4)	1.812*** (0.300)	2.173*** (0.246)	1.822*** (0.218)	1.998*** (0.252)	1.753*** (0.187)	2.353*** (0.436)
<i>Ref. high edu</i>						
Age at the date of the interview	1.204* (0.107)	1.231** (0.0820)	1.095 (0.0742)	0.996 (0.0698)	0.965 (0.0592)	1.249* (0.123)
Age * Age	0.998* (0.00110)	0.997** (0.000821)	0.999 (0.000836)	1.000 (0.000843)	1.001 (0.000733)	0.998* (0.00120)
Migrant background	1.642** (0.279)	1.492+ (0.335)	1.057 (0.147)	1.643** (0.266)	2.090*** (0.292)	2.392*** (0.405)
Standard employment relation (SER)	0.261** (0.109)	0.285*** (0.0776)	0.611 (0.271)	0.338*** (0.0852)	0.549* (0.142)	1.466 (0.758)
Non-standard work	0.249** (0.121)	0.257*** (0.0804)	0.490 (0.233)	0.372*** (0.102)	0.411** (0.115)	1.162 (0.656)
Single	0.338** (0.139)	0.300*** (0.0848)	0.890 (0.401)	0.414*** (0.111)	0.634+ (0.168)	1.602 (0.836)
<i>Ref. partner is not employed</i>						
At least 1 child	0.230 (0.207)	0.482 (0.224)	1.662 (1.080)	2.076* (0.749)	1.483 (0.654)	7.007* (5.483)
SER # 1. At least 1 child	4.211 (3.864)	3.393* (1.617)	1.084 (0.715)	0.685 (0.262)	0.686 (0.313)	0.154* (0.125)
Non-standard work # 1. At least 1 child	4.234 (4.232)	2.231 (1.179)	1.312 (0.920)	0.767 (0.317)	0.809 (0.389)	0.146* (0.134)
Single # 1. At least 1 child	5.825+ (5.535)	6.061*** (3.283)	1.594 (1.097)	0.764 (0.347)	0.733 (0.361)	0.256 (0.221)

(Continued)



Table 1 Continued.

<i>Economic insecure</i>	<i>AT</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>UK</i>	<i>ES</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>CH</i>
<i>Ref. partner is not employed* At least 1 child</i>						
The person personally provides care	1.283 (0.321)	1.125 (0.159)	1.494* (0.253)	1.212 (0.194)	1.170 (0.179)	1.089 (0.241)
HH net income in decile	0.798*** (0.0288)	0.774*** (0.0215)	0.784*** (0.0201)	0.765*** (0.0197)	0.860*** (0.0196)	0.796*** (0.0350)
Household rent the house = 1	2.012*** (0.309)	2.290*** (0.266)	2.898*** (0.344)	1.784*** (0.278)	2.207*** (0.254)	2.036*** (0.403)
<i>Poverty</i>	<i>AT</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>UK</i>	<i>ES</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>CH</i>
Other FT non-standard	2.022 (0.874)	1.954* (0.570)	0.992 (0.427)	2.718*** (0.817)	1.113 (0.277)	4.616*** (2.115)
Voluntary part-time	1.392 (0.480)	2.793** (0.923)	1.621 <sup>+</sup> (0.442)	1.776 <sup>+</sup> (0.606)	1.614 (0.526)	2.347* (0.791)
Involuntary part-time	5.207* (3.930)	5.849*** (2.550)	3.724** (1.779)	3.073** (1.223)	2.420** (0.773)	5.003 <sup>+</sup> (4.111)
Unemployed	7.308*** (3.110)	5.986*** (1.660)	6.186*** (3.037)	4.377*** (1.159)	3.720*** (0.985)	3.142* (1.565)
<i>Ref. standard employment relation</i>						
Low edu (ISCED 1-2)	5.018*** (2.149)	4.329*** (1.434)	2.727*** (0.795)	4.774*** (1.098)	3.306*** (0.895)	14.42*** (7.491)
Medium (ISCED 3-4)	1.134 (0.323)	3.290*** (0.799)	1.475 (0.376)	2.075** (0.504)	1.730* (0.439)	2.640** (0.820)
<i>Ref. High Edu</i>						
Age at the date of the interview	1.636** (0.256)	2.005*** (0.246)	1.747*** (0.223)	1.301* (0.174)	1.025 (0.109)	1.102 (0.166)
Age * Age	0.994** (0.00190)	0.992*** (0.00150)	0.994*** (0.00157)	0.998 (0.00163)	1.000 (0.00133)	0.999 (0.00189)
Migrant background	2.411** (0.680)	3.092*** (1.025)	0.976 (0.264)	2.844*** (0.742)	1.557* (0.337)	1.739 <sup>+</sup> (0.528)

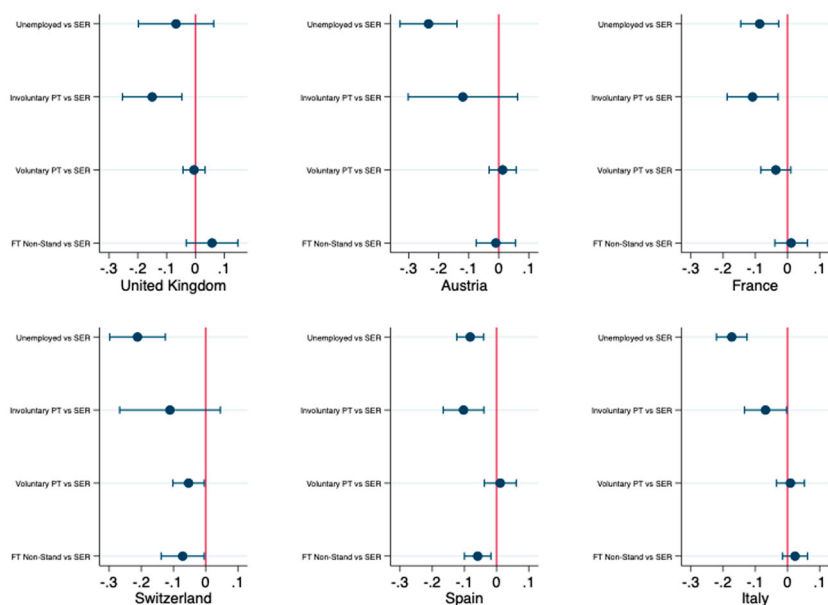
(Continued)

Table 1 Continued.

Poverty	AT	FR	UK	ES	IT	CH
Standard employment relation (SER)	0.344 (0.254)	0.196* (0.135)	1.638 (1.022)	0.424 <sup>+</sup> (0.192)	0.683 (0.397)	0.0993*** (0.0686)
Non-standard work	0.810 (0.532)	0.272* (0.176)	0.868 (0.564)	0.468 <sup>+</sup> (0.212)	0.336 <sup>+</sup> (0.191)	0.0909*** (0.0645)
Single	0.0458*** (0.0309)	0.0347*** (0.0198)	0.178** (0.101)	0.0502*** (0.0215)	0.0268*** (0.0128)	0.0308*** (0.0184)
Ref.Partner is not employed						
At least 1 child	3.215 (3.053)	2.516 (2.029)	44.29*** (35.36)	9.006*** (4.574)	2.618 (1.722)	2.872 (2.953)
SER # 1. At least 1 child	0.445 (0.485)	1.252 (1.166)	0.0912** (0.0798)	0.250* (0.161)	0.295 (0.244)	4.158 (5.165)
Non-standard work # 1. At least 1 child	0.331 (0.382)	1.327 (1.192)	0.157 <sup>+</sup> (0.150)	0.571 (0.344)	1.515 (1.265)	4.857 (6.542)
Single # 1. At least 1 child	2.119 (2.132)	2.485 (2.174)	0.190* (0.161)	0.922 (0.584)	1.452 (1.035)	3.270 (3.733)
Ref. partner is not employed * At least 1 child						
The person personally provides care	1.215 (0.505)	0.746 (0.198)	1.564 (0.503)	1.233 (0.361)	1.349 (0.524)	0.962 (0.368)
HH net income in decile	0.131*** (0.0390)	0.133*** (0.0186)	0.0885*** (0.0156)	0.0810*** (0.0100)	0.0692*** (0.00967)	0.0847*** (0.0252)
Household rent the house = 1	0.785 (0.259)	1.763** (0.386)	3.094*** (0.731)	1.959** (0.464)	1.721** (0.358)	0.448* (0.158)
Observations	2,112	3,914	3,303	5,160	5,987	2,420

Source: Author’s elaborations from EU-SILC microdata, 2016. Population ages 25–55. Relative risk ratios, robust standard error in parenthesis. <sup>+</sup>, \*, \*\*, \*\*\* denote statistical significance at the 10, 5, 1, and 0.1 percent levels, respectively.

## WOMEN'S INVOLUNTARY PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT



*Figure 1* Difference in Average Marginal Effect of living in an economic secure family by comparing women's LM status with standard work as reference. Only women, models by countries

*Source:* Authors' elaborations from EU-SILC microdata, 2016. Population ages 25–55.

potentially affecting the results of the regression model, as shown by the wider confidence intervals compared to the other countries.

But is it the involuntary nature of part-time work that matters for economic insecurity? Or is it just having reduced working hours? The difference between voluntary and involuntary part-time employment might be related to the different composition of the two populations, which could change in terms of educational level, the partner's labor market participation, a migrant background, or other personal and household characteristics. It could be argued that in labor markets where part-time employment is abundant and prevalently voluntary (Austria, Switzerland, and the UK), involuntary part-timers are highly selected populations, with low education and skill levels, and vulnerabilities that make them more exposed to a loss of economic security. To test the possible effects of the different compositions of voluntary and involuntary part-time workers, a counterfactual analysis has been made of the difference in likelihood of voluntary and involuntary part-timers suffering economic insecurity.

When all the observed differences within the two populations of part-time workers are taken into account and controlled for (Table 2), the

*Table 2* Treatment effect estimations, voluntary versus involuntary parttime on the probability of being in a condition of economic security (ATET). Estimator: regression adjustment. Only women, models by countries

	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>P.</i>	<i>P0 mean</i>	<i>P.</i>	<i>Obs.</i>
Austria	− 0.0873445	0.0701027	0.213	0.6873445	0.000	846
France	− 0.1219652	0.0382957	<b>0.001</b>	0.4481684	0.000	740
United Kingdom	− 0.0865795	0.0425993	<b>0.042</b>	0.3705301	0.000	1.086
Spain	− 0.0744654	0.031194	<b>0.017</b>	0.3964028	0.000	850
Italy	− 0.0693897	0.0296422	<b>0.019</b>	0.4402506	0.000	1.142
Switzerland	− 0.1063386	0.0529809	<b>0.045</b>	0.6396719	0.000	995

*Source:* Author's elaborations from EU-SILC microdata, 2016. Population ages 25–55.

involuntary nature of part-time work displays a significant effect. The only exception is Austria. The difference between the two groups (voluntary versus involuntary) is significant in Spain, Italy, France, Switzerland, and the UK, such that involuntary part-timers suffer a reduction in household economic security of − 7.4 percent in Spain, − 6.9 percent in Italy, − 12.1 percent in France, − 10.6 percent in Austria, and − 7.5 percent in the UK, compared to households in which women are in voluntary part-time employment. Switzerland – which previously resulted not significant in the multinomial regression model – shows the significance of involuntariness in determining economical security (neither in poverty nor economically insecure). Since there is no random assignment to the treatment and control groups, the empirical evidence does not contribute to the explanation of the causal mechanism behind involuntary part-time work, nor it is the aim of this analysis.

In conclusion, the results have demonstrated that household economic security is influenced by women's labor market participation. Women's involuntary part-time work has a significant negative influence on the economic security of households in Italy, Spain, France, and the UK. However, once the different compositions of the population of voluntary and involuntary part-time workers are controlled for, the influence of voluntariness on economic security is demonstrated to be significant in comparison to voluntary part-time work in all countries except Austria. In these countries, the influence of involuntariness is confirmed: women's involuntary part-time work lowers the likelihood of them living in economically secure households.

## DISCUSSION

The previous section offered empirical evidence for the argument that women being in involuntary part-time work negatively influences the

economic security of their households. What matters in the relationship between part-time work and household economic security is its involuntary nature, but not in Austria.

Public transfers might explain the exception in Austria. The economic security of a household depends on intrahousehold solidarity mechanisms (Bredtmann, Otten, and Rulff 2018; Insarauto 2021) and the resources that households as collectives might receive from the state (Keck and Saraceno 2013). Austria has a social policy system that gives public support to mothers' long absences from the labor market and to part-time work after a child's birth. The beneficiaries receive flat-rate payments during leave, especially benefitting low-income women because of the higher degree of earnings replacement. However, the benefit is quite limited and does not ensure the mothers' economic independence. Parents are also entitled to take part-time work until the child reaches the age of 7: the most common pattern is for women to have a long break, followed by part-time employment, which is not limited to the first years of the children's lives but is a permanent arrangement (Berghammer 2014). The Austrian model fits into the so-called gender-regime model proposed by Tijdens' typology (2002): women engage in part-time work voluntarily, and they assume the role of secondary earners in the family. But the generous support of the state allows this strategy to avoid negative consequences for the economic security of the family, although it could be discussed to what extent long-term part-time employment is a "real" preference for these women.

In the UK and Switzerland, households' economic security depends more on the segment of the labor market of the part-time work rather than the involuntariness of the contract. In both countries, involuntary part-time work among women is less diffused than voluntary part-time work, and involuntary part-time employment tends to be more common for the lower classes (Fioretta and Rossier 2018; Warren and Lyonette 2018). Hence, the difference between voluntary and involuntary part-time work becomes significant once the different composition of the population is controlled for – thanks to the counterfactual analysis. Previous studies have confirmed that, in Switzerland, households in which only one member has a standard employment relationship suffer from financial difficulties more frequently than those in other continental countries such as France, Germany, Belgium, or Sweden (Fioretta and Rossier 2018). The UK shows a strong segmentation of the part-time labor market that is not observed in other countries (Warren 2000; Warren, Pascall, and Fox 2010). In these countries, the significance of involuntariness in part-time employment for the economic security of the household is consistent when compared to voluntary part-time work (– 8.6 percent in the UK and – 10.6 percent in Switzerland with 95 percent confidence intervals). For countries characterized by liberalized labor markets such as Switzerland and the UK,

the prevalent model of part-time work is thus the secondary-market model, following Tijdens (2002). However, it is important to stress that in both countries, the samples of involuntary part-time workers included are small and might affect the significance of the results.

In France, Italy, and Spain, the consequences of involuntary part-time work on household economic security depend on the institutional configuration of the country, as argued by the dualization thesis (Emmenegger et al. 2012). Unlike in the UK, Austria, and Switzerland, part-time work in those countries is not generally a voluntary option, but an involuntary condition determined by part-time work being used increasingly as a flexibilization strategy by firms (Kjeldstad and Nymoen 2012; Maestripieri and León 2019; Insarauto 2021). The dualization debate (Prosser 2016) has highlighted that one of the consequences of the 2008 financial crisis has been an exponential growth in involuntary part-time employment among women in these countries, only partially explained by the possible added worker effect (Bredtmann, Otten, and Rulff 2018; Sánchez-Mira and O'Reilly 2019; Insarauto 2021). The crisis led to an increase in part-time work being offered in the southern labor markets, due to flexibilization strategies (Horemans, Marx, and Nolan 2016; Insarauto 2021). The result is the increasing number of workers who find themselves involuntarily working part time for economic reasons, with all the negative consequences in terms of economic security for their households that this study highlights. In the absence of specific monetary transfers to families with a part-time employed member (as in Austria), it is thus not at all surprising that in these countries, the fact of women involuntarily working part time does not merely constitute an individual risk, but appears to constitute a major threat to household economic security. The diffusion of involuntary part-time employment among women makes the results particularly relevant in terms of reducing the economic security of their households compared to voluntary part-time work (−12.1 percent in France, with a 99% confidence interval, −7.4 percent in Spain and −6.9 percent in Italy, with a 95 percent confidence interval). What is unexpected is that France, a country with a long tradition of generous welfare state transfers, is showing the same trend, even more sharply than Spain and Italy. The prevalent model of part-time employment is thus the secondary-market model also in the case of dualized countries (Tijdens 2002), although they have a prevalence of involuntary part-time work over voluntary part-time work in their labor markets.

In conclusion, the empirical evidence demonstrates that women's involuntary part-time employment influences household economic security in countries that are more exposed to dualization, such as France, Italy, and Spain, and there is a significant difference with voluntary part-time employment in all of the countries considered, except Austria.

## CONCLUSIONS

The article sets out to study the relationship between women's involuntary part-time employment and the economic security of the households in which they live. The analysis was conducted using 2016 EU-SILC microdata for six countries and shows that women's involuntary part-time work lowers the likelihood of living in economically secure households in France, Italy, and Spain. In Switzerland and the UK, the findings point to a disadvantage suffered by the lowest segment of the part-time workers more than the involuntary part-time employment in itself. Austria is an exception, most likely due to the transfers that families receive when mothers are employed part time. In Switzerland, the UK, and Austria, however, involuntary part-time work among women is less common than voluntary part-time work compared to the other countries in the study, France, Italy, and Spain.

The analysis comes up with two main original findings: first, the findings show that involuntary part-time employment negatively influences the economic security of a household, going beyond the existing literature that analyzed this phenomenon in terms of women's individual poverty risk. Second, shifting attention from the individual to the household implies a change of perspective regarding part-time work. Involuntary part-time work is not just a problem for women but is a potential risk for the sustainability of the European social model, as it is stronger in certain institutional contexts than in others. The relevance of the phenomenon of involuntary part-time work in terms of its diffusion and its consequences on households' economic security in dualized and liberalized countries should question the current status that part-time employment has in terms of a flexibilization strategy (Kjeldstad and Nymoen 2012; Maestripieri and León 2019; Insarauto 2021).

In fact, the costs that flexibilization strategies entail are higher when accepting jobs that are inferior to one's work capacity (Wilson and Hadler 2017), since the increasing number of part-time jobs on offer include precariousness, heightening the risk of in-work poverty (although not everywhere and more likely in dualized countries; Prosser 2016). It is not at all surprising that the worst consequences of women's involuntary part-time work occur in countries in which households are more dependent on the market and less supported by the state, that is, the liberalized countries in our sample (Switzerland and the UK) or the dualized ones (Italy and Spain). If a household's members have difficulties obtaining a job that allows them to work enough hours, the household is easily exposed to financial difficulties if the state does not intervene. The case of Austria demonstrates the importance of targeted benefits to part-time employed mothers to protect the economic security of the households. However, involuntary part-time work is still not considered a social issue in the contemporary welfare state, unlike unemployment (Wilkins 2007).

Several limitations affect the research design presented in the article. First, it is not possible to eliminate possible omitted variables in the relationship, so there is no claim of a causal relationship between women's involuntary part-time work and household economic security, even when the possible risk of the endogeneity of voluntariness is included. Furthermore, causal interpretations are also challenging because the direction of the causality between involuntary part-time employment and household economic security is ambiguous. Recent studies have investigated the possible impact that the added worker effect has on women's desire to have a full-time job (Bredtmann, Otten, and Rulff 2018; Sánchez-Mira and O'Reilly 2019; Insarauto 2021); in this analysis, the model controls for the partner's status in the labor market. However, possible reverse causality might occur in this relationship. Finally, given the limitations caused by the selected respondent strategy in Scandinavian countries, the sample of involuntary part-time workers in these countries was too small to be included in this study. Including a country from a sociodemocratic welfare regime would have given more strength to my argument.

Future research directions should take into account the relationship between women's involuntary part-time work and the economic security of the household in a longitudinal perspective, especially in conjunction with biographical events such as the birth of a child or a partner losing a job, to fully understand key events happening in time and disentangle what comes first in the relationship between women's involuntary part-time work and a household's loss of economic security.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The article has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Grant Agreement No 747433.

## DATASET

EU-SILC 2016, Microdata with Ad-Hoc Module.

## FUNDING

This work was supported by H2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions [grant number 747433].

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Data refer to the indicator involuntary part-time employment as percentage of the total part-time employment, European Union twenty-eight countries, values for men and women (2002–14), Eurostat online data code: LFSA\_EPPGAI. The rate of involuntary part-time work on total part-time employment in 2016 was 26.4 percent. For women only: 24.5 percent.
- <sup>2</sup> The EU-SILC survey has a flexible design, thus allowing some countries to complete their data with information taken from registers. Nordic countries are “register countries,” using a “selected respondent” design. This means a limited number of persons give answers to question PL120 about reasons for part-time employment, because it is information which is not included in the register and is only available for the selected respondents (Jäntti, Törmälehto, and Marlier 2013). This is why no Scandinavian countries are included in the sample, as there are few cases in which the information on involuntariness is present.

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## APPENDIX

*Table A1* Samples used in the multinomial logistic regression – Only women, by country

<i>Household conditions</i>	<i>AT</i>	<i>CH</i>	<i>ES</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>UK</i>
Women in couple	634	566	3,635	4,570	3,276	4,600
Not-partnered women	228	256	975	1,715	1,373	1,499
Total	862	822	4,610	6,286	4,649	6,098

*Source:* Authors' elaborations from EU-SILC microdata, 2016. Population ages 25–55.

WOMEN'S INVOLUNTARY PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

*Table A2* Incidence of involuntary part-time over total employment – only women, by country and age

	<i>AT</i>	<i>CH</i>	<i>ES</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>UK</i>
Employment/population ratio						
15–64	67.7%	75.4%	55.1%	60.9%	48.1%	68.9%
Unemployment rate						
15–64	5.6%	5.1%	21.5%	9.9%	12.9%	4.8%
Unemployment rate						
15–64	9.1%	13.2%	26.4%	16.6%	14.6%	6.5%
Part-time employment (common definition) over total employment						
15–64	34.2%	43.5%	22.3%	21.7%	32.5%	36.4%
Incidence of involuntary part-time over total employment						
15–64	5.3%	4.7%	14.7%	12.4%	19.2%	4.5%
15–24	4.9%	-	24.6%	18.3%	34.5%	7.8%
25–54	5.4%	-	14.7%	11.6%	19.8%	3.9%
55–64	5.5%	-	12.2%	13.5%	12.9%	4.3%
Gender equality Index						
Overall	68	-	73.7	75.5	63.8	-
Care activities	62.7	-	74.5	70.4	61.2	-
Social power	53.6	-	75.1	74.2	47.5	-

*Source:* OECD – Labour statistics, 2016.

*Table A3* Descriptive statistics of the independent and dependent variables – only women, by country

	<i>AT</i>	<i>CH</i>	<i>ES</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>UK</i>
Average age	43	43	43	42	44	41
Economic insecurity						
Economic secure	68.7%	70.8%	48.5%	59.7%	51.8%	58.2%
Economic insecure	21.9%	20.3%	29.1%	29%	31.5%	32.5%
At risk of poverty	9.4%	8.8%	22.4%	11.3%	16.7%	9.3%
LM activity						
Standard Employment	44%	51.2%	40.1%	58.7%	47.4%	58.4%
FT non-standard	9.8%	7.7%	19.7%	14%	17.2%	5.9%
Voluntary PT	36.6%	31.3%	8.6%	13.3%	14.2%	29.1%
Involuntary PT	1.8%	3.4%	7.2%	4.3%	5.2%	2.4%
Unemployed	7.8%	6.3%	24.4%	9.8%	15.9%	4.2%
Education						
Low education (ISCED 1-2)	13.3%	10.1%	30.7%	10.7%	26.1%	15.8%
Medium (ISCED 3-4)	53%	48.3%	23.4%	41.2%	46.8%	30.4%
High Education (ISCED 5-8)	33.7%	41.6%	45.9%	48.1%	27.1%	53.8%
<i>Migrant background</i>						
Migrant	24.9%	40.2%	17.7%	10.1%	18.5%	21%
<i>Partner's LM activity</i>						
Not employed	4.4%	2.3%	13.3%	5%	6.5%	3.6%
Employed with standard contract	53.8%	53.5%	41.4%	51.8%	43.4%	56.7%
Employed with non-standard contract	14.9%	12.6%	23.8%	15.3%	20%	14.9%
No partner	27%	31.5%	21.4%	27.9%	30.2%	24.8%
<i>Children in the household</i>						
Children less than 10 y.o.	25.9%	28.9%	39.8%	41.1%	34.2%	37.4%
<i>The person personally provides care</i>						
Yes	9.7%	16.9%	9.6%	12.7%	6.8%	10.9%
<i>Income decile</i>						
1	10.3%	14.5%	11.5%	11.1%	10.3%	6.4%
2	9.4%	11.9%	10.9%	10.9%	10%	8.3%
3	10.3%	10.7%	10%	9.9%	9.4%	8.7%
4	9%	10.3%	10.5%	9.2%	9.3%	9.9%
5	9.5%	9.1%	10.2%	9.7%	8.4%	10.3%
6	9.9%	9.4%	10%	10.3%	9.8%	10%
7	10.7%	8.3%	9.5%	9.7%	10.4%	11%
8	9.6%	8.7%	8.9%	9.2%	10.7%	11.3%
9	9.9%	9.4%	9.7%	9.6%	11.1%	11.7%
10	11.4%	7.7%	8.9%	10.4%	10.5%	12.3%
<i>Housing tenure</i>						
Renting house	44.7%	64.7%	22.4%	36%	22.1%	34.5%
Absolute values	2112	2420	5160	3914	5987	3303

*Source:* Authors' elaborations from EU-SILC microdata, 2016. Population ages 25–55.