

The Fall in German Unemployment: A Flow Analysis*

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Abstract

In this paper we investigate the recent fall in unemployment, and the rise in part-time work, and labour market participation in Germany. Unemployment fell because the Hartz reforms induced a large fraction of the long-term unemployed to deregister as jobseekers and appear as non-participants. Female labour force participation increased because they accepted the low-paid, part-time jobs that were offered in quantity in absence of a universal minimum wage. Male non-participation increased as they were less inclined to take up part-time jobs. Counterfactual analyses show that job destruction also fell in the early 2000s, which is less easily attributable to the labour market reforms. A calibrated search-matching model shows that labour market reforms and wage moderation were equally responsible for the fall of unemployment and should not have produced the observed reduction of full-time work. Our model produces correct predictions by increasing the cost of vacancy creation, which likely originates from weak demand in the context of the financial crisis.

Keywords: Unemployment, part-time work, mini-jobs, non-participation, multiple job holding, income inequality, Germany, Hartz reforms.

JEL: J21, J31, J63, J64

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1 Introduction

Since the mid-2000s, Germany has experienced one of the largest falls in unemployment seen in recent times. Figure 1 shows that after nearly two decades of persistently high levels, unemployment entered a downward trend in 2006, reaching its lowest level of 3.6% by the end of 2017. This decline started right after the implementation of the Hartz reforms (2003-2005), which aimed to make the labour market more flexible. Many economies with structurally high unemployment, such as France, have been called upon to do the same and adopt labour market deregulation policies. As a result, much work has been undertaken to understand the role (if any) the Hartz reforms played in reducing unemployment.¹ Many of these studies find support for these reforms, but are inconclusive as to their degree of success. Others are less positive on their effects and view wage moderation and the increased competitiveness of the German economy as the main drivers of economic growth and unemployment reduction (Dustmann et al., 2014).

In this paper we develop a simple yet insightful framework for studying the reduction of unemployment in Germany. Our framework takes into account all possible flows in and out of unemployment, non-participation and all forms of employment (full-time, part-time and marginal employment). The parallel between increasing part-time and marginal employment (mini-jobs), and falling unemployment has already been documented elsewhere (Weinkopf, 2009, Burda and Seele, 2016). The key insight from our study is that unemployment reduction did not happen through direct unemployment-employment flows, as is the focus of much of the literature. Unemployment fell because a greater fraction of unemployed workers did no longer register as jobseekers. This in principle should have increased non-participation. However, labour force participation actually increased due to the take up of low quality part-time employment (also documented in Burda and Seele, 2016, Burda, 2016, Rothe and Wälde, 2017, Biewen et al., 2017). This occurred because welfare benefits became less generous after the Hartz IV reform (2005), reducing long-term unemployment benefits and imposed tighter conditions on welfare benefit recipients. One of the main findings of this paper is that a considerable proportions of the flows in and out of (registered) unemployment, and in and out of all forms of employment (marginal, contributing part-time and full-time) are with non-participation. Hence, non-participants, that is workers who do not register as job seekers to job placement centres, may not be seeking for a job the day of the survey interview or may decide not to show up at the job centres, but they are actually still attached (at least loosely) to the labour market. Adding unemployed and non-participants together, we find that the non-employment rate did not fall for men after 2005, as they were much less inclined than women to take up a part-time job and preferred to stay unemployed for longer.

Our flow analysis on its own is interesting and original, but our paper provides two more contributions. Having estimated all transition probabilities at the monthly frequency

¹See for example Fahr and Sunde (2009), Krause and Uhlig (2012), Klinger and Rothe (2012), Krebs and Scheffel (2013), Launov and Wälde (2016), Burda and Seele (2016), Burda (2016).



Figure 1: Labour market characteristics of Germany, France, UK and US. (Source: OECD. Working age population, 14-65.)

across all five states (registered and unregistered unemployment, and marginal, part-time and full-time employment), we proceed to a first set of counterfactual simulations based on the statistical mobility model. We keep constant the transition probabilities as estimated in 2002, just before the Hartz reforms, and we introduce the changes to outbound probabilities from all five states separately. We find that unemployment outflows tend to reduce unemployment and increase non-participation (or unregistered unemployment) but have no effect on employment stocks. Non-participation outflows entirely explain the rise of marginal and part-time employment and of labour market participation. It does not affect registered unemployment or only to a small extent (for men). In order to obtain the full decrease in (registered) male unemployment, we need to add the changes to flows out of full-time employment. Specifically, job destruction is falling rather abruptly around 2003. This is slightly early for the timing of the Hartz reforms, and more easily explained by the reduction of labour costs induced by wage moderation. This first set of counterfactuals then suggests that both the Hartz reforms and wage moderation played an important role in explaining the German labour market dynamics.

In order to quantify better the effects of both interventions (labour market reforms and wage moderation) we then proceed to a second set of counterfactual simulations, this time

based on a search-matching model that we calibrate independently on the 1999-2004 and 2007-2014 periods. We relate changes to parameters such as matching efficiency and UI benefits to labour market reforms, and parameters such as worker's wage bargaining power and job destruction rates to wage moderation policies. We find that both sets of interventions tend to cause a similar reduction of unemployment. However, the two interventions together over-predict the reduction of unemployment. In order to obtain the right prediction, a last parameter change must be implemented: a rise in the cost of vacancy creation, which we interpret as capturing a weak demand effect in the context of the financial crisis.

Other papers have tried to analyse the fall of German unemployment through the lenses of an equilibrium model. Krause and Uhlig (2012), Krebs and Scheffel (2013), Launov and Wälde (2013, 2016), Hochmuth et al. (2017) design DSGE models that interpret the reduction of unemployment reflecting the cuts in unemployment benefits induced by Hartz IV, which in their proposed search models can only increase search effort and/or job finding rates. Burda and Seele (2016) use the supply and demand framework of Katz and Murphy (1992) and conclude to a stable labour demand curve and an increasing labour supply shift, which they attribute to the Hartz reforms. This latter paper is closer in spirit to our approach as it tries to sort out two different types of causes. Yet, their framework is parametrically not as rich as ours and hence cannot distinguish between wage moderation and proper demand shocks.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 describes the institutional background emphasising the role of the Hartz reforms and the datasets we use. Sections 3 and 4 describes the evolution of the stocks and flows, respectively. Section 5 shows that variations in monthly flows allow to predict the evolution of stocks very accurately. This section also proceeds to the first set of counterfactual changes based on estimated monthly transitions. Section 5 develops a search-matching steady-state equilibrium model and proceeds to a second series of counterfactual analyses. Section 6 concludes.

2 Preliminaries

2.1 Institutional background

The main institutional change that occurred during the period of study were the Hartz reforms. These reforms came in four packages. Many detailed descriptions exist in the literature (see for example Jacobi and Kluve, 2006, Fichtl, 2015). We briefly summarise their main content.

The Hartz I and III reforms were generally aimed at improving labour supply, and matching efficiency. Hartz I (1/1/2003) deregulated and enhanced temporary employment, implemented occupational training programmes, introduced subsistence payments on behalf of the employment agency, and introduced new forms of employment for elderly workers. Hartz III (1/1/2004) reorganised the Federal Employment Agency as an entity improving in particular

its efficiency in job offer mediation to unemployed workers.

The Hartz II package was introduced at the same time as Hartz I. It reformed marginal employment. Marginal employment was introduced in Germany in the sixties to help non-participants take up work. It is considered a form of low-pay employment with caps on hours and pay.² Workers in marginal employment are exempted from income tax and social security contributions, but are not entitled to unemployment benefits and obtain reduced pension payments at retirement. Firms, however, contribute to these worker's health insurance and pensions. In addition, unemployed workers who receive benefits are allowed to work in marginal employment to top up their benefits, as long as their jobs do not pay more than 165 euros per month. The precariousness of marginal jobs also arises from the flexibility these jobs introduced to firm's hiring and firing practices by, for example, allowing them to cover spikes in demand. Moreover, employers reduce the costs by not paying marginally employed workers during holidays and sickness leave, and by paying only for the hours they work (Weinkopf, 2009).

Hartz II defined two types of marginal jobs: mini-jobs and midi-jobs. *Mini-jobs* paid up to 400 euros per month (450 euros in 2013), while *Midi-jobs* paid between 400 and 800 euros per month.³ We highlight three modifications Hartz II introduced to the legal setup that governed the marginal employment sector. (i) It increased the maximal wage for mini-jobs from 325 to 400 euros. (ii) It eliminated the maximum limit of 15 working hours per week.⁴ (iii) It extended the income tax and social security exemptions to mini-jobs held as a secondary job.⁵

Finally, Hartz II created the *Minijobzentrale*, a unique legal entity solely responsible for registering marginally employed workers and dealing with all tax and social security matters related to marginal workers and their employers. This made it easier for firms, from an administrative point of view, to set up marginal jobs and to pay the associated taxes and social security contributions. The flexibility that mini-jobs introduced to firm's hiring practices and the low set-up costs needed to create these jobs are important reasons why firms created mini-job opportunities after Hartz II. The *Minijobzentrale* also facilitated the systematic collection of data on marginal employment.

Hartz IV (1/1/2005) reformed the unemployment benefit system completely. It im-

²Throughout the 1980s and the 1990s this wage cap was set between one-fifth and one-seventh of the average gross national wage in the previous year. In April 1999 the German Federal Employment Agency set the wage cap to 325 euros per month.

³As in the pre-Hartz period, workers in mini-jobs paid no income tax and no social security contributions, while firms had to pay an increased contribution of 25% (and 30% in 2006) of an employee's gross earnings for health insurance, pensions and other taxes. Workers in midi-jobs paid reduced social security contributions and a linear income tax that ranged between 4% and 21%, while firms paid the full contribution rates to health insurance, pensions and income taxes.

⁴This hour limit was not lifted for those unemployed workers who in addition to their benefits received wages from a mini-job. See Caliendo and Wrohlich (2010) and Caliendo et al. (2016).

⁵Bundesgesetzblatt, 2002, Teil I Nr. 87, 4623. Prior to the reform a secondary mini-job increased the tax base of the primary job. However, workers with more than two mini-jobs as secondary employment in conjunction with a mini-job as primary employment were subject to income tax and social security contributions on all except two of the mini-jobs.

posed tighter conditions on unemployment benefit recipients. It merged the long-term (i.e. more than 12 months) unemployment assistance benefits with social assistance benefits into *Arbeitslosengeld II* (ALG II) benefits. This has amounted to 345 euros per month (West) and 331 euros per month (East), which is on average lower than the unemployment assistance benefit allowance before the reform.⁶ Crucially, ALG II benefits are means-tested at the household level and this affected the eligibility of the long-term unemployed. Launov and Wälde (2013), for example, estimate that only 24% of the long-term unemployed are able to pass the test, leaving about three quarters of the long-term unemployed without benefits. In addition, under Hartz IV benefits can be cut by 30% for 12 weeks if a person who is able to work refuses to enter the activation program or take up a suitable offer of work proposed by the case worker, where Hartz laws explicitly state that about any work is now considered suitable. Repeated refusal leads to further 30% cut for another 12 weeks.

2.2 Data

Our analysis primarily relies on the Sample of Integrated Labour Market Biographies (SIAB) provided by the Institute for Employment Research (IAB). The SIAB is a 2% random sample drawn from the Integrated Employment Biographies (IEB) – an administrative data set which comprises the universe of individuals who are (i) in jobs that are subject to social security (in the data since 1975), (ii) in marginal employment (in the data since 1999), (iii) in benefit receipt according to the German Social Code (since 1975), (iv) officially registered as a job-seeker at the German Federal Employment Agency or (v) participating in active labour market policies (ALMP) programs (in the data since 2000). These data provide information on individuals’ daily employment status, education, gender, age, gross daily wage/benefit (wages are top-coded) and a unique identifier that allows us to match the individual’s information to that of his/her employing establishment. Since marginal employment has been classified as a separate category since April 1999, we use these data for the period 1999-2014, where 2014 is our last year available.

The German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) is also used to complement the information derived from the SIAB. In contrast to the SIAB the GSOEP data is a household panel survey. The GSOEP started in 1986 and is updated on an annual basis. This data set is used to extract further information on worker demographic characteristics as well as hours worked and hourly wages. In addition, we use the IAB Job Vacancy Survey (JVS) to obtain information about vacancy duration when quantifying our search and matching model.⁷

One restriction is made to the sample of workers in our study. Namely, at any point in time workers need to be between 25 and 54 years old. We label this set as prime-aged workers and note that they represent the vast majority (around 65%) of workers in the

⁶Within the ALG II scheme, the state covers the health insurance of the unemployed and until 2010 contributed to her pension scheme. It may also provide for rental costs in case of hardship.

⁷Further information about the SIAB, GSOEP and JVS data can be found in FDZ (2013), <https://www.diw.de/en/soep>, and <https://www.iab.de/en/befragungen/stellenangebot.aspx>, respectively.

German working age population. Younger and older workers are excluded for the following reasons. The 15-24 years old group is excluded to avoid considering individuals who are using part-time employment to support their studies, which seems common practice in Germany. The 55-65 years old group is excluded to avoid analysing retirement decisions in our model. This is important because one objective of Hartz I was to increase the participation rate of older workers, which seems to have been successful. Although retirement decisions are potentially interesting, we do not consider them in this paper as we want to keep our model as parsimonious as possible given that the labour market dynamics we document for prime-aged workers are already sufficiently intricate.

The registered labour force is defined as the sum of registered employment and registered unemployment. Registered employment consists of the sum of those workers registered in the social security system whose main employment is either a full-time, part-time or a mini-job. Since mini-jobs are taxed, we incorporate them into the contributing part-time employment category. Therefore, we will use the terms mini-jobs and marginal employment interchangeably. Registered unemployment consists of those individuals who are registered with the labour office and have been actively searching for a job within the last 2 weeks irrespectively of their benefit status. We will refer to the registered labour force, employment and unemployment simply as labour force, employment and unemployment. Non-participants are those workers who are not in registered unemployment or in any form of registered employment. This category includes truly inactive individuals, but also non-employed workers enrolled in some ALMP program or self-employed individuals.⁸

Registered unemployment as published by the Federal Employment Agency differs from unemployment calculated from the Labour Force Survey which follows the definition of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), i.e. being without work, being available for work and seeking work. In the European Statistical System, the results of the Labour Force Survey are used as a standard basis for calculating unemployment rates. Registered unemployment is however the most commonly used measure for the analysis of labour market policies (Melis and Lüdeke, 2006). Workers taking part in activation programs are not considered registered-unemployed (see Kruppe et al., 2008, for details). Figure 2 depicts the evolution of the unemployment rate (unemployment stock divided by employment plus unemployment stocks) calculated from SIAB, OECD statistics and GSOEP for the 25-54 age group.⁹ The OECD series (the same as the official series from *Statistisches Bundesamt*) is generally below the SIAB series, usually by less than one percentage point, except toward the end of the period where the difference approaches two percentage points. Nevertheless, all series show consistent trends. Unemployment peaks in 2005 and plummets afterwards.

We categorise workers by their type of job contracts. A full-time (part-time) worker is one

⁸When we use other data sources, such as OECD, GSOEP and EUROSTAT, we follow the same classification definitions.

⁹Note that SIAB excludes civil servants (Beamte). Moreover, OECD does not report age-specific self-employment rates (% of self-employed in total employment). We have therefore removed self-employment from the total employment stock under the assumption that self-employment rates are the same in the working age population (18-64) and in the prime age group (25-54).

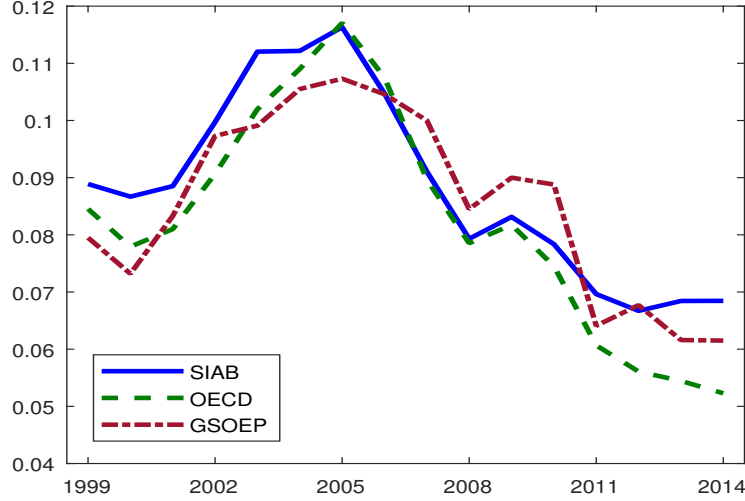


Figure 2: Different unemployment measures

whose primary employment is in a contributing full-time (part-time) job. A mini-jobber is one whose main employment is a mini-job or one who holds two mini-jobs simultaneously. We refer as part-time workers those who are either contributing part-timers or mini-jobbers.

3 The dynamics of stocks

In this section, we document that the increase in the importance of part-time employment occurred together with a reduction of unemployment and non-participation.

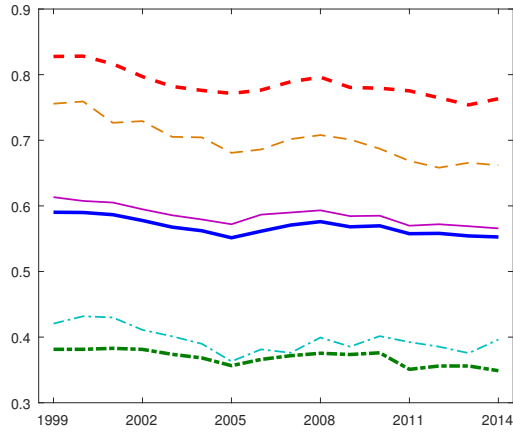
3.1 Trends in the employment stocks

Figure 3 depicts the evolution of the stocks of prime-aged workers in full-time employment, part-time employment, exclusive marginal employment, unemployment and non-participation. These stocks are presented as shares of the population of prime-aged individuals, overall and by gender and education.¹⁰ A key feature is the opposing patterns observed in the stocks of full-time employment and unemployment relative to the stocks of part-time employment and labour force participation.

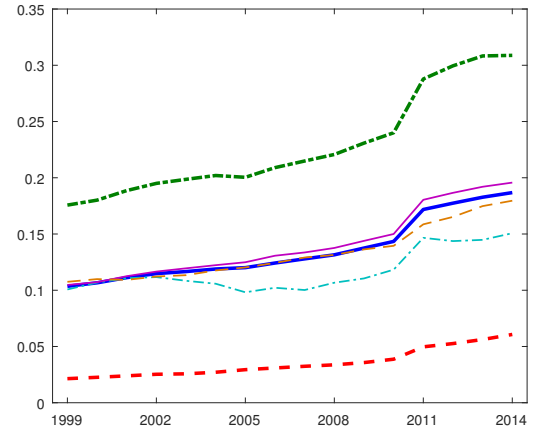
Full-time employment decreased from about 60% in 1999 to 55% in 2014, while the share of unemployment decreased from its peak of 10% in 2005 to just below 6% in 2014. In contrast, contributing part-time employment and, to a lesser extent, exclusive marginal employment increased during the 1999-2014 period.¹¹ Contributing part-time contracts are

¹⁰The SIAB allows us to calculate aggregate stocks of employed and registered-unemployed workers. The stocks of non-participants are obtained from OECD statistics. The shares of these stocks by gender and education are drawn from the GSOEP. The jump in the share of part-time employed in 2011 is related to the improved classification of the part-time versus full-time employment by the Federal Employment Agency. The share of full-time employed went down by the same amount in that year. Although the new classification was applied retrospectively for the 1999-2010 period, this did not remove the structural break completely.

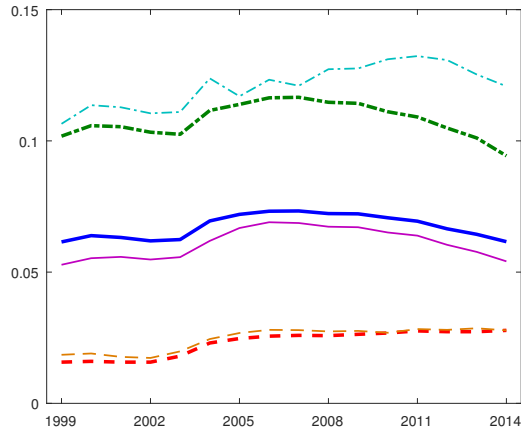
¹¹By 2014, there were more workers who had a mini-job as primary employment (7.4% of the labour force)



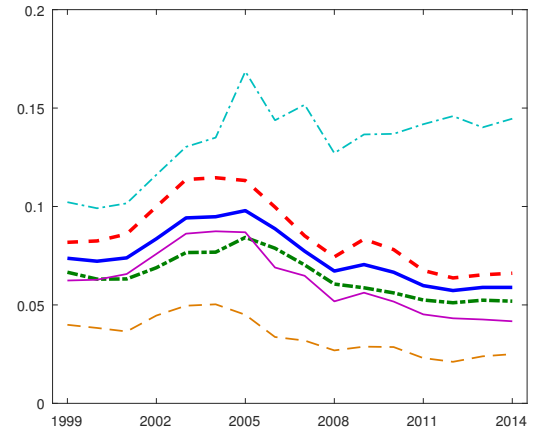
(a) Full-time employment



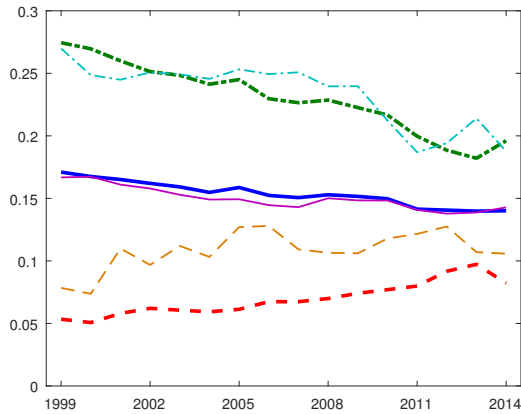
(b) Part-time employment



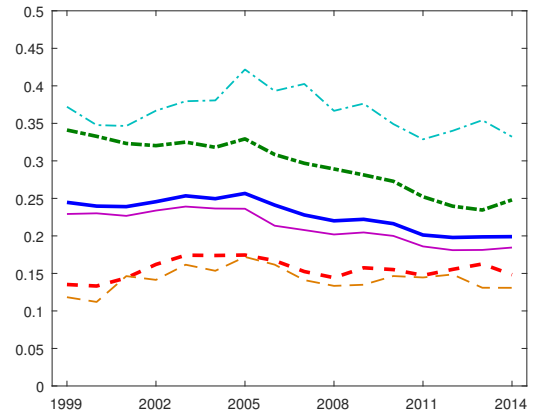
(c) Marginal employment



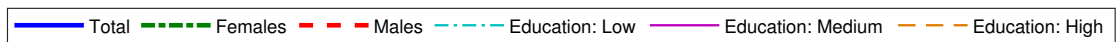
(d) Unemployment



(e) Non-participation



(f) Non-employment [(d) and (e)]



Source: OECD, SIAB and GSOEP. The SIAB data allow to calculate aggregate stocks of employed and registered-unemployed workers. The stocks of non participants are obtained from OECD statistics. The shares of these stocks by gender and education are drawn from the GSOEP.

Figure 3: Dynamics of the labour force and participation (% of the entire population)

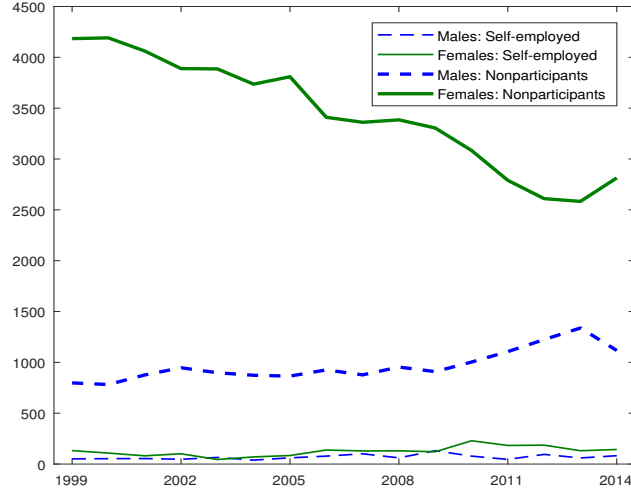


Figure 4: The evolution of self-employment relative to non-participation (source: OECD)

predominantly signed by female workers. Education is not a determining factor. However, marginal employment is heavily concentrated among women and low educated workers.¹²

Unemployment is more prevalent among the low educated, but is much less gender differentiated than marginal employment. Note that low educated workers are the only group for which unemployment did not fall after 2005, but remained at a high rate of 15%. Labor force participation increases (slightly) over the period because female and less educated individuals supplied more labour, enough to compensate for the increase of the non-participation of male and higher-educated workers. The last panel displays the non-employment rate, adding up unemployment and non-participation. For men and for high-educated workers the non-employment rate peaks in 2005 but does not fall afterwards, the rise in non-participation compensating one for one the fall in unemployment.

Since the SIAB counts self-employed workers as non-participants, it is important to note that the increase in the male non-participation rate does not arise because more male workers became self-employed. This might be a concern as Hartz II provided incentives for unemployed workers to become self-employed. Figure 4 shows the stock of non-participants along side the stock of self-employed individuals by gender obtained from the OECD. It is immediate that among male workers the stock of self-employment is at least one order of magnitude smaller than the stock of non-participants. For females, the difference is even larger. Even though self-employment did increase among male prime-aged workers, this increase was far too small to have a meaningful effect on the dynamics of the stock of male non-participants.

than unemployed workers (6.8% of the labour force).

¹²Low skilled workers are those with no vocational training and no high school degree. Medium skilled workers are those with vocational training (no high school), or high school (no vocational training), or both. High skilled workers are those with a university degree, either from a university of applied science (*Fachhochschule*), technical college (*technische Hochschule*) or a university.

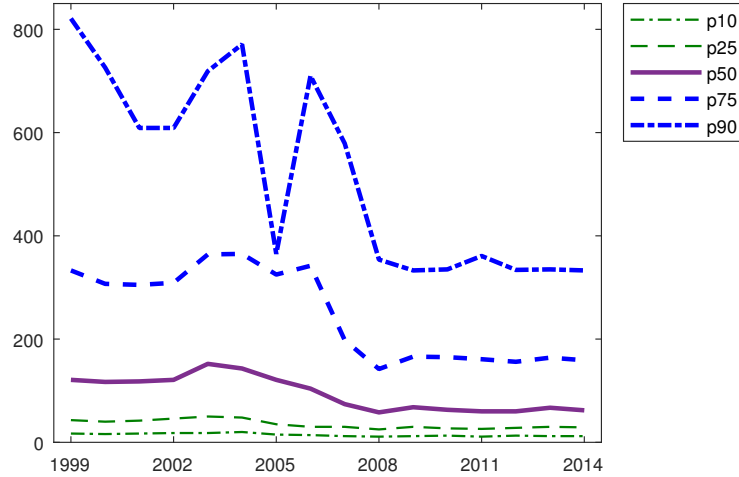


Figure 5: Elapsed duration of unemployment at the end each year (in days; excludes fixed-term contracts. Source SIAB)

3.2 Unemployment duration

Figure 5 shows the evolution of the distribution of elapsed unemployment duration in stock samples on the last day of each year. It shows that accompanying the reduction in the stock of unemployed workers was a striking collapse of the right tail of the unemployment duration distribution. During the 2007-2014 period, the median duration of an unemployment spell was essentially half of that observed during the 1999-2004 period.¹³ Stronger reductions can also be observed at the 75th and 90th percentiles of the duration distribution. This implies that the reduction in unemployment after 2005 was obtained by limiting long-term unemployment. The most likely reason for this conversion is Hartz IV, which cut unemployment benefits and reformed the welfare system.

3.3 Number of hours

How did the expansion of the stock of part-time employment, as documented in Figure 3, impact the total number of hours worked? Given that the SIAB does not report hours worked, we use the GSOEP to tackle this question. Figure 6 shows the mean and the 10th, 50th and 90th percentiles of the distribution of weekly hours worked in full-time, contributing part-time and marginal employment for each year, respectively. It is immediate that individuals work the lowest amount of hours when in a mini-job. Further, the distribution of hours worked by mini-jobbers seems to have been relatively stable throughout the period.¹⁴

¹³The collapse of the right tail in 2005 and its rebound in 2006 occurred because Hartz IV abolished social assistance, so all former recipients of social assistance had to register as unemployed on the 1st January 2005, partly explaining the rise in unemployment during 2005. This resulted in a 16% mass point in the distribution of the elapsed duration at the end of 2005. At the end of 2006 the mass point has reduced to 4.5%. In 2007 it became negligible.

¹⁴For example, the P90/P10 ratio has been fluctuating closely around a mean of 4.35, but showing a downward trend in the last years. We find a similar feature in the distribution of hours worked by full-time workers, where the P90/P10 ratio has been fluctuating closely around a mean of 1.44 with a slight dip in

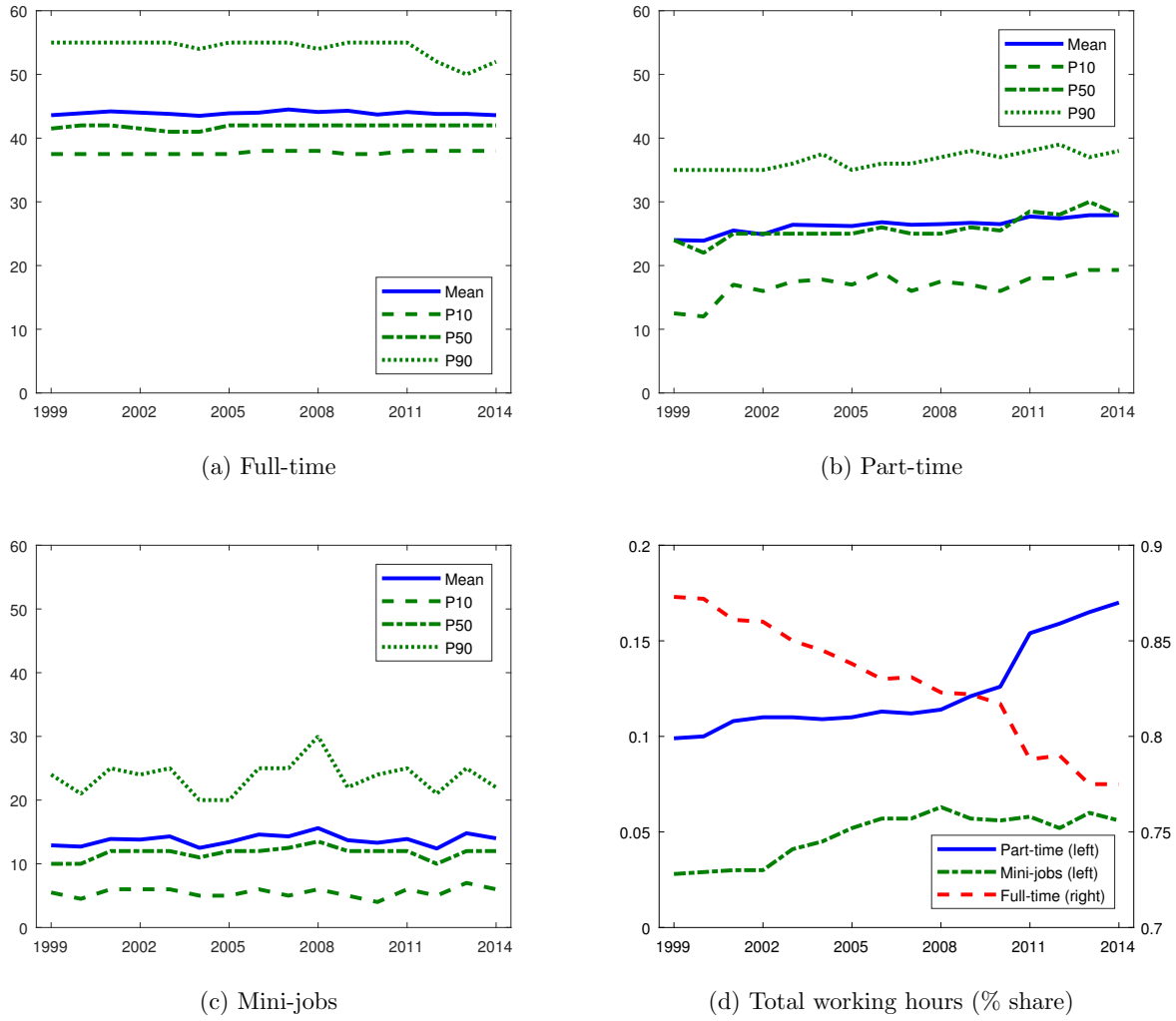


Figure 6: Weekly hours worked by type of employment (Source: GSOEP)

In contrast, the distribution of hours worked in contributing part-time jobs has been shifting to the right throughout the period, with a stronger increase in the left tail of the distribution (below the first quartile). Indeed, the P50/P10 ratio decreased from 1.92 in 1999 to 1.45 in 2014, which made the P90/P10 fall from 2.9 in 1999 to 1.97 in 2014.

Figure 6d shows the evolution of the shares of total hours worked (hours \times number of contracts) for each type of contract. It shows a constant fall in the share of total hours worked in full-time jobs and a constant rise in the share of total hours worked in contributing part-time and mini-jobs. These patterns then imply that the decreasing trend in labour utilisation observed during the 1999-2005 period in Figure 1 for Germany is driven by the decrease in the number of total hours worked in full-time employment. The rebound observed after 2005 is driven by the rise in the number of total hours worked in contributing part-time and mini-jobs. Since marginal employment increased primarily on the extensive margin and had a very subdued response on the intensive margin, the increase in total hours worked in the marginal employment sector was mainly due to a larger number of individuals taking last few years.

mini-jobs rather than an increase in working hours. Contributing part-time employment, however, increased in both the extensive and intensive margins and hence the increase in total hours worked was due to both more workers taking up contributing part-time jobs and working more hours.

4 The dynamics of flows

An important contribution of this paper is to explain the evolution of the stocks reported in Section 3.1, highlighting the role of part-time employment. For this purpose we use the SIAB to construct the gross and net flows of each of these employment categories and investigate the dynamic system underlying the stocks. We then derive the stationary distribution of the stocks implied by the flows and check whether we can predict the share of the observed stocks depicted in Figure 3.

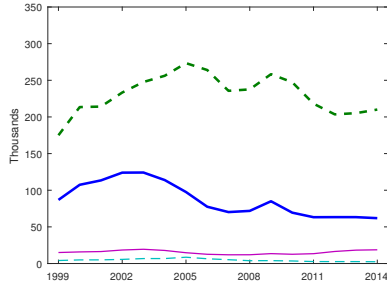
4.1 The ins and outs of unemployment

Figure 7 depicts the average monthly inflows to unemployment, outflows from unemployment and the net inflows (inflow minus outflow), measured in thousands of workers. These flows are decomposed by the worker's origin and destination states: full-time employment (FT), contributing part-time employment (PT), exclusive marginal employment (ME) and non-participation (NP). We show the flows for the whole population (first row) and separately by gender (second and third rows).

Looking first at gross flows, we see that by far the two main sources and destinations of unemployment are non-participation and full-time employment. That so many individuals churn between unemployment and non-participation indicates that a large fraction of individuals who are not registered at the German Federal Employment Agency are counted as non-participants, yet have not, or only temporarily, stopped searching for a job. Gross flows between unemployment and non-participation are of similar magnitude for men and women. Flows with full-time employment are lower for female workers and flows with part-time employment are bigger.

Net flows show a striking feature. The main reason behind the reduction in German unemployment was not re-employment in a contributing job (either full-time or part-time) or in a marginal job. Instead the unemployment rate decreased because individuals stopped registering as unemployed and became non-participants. About 19,000 more workers went from unemployment into non-participation each month than from non-participation into unemployment. These net outflows peaked in 2005 at about 37,000 workers and exhibited a gradual decline thereafter. This contrasts with the flows associated with full-time employment. Every month more full-time workers entered unemployment than unemployed obtained a full-time job. These monthly net inflows were of about 17,000 workers, although peaking at 32,000 earlier in 2002.

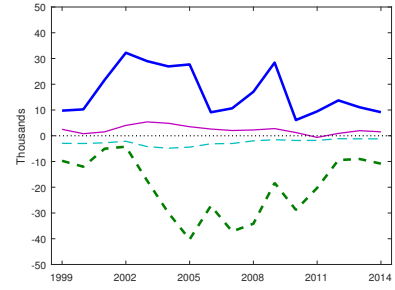
All



(a) Inflows

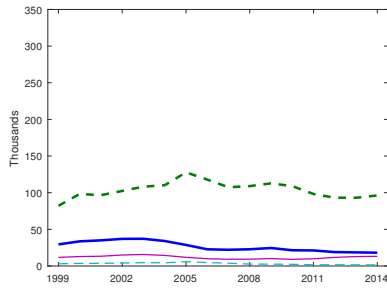


(b) Outflows

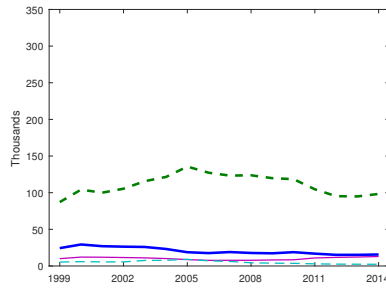


(c) Net: Inflows - Outflows

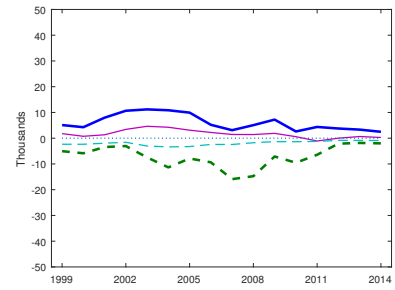
Females



(d) Inflows

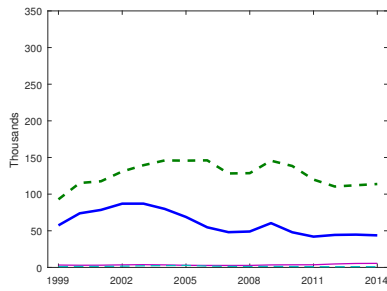


(e) Outflows

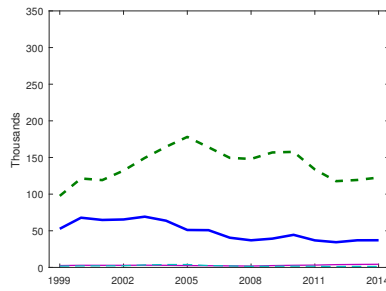


(f) Net: Inflows - Outflows

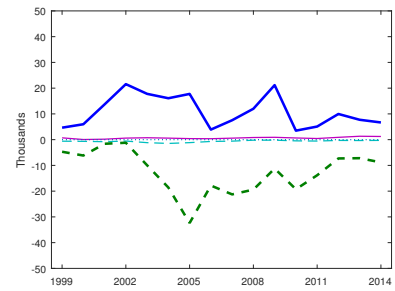
Males



(g) Inflows



(h) Outflows



(i) Net: Inflows - Outflows



Figure 7: Unemployment flows

We also see that part-time employment, including marginal employment (mini-jobs) essentially concerns female workers. Figure 7 shows that more unemployed workers took a mini-job than there were mini-jobbers becoming unemployed. Every month there were around 7,000 individuals leaving unemployment to take up a mini-job, while there were around 4,500 mini-jobbers becoming unemployed.¹⁵ At the same time, every month there were on average around 15,000 workers (mostly female) leaving a contributing part-time job to enter unemployment and on average around 13,000 individuals leaving unemployment to take a contributing part-time job. Pooling together marginal employment and contributing part-time employment, this implies that on average nearly the same amount of workers entered unemployment from the part-time employment sector as there were individuals leaving unemployment to take part-time jobs. Contrary to non-participation, this evidence shows that the effectiveness of part-time employment in *directly* reducing unemployment was negligible.

Although not shown here we find that for medium and high skilled workers unemployment decreases because of the larger net outflows into non-participation. In the case of low skilled workers, however, unemployment continued increasing after 2005 because the net inflows from contributing employment balanced in most years the net outflows into non-participation and marginal employment. Since the vast majority of prime-aged workers in our data have a vocational training (but no high school), the behaviour of low skilled workers does not affect much the aggregate dynamics depicted in Figure 7.

4.2 The ins and outs of non-participation

Given that unemployment decreased because individuals became non-participants, we now investigate whether non-participation acted as a transitional step towards employment.

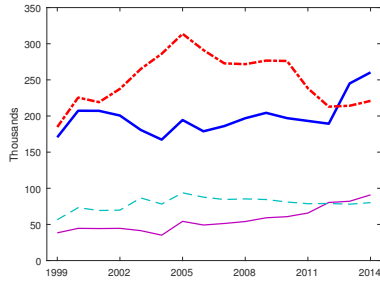
Figure 8 shows the evolution of the average monthly flows into and out of non-participation. The most striking feature is that these flows are huge, indicating again that non-participation should be understood as non-registered unemployment or long-term unemployment. In particular, flows with unemployment and flows with full-time employment are of similar magnitude.

Second, we already know that non-participation increases over time for prime-aged men. The flow analysis shows that this is because transitions to full-time employment do not compensate the entries from unemployment. For male workers, transitions from and to part-time employment are too small to make a difference. For women, we observe a lot more transitions with part-time work (contributing and marginal roughly in equal proportions). These are the ones which work against the transitions from unemployment.

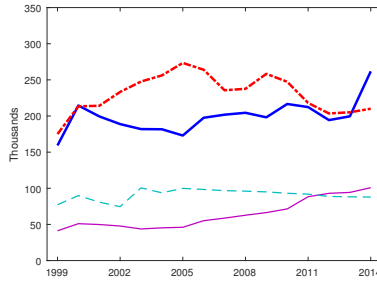
Overall these patterns present clear macroeconomic evidence that part-time employment, and mini-jobs in particular, helped bring female non-participants to work, fuelling the rise of part-time employment in Germany and containing the net inflows from unemployment into

¹⁵The outflows from unemployment to exclusive marginal employment also reflect that many individuals (on average 71.3% of the outflow from unemployment to marginal employment) remained unemployed but topped up their unemployment benefits with the earnings from a mini-job.

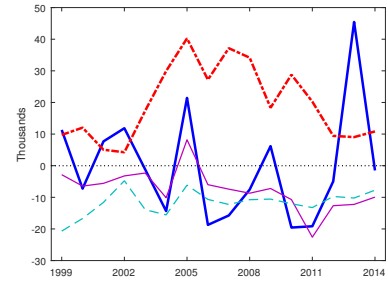
All



(a) Inflows

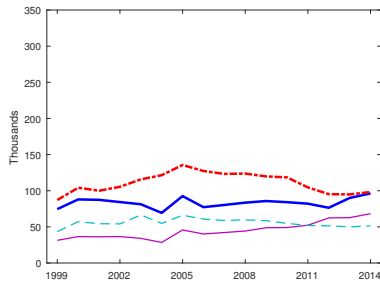


(b) Outflows

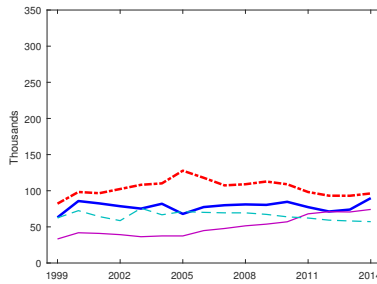


(c) Net: Inflows - Outflows

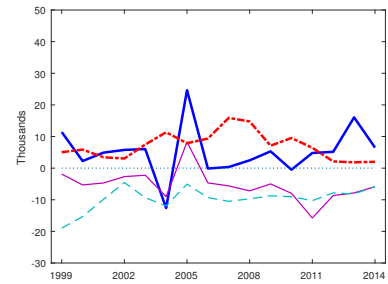
Females



(d) Inflows

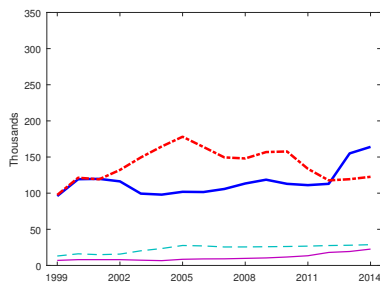


(e) Outflows

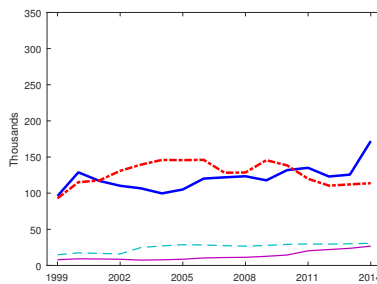


(f) Net: Inflows - Outflows

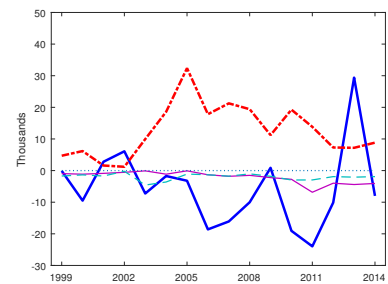
Male



(g) Inflows



(h) Outflows



(i) Net: Inflows - Outflows



Figure 8: Flows into and from non-participation

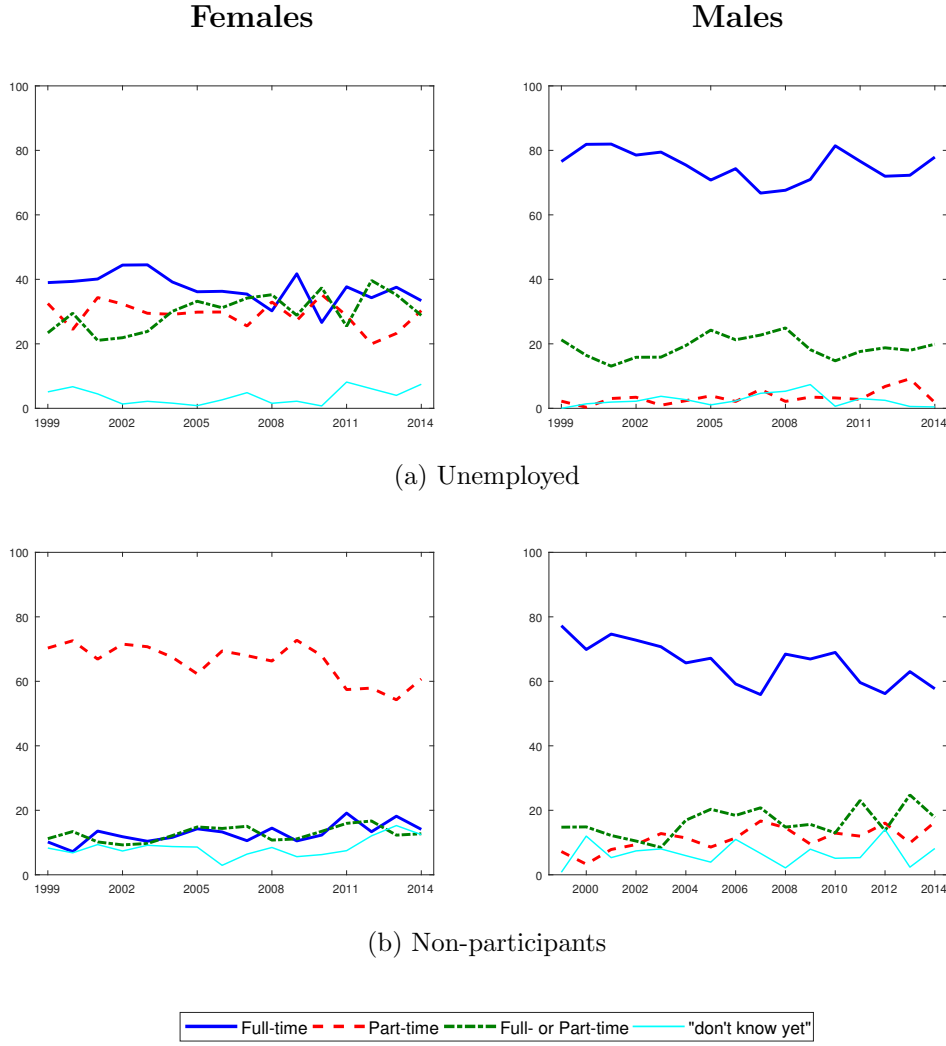


Figure 9: Desired employment for unemployed and non-participants (Source: GSOEP)

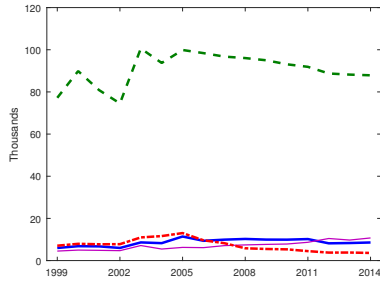
non-participation.

The GSOEP asks to unemployed workers and non-participants what type of employment they are looking for or would be looking for. Figure 9 shows the answers by gender. For men, being unemployed or non-participant does not change their answer. They primarily search for a full-time job. For women, this is different. Non-participants do favour part-time over full-time work. Note that over time, male non-participants look at part-time work a bit more positively and female non-participants a bit more negatively.

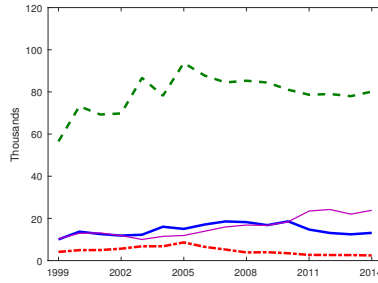
4.3 The ins and outs of exclusive marginal employment

Given the importance of marginal employment in bringing female non-participants back to work, we now investigate whether mini-jobs acted as stepping stones towards contributing employment or represented dead-end jobs. For this purpose, Figure 10 shows the gross flows of exclusive marginal employment, as well as its net inflows (inflows minus outflows). It shows that the main source and destination of exclusive marginal employment is by far non-participation. Every month after 2000, on average about 90,000 individuals

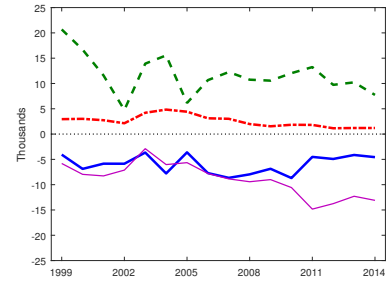
All



(a) Inflows

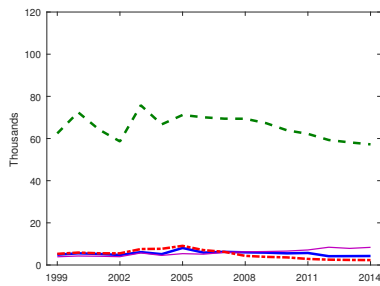


(b) Outflows

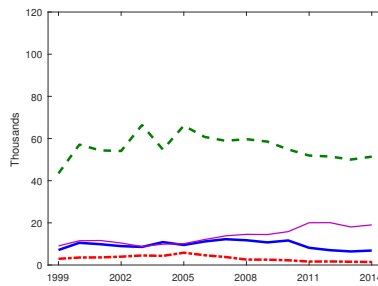


(c) Net: Inflows - Outflows

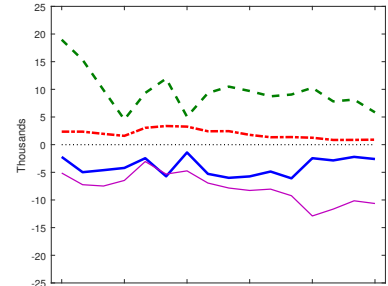
Females



(d) Inflows

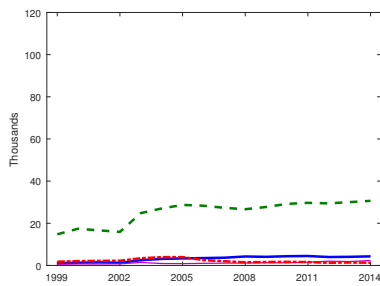


(e) Outflows

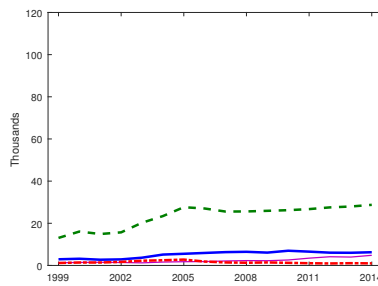


(f) Net: Inflows - Outflows

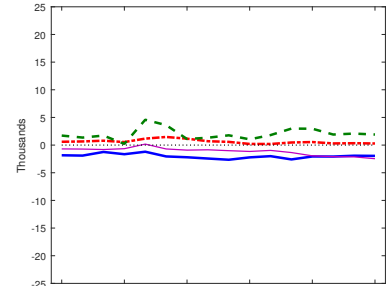
Males



(g) Inflows



(h) Outflows



(i) Net: Inflows - Outflows



Figure 10: Flows into and from marginal employment

left non-participation to take a mini-job, and about 80,000 mini-jobbers returned to non-participation. These flows are maximum in 2005-2006. Further, non-participation was also the main source of the net inflows into exclusive marginal employment, around five times larger than the average net inflows from unemployment.

Figure 10c then shows that all the net outflows from exclusive marginal employment went to contributing employment (full-time and part-time). We find that on average about 12,000 more workers with a mini-job left for a contributing contract every month than workers with a contributing contract entered the stock of exclusive mini-jobbers.¹⁶ Second, the net outflows from marginal employment into contributing employment are of a similar order of magnitude as the net inflows from non-employment (non-participation and unemployment). This explains the lack of growth in the stocks of exclusive marginal employment documented in Figure 3. Lastly, after 2007, contributing part-time employment became the main destination of marginally employed workers. Although not shown here, we also find that around 40% of those mini-jobbers who found a contributing job retained their mini-job to benefit from the tax exemptions introduced by Hartz II.

These net outflows are comprised primarily of female workers (in proportion 3:1) with either no qualifications (low skilled) or just a vocational/high school qualification (medium skilled). Mini-jobbers churn between non-participation and marginal employment. Yet, a significant fraction of female exclusive mini-jobbers are able to find a contributing job, most likely part-time. This is, we believe, a clear evidence that mini-jobs acted as stepping stones to contributing employment, but this is true only for women.

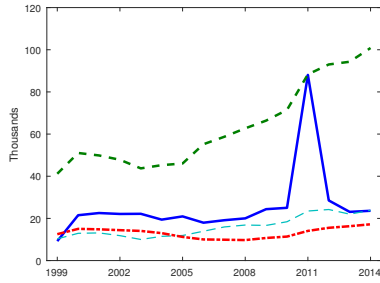
4.4 The ins and outs of contributing part-time employment

The evidence in Section 4.2 showed that the second most important destination of the net outflows from non-participation was to contributing part-time employment. Figure 11 shows the gross and net flows of this category. Although the share of part-time labor increases over time for men, all forms of part-time work are predominantly occupied by women. It is therefore not surprising that, as in the case of the marginal employment flows, part-time flows are mostly comprised of medium skilled, female workers.

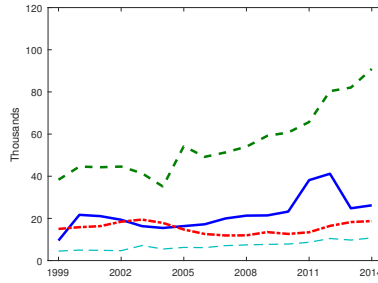
As in the case of marginal employment, we also observe that the main inflows and outflows of contributing part-time employment are with non-participation. The difference is that the gross flows between non-participation and contributing part-time employment started increasing after 2005, while the gross flows between non-participation and exclusive marginal employment exhibited a decreasing trend after 2005. This has led the gross flows between non-participation and contributing part-time employment and the gross flows between non-participation and exclusive marginal employment to become of similar magnitudes after

¹⁶Note that Hartz II changed the maximal earnings limit to qualify for a mini-job from 325 to 400 euros. This may have encouraged the conversion of contributing jobs into mini-jobs to take advantage of the tax break. However, if there is a one-off increase in the inflows from contributing employment in 2003, it is small.

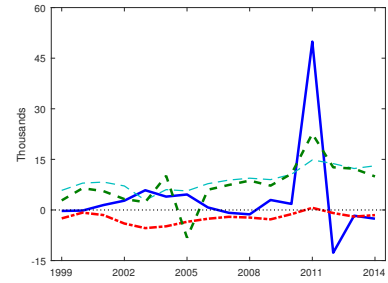
All



(a) Inflows

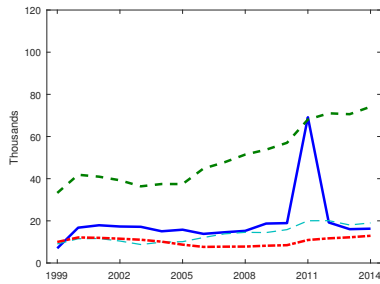


(b) Outflows

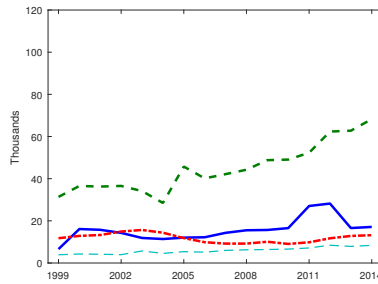


(c) Net: Inflows - Outflows

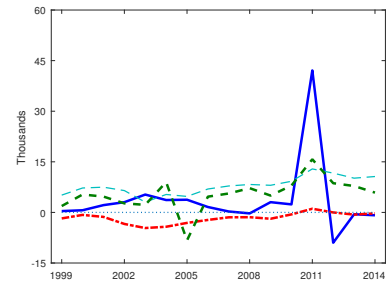
Females



(d) Inflows

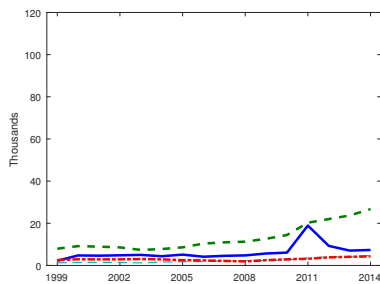


(e) Outflows

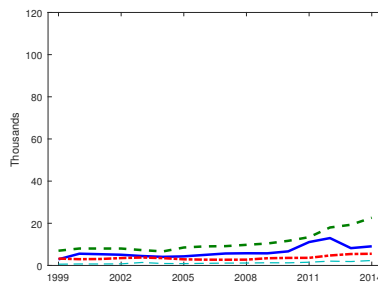


(f) Net: Inflows - Outflows

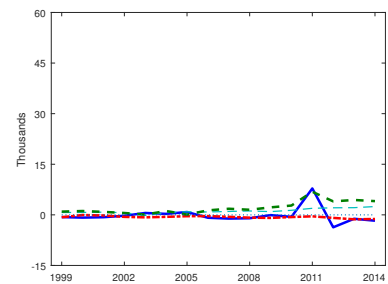
Males



(g) Inflows



(h) Outflows



(i) Net: Inflows - Outflows

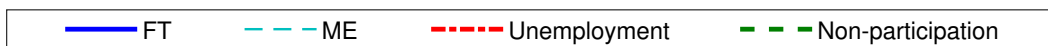


Figure 11: Flows into and from contributing part-time employment

2010.

The net inflows in Figure 11 show that the stock of contributing part-time employment increased over the period because of the strong net inflows from marginal employment and non-participation, and to a lesser extent from full-time employment. This evidence highlights another important feature in the German labour market dynamics: Mini-jobs were an important driving force behind the growth of contributing part-time employment.

4.5 The ins and outs of full-time employment

To complete the dynamic system described until now, Figure 12 depicts the average monthly gross and net flows of full-time employment. From these graphs it is clear that the main gross flows of full-time employment arise from non-participation and from unemployment. Consistent with the decrease in unemployment shown in previous sections, we observe that both the inflows and outflows between full-time employment and unemployment started to decrease during the implementation period of the Hartz reforms. By 2014 these gross flows decreased to about half of the size they had in 2003. In contrast, the inflows and outflows between full-time employment and non-participation remained overall constant around 200,000 workers, with a slight decrease up to 2004/2005 and a slow rebound after that.

The picture that the net flows present are very different for men and women. For women, the only positive contribution to the stock of full-time jobs is marginal employment. Unemployment, non-participation and contributing part-time employment all contribute negatively. Overall, the negative net flows dominate the positive ones, which leads to a reduction in full-time employment for these workers. For men, all net flows are negligible but with non-participation and unemployment. The stock of full-time, male workers is fattened up by non-participants and thinned by unemployment.

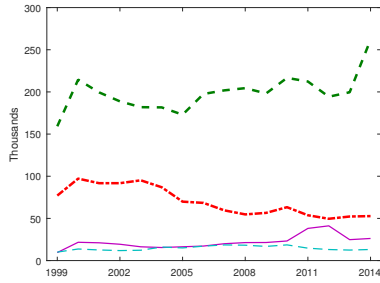
5 Predicting the observed stocks through the flows

5.1 How well do flows determine the evolution of the stocks?

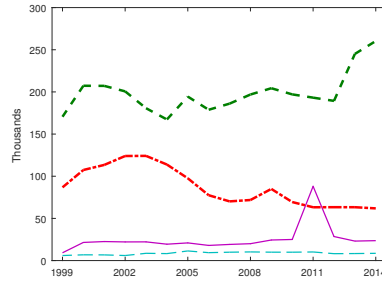
We now investigate how well the gross flows and associated net flows predict the observed stock of workers in each of the labour market states considered. In particular, are one-period ahead flows the main determinants of the stocks? Are we missing important channels requiring two lags? Two prominent features of the dynamics that we have just described are (i) that there are very large flows into and from the different stocks, and (ii) that the net flows are generally an order of magnitude smaller. We now show that this implies that one can approximate the observed stocks quite well by the stationary distributions associated with the transition probability matrices estimated from the flows.

Figure 13 presents the evolution of the stationary distribution of workers across the states of the labour market. This distribution is constructed on the basis of the estimated sequence of monthly transition matrices across all the market states for every year. The procedure

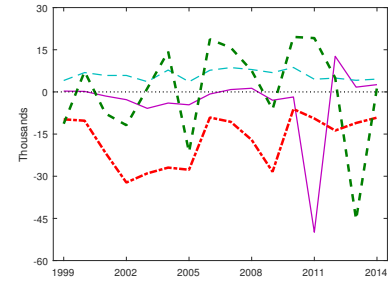
All



(a) Inflows

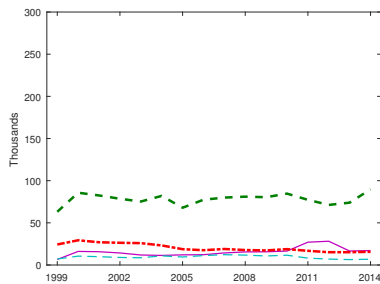


(b) Outflows



(c) Net: Inflows - Outflows

Females



(d) Inflows

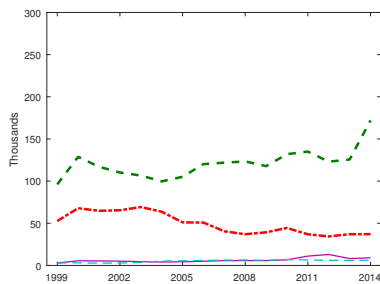


(e) Outflows

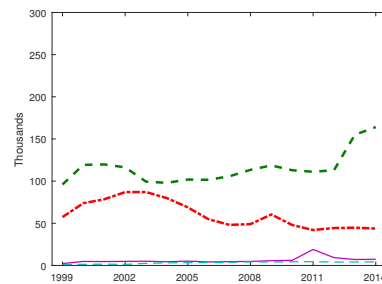


(f) Net: Inflows - Outflows

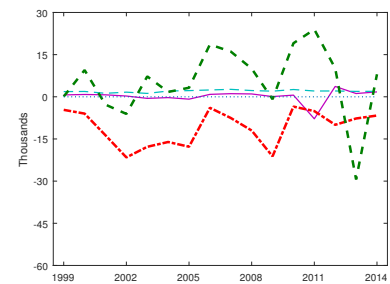
Males



(g) Inflows



(h) Outflows



(i) Net: Inflows - Outflows



Figure 12: Flows into and from contributing full-time employment

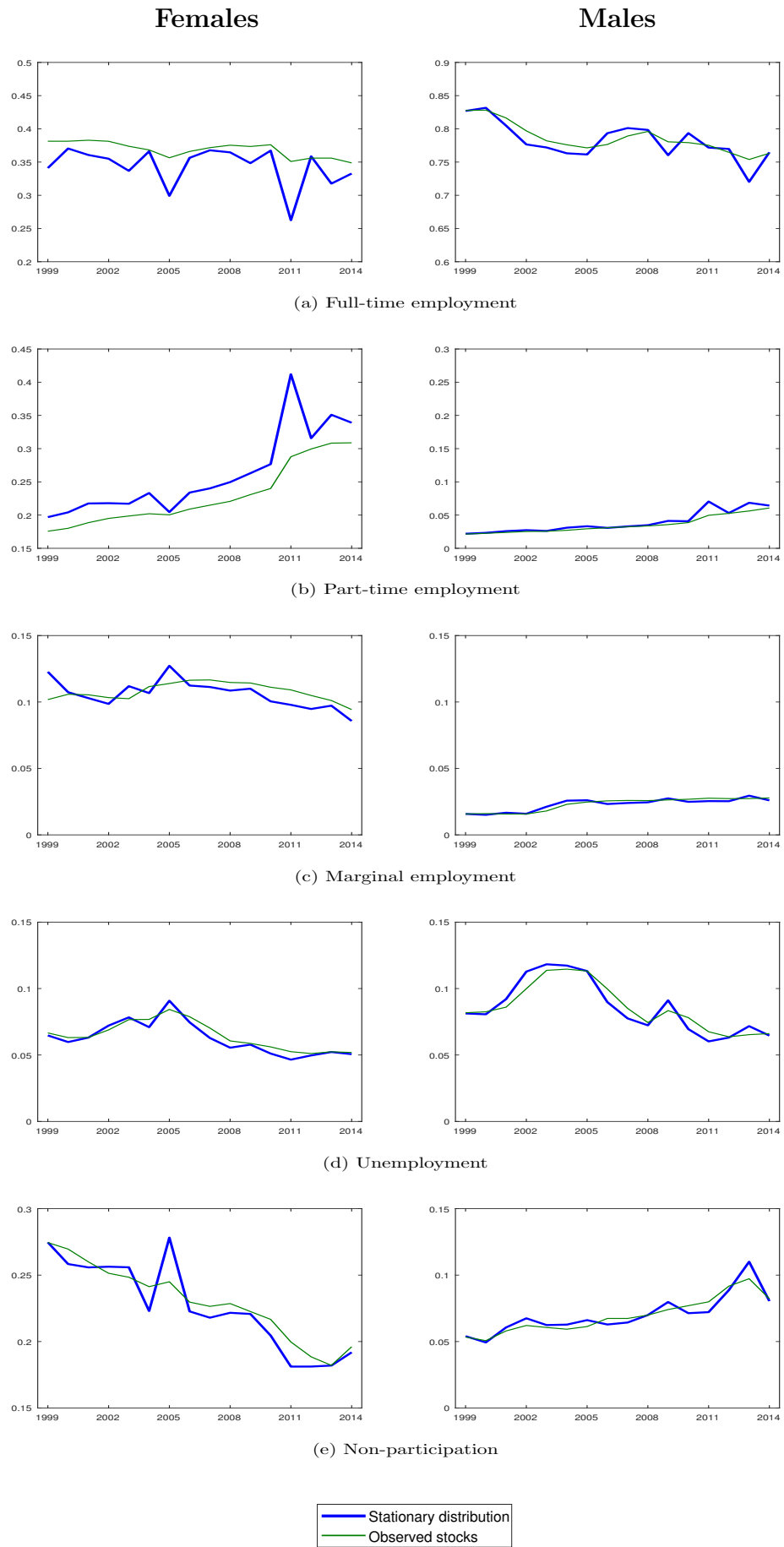


Figure 13: Stationary distribution of labour market states

is as follows. For any two adjacent months within a given year we consider the change in the stocks sampled at the last date of each month. The change in the stock of individuals in any given state is defined as the sum of the inflows from all other states less the sum of the outflows to all other states within the corresponding month. Hence, each row of the monthly transition matrix is estimated as the number of outflows from a given source state to any destination state (including staying in the current state). Summing over all months within a year and dividing by the total number of outflows from this source state over all months within a year gives us the non-parametric estimate of the transition matrix expressed in terms of monthly transition probabilities.¹⁷ We then view this estimate as if it was characterising the long-run transition probability matrix across all labour market states and calculate the corresponding stationary distribution of the labour market states. This stationary distribution is the normalised left eigenvector associated to the eigenvalue 1 of the estimated transition probability matrix.

The proportions based on flow data fluctuate slightly more (despite the yearly averaging of monthly rates) but yet follow very closely the observed stocks in all labour market states. A key implication from this exercise is that in Germany any policy that affects the monthly flows very soon shows up in the stocks. We believe this is remarkable given the common view that the German labour market is not as fluid as the Anglo-Saxon labour markets.

5.2 Counterfactual simulations

Now that we have demonstrated the ability of the flows to predict the stocks, we can then move on to determine which flows are the main drivers of the observed dynamics of the stocks.

Our starting point is the estimated transition probability matrix for 2002, just before the start of the Hartz reforms. Each row of this matrix contains the transition probabilities from one particular state, say unemployment. We then conduct counterfactual simulations that apply all observed changes to transitions from one particular state in all years after 2002, but keeps constant the other transition probabilities to their 2002 value. Figures 14-18 depict the evolution of the stocks predicted by our counterfactual exercise, and compare it to the actual ones.

Figure 14 shows the changes in all stocks that would have been observed had the transition probabilities from unemployment (i.e. outflow probabilities) changed as observed after 2002. As suggested from the flow analysis in Section 4.1, these probabilities obviously do little to explain the observed changes in the different forms of employment (full-time, contributing part-time or marginal). For both men and women, unemployment is reduced and non-participation is increased in equal proportions. For women, this mechanism suffices

¹⁷The SIAB does not measure the stocks of non-participants, but at the same time allows us to determine the outflows from non-participation to any other state and inflows from any other state to non-participation quite precisely. Consequently, only the number of stayers in non-participation between any two adjacent months is missing. We estimate this number using OECD aggregate statistics on non-participation. Data Appendix gives detailed account of how this is done.

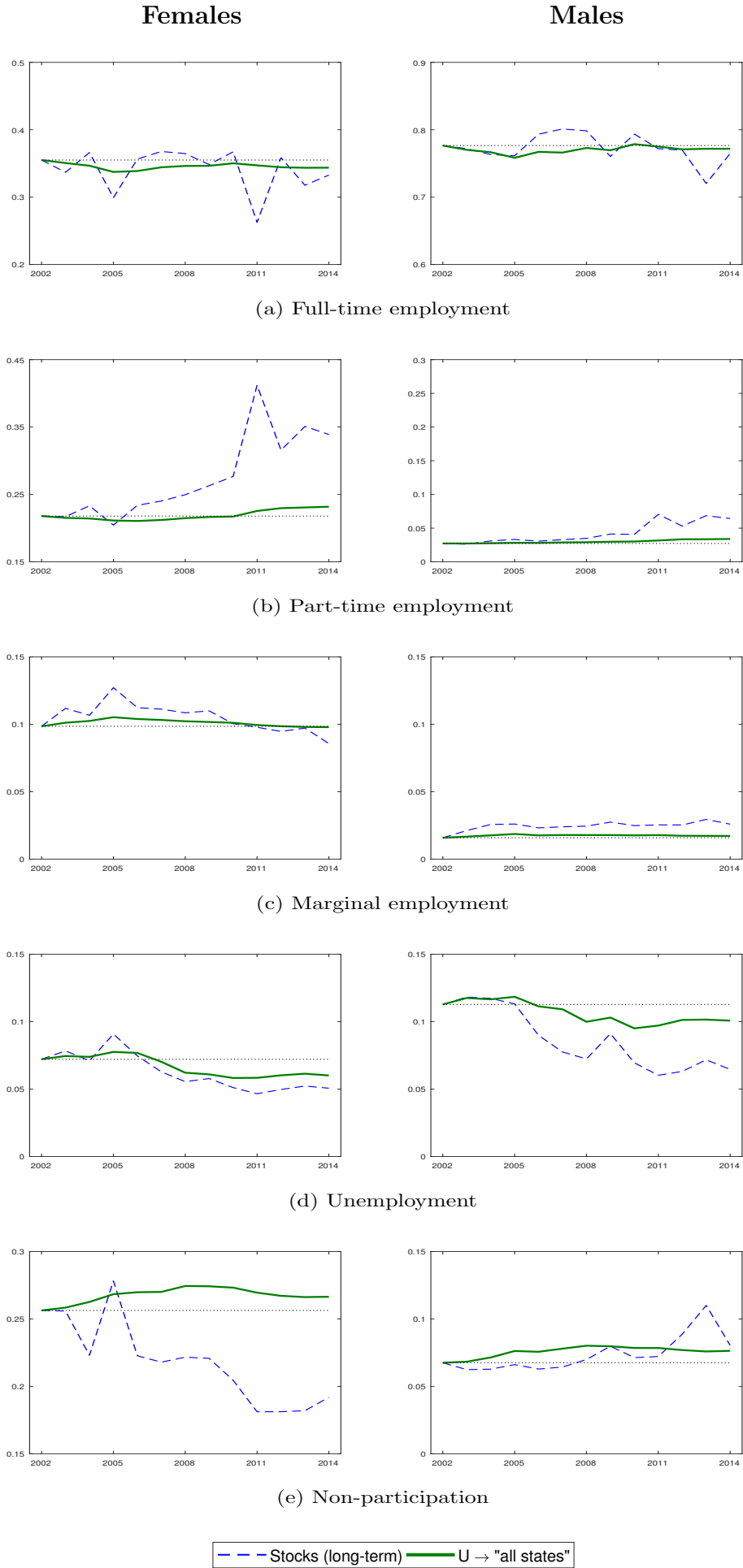


Figure 14: Counterfactual simulations where only transitions from unemployment change

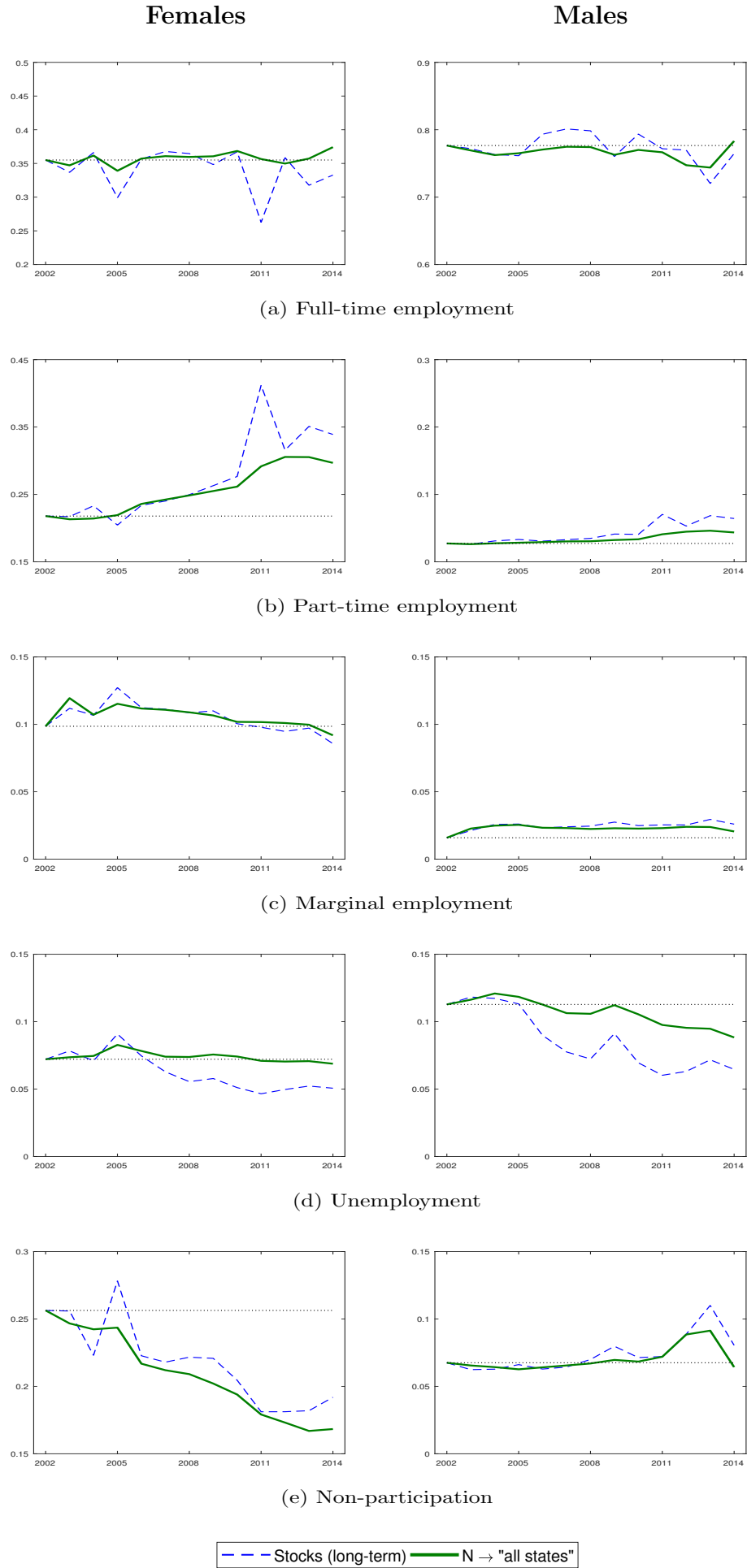


Figure 15: Counterfactual simulations where only transitions from non-participation change

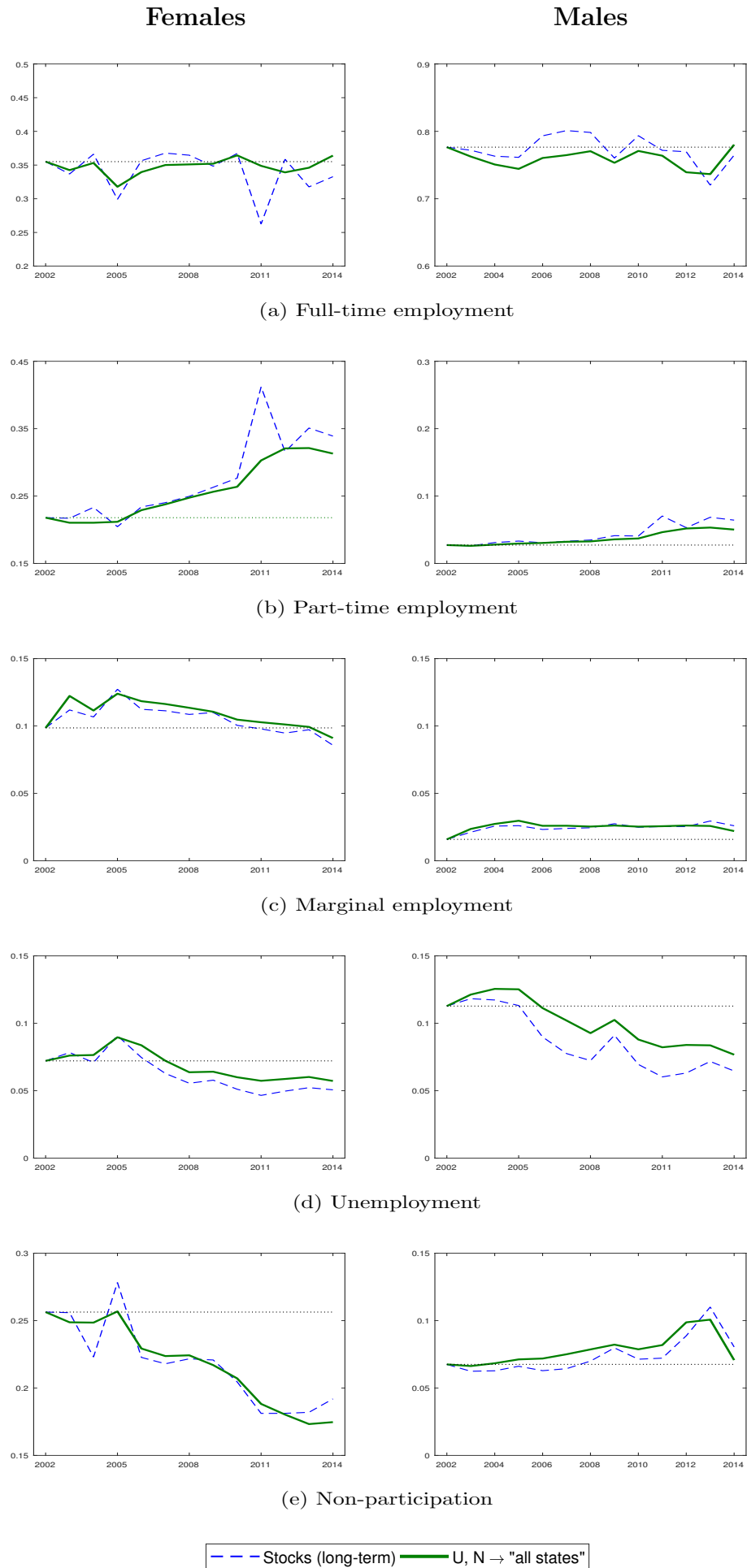


Figure 16: Counterfactual simulations where only transitions from unemployment and non-participation change

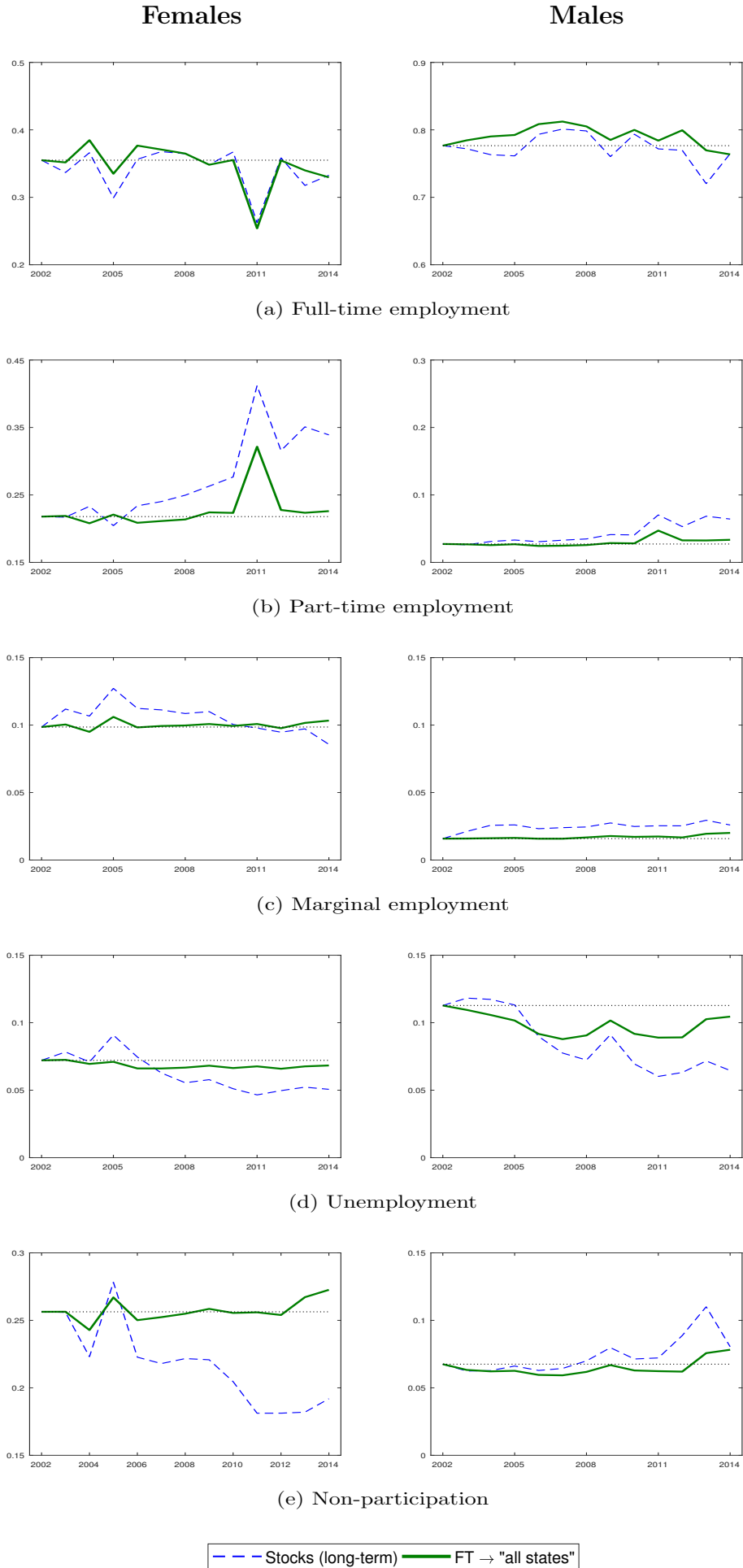


Figure 17: Counterfactual simulations where only transitions from full-time employment change

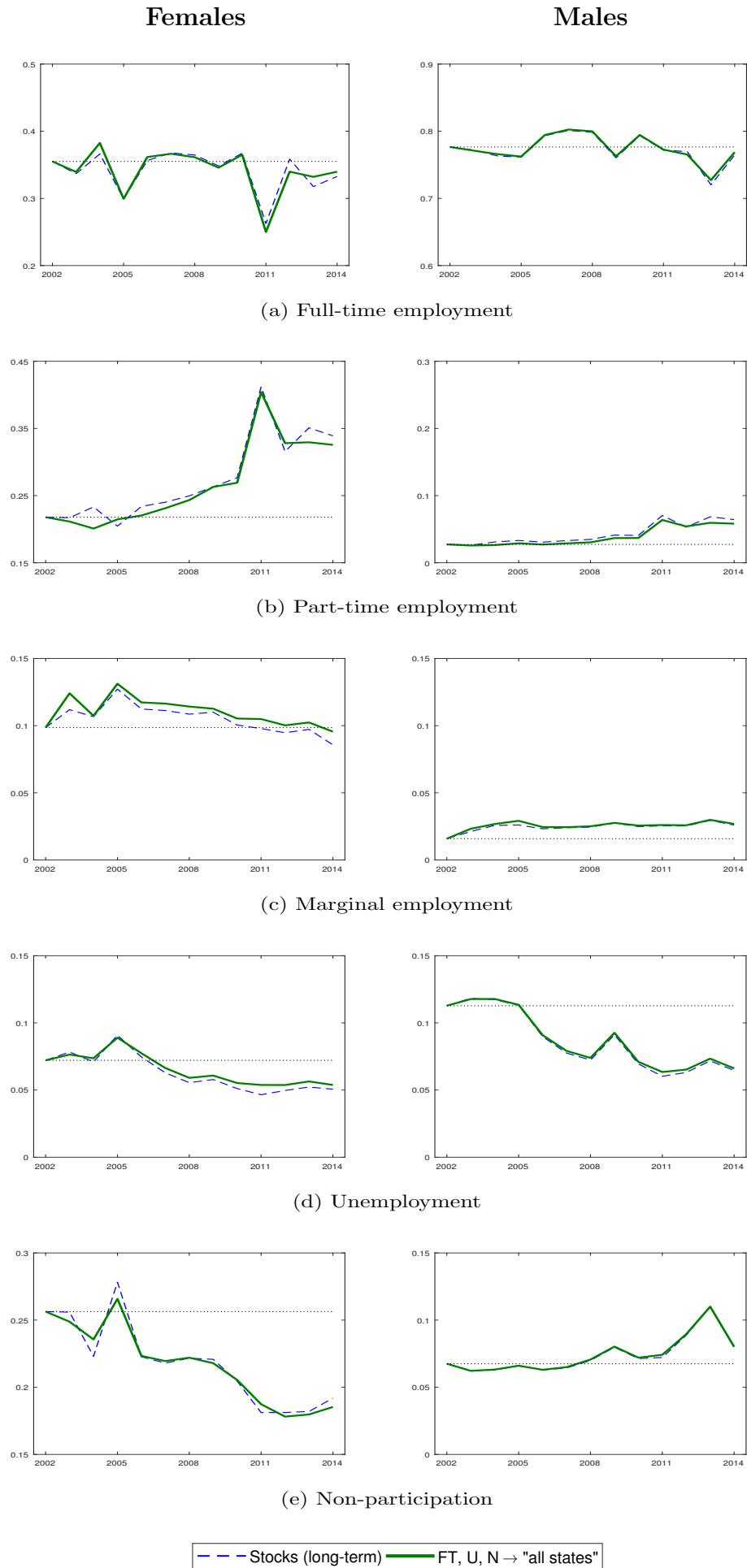


Figure 18: Counterfactual simulations where only transitions from full-time employment, unemployment and non-participation change²⁹

to explain most of the reduction in unemployment soon after 2002, but progressively loses power, to only explain $\frac{0.060-0.072}{0.051-0.072} = 56\%$ of the reduction when comparing 2002 to 2014. For males, unemployment outflows have even less traction on the change in unemployment. They only explain $\frac{0.101-0.113}{0.065-0.113} = 25\%$ of the reduction in male unemployment, when comparing 2002 to 2014. This suggests that the stringent conditions imposed by the Hartz reforms on unemployed workers seem unable to explain, on their own, the large reduction in unemployment by way of outflows.

Figure 15 considers only changes to transitions from non-participation to all other states. This counterfactual does very well in capturing the observed changes in the different forms of employment and non-participation. It picks up the increase in part-time work (contributing and marginal) as well as the strong decrease in female non-participation and the more moderate increase in male non-participation. The outflows from non-participation do nothing to explain female unemployment. In contrast non-participation outflows do explain part of the reduction in male unemployment. This last point was not totally obvious from the flow analysis of the previous section. Over time, there are fewer transitions of male prime-aged workers from non-participation to any other states, which increases the stock of non-participants. There are also fewer transitions to unemployment (a non-registered unemployed would register again) and to full-time jobs, which decreases the corresponding stocks, but more transitions from non-participation to part-time jobs.

Figure 16 shows the simulations results obtained using transition outflow probabilities from *both* unemployment and non-participation. The key characteristics of this exercise is that it captures the net flows associated with unemployment depicted in Figure 7. The main lesson is then that the Hartz reforms not only pushed workers out of unemployment, but also brought them back to work using non-participation as a siphon. The flow analysis presented in Section 4 suggests that this occurred due to the interplay of Hartz II and Hartz IV. The former increased the cost of registering as unemployed, while the latter improved the availability of part-time employment, in particular in the form of mini-jobs.

As our previous discussion suggested, the fit is very good for females. The fit for males is also good, but male full-time employment is slightly underestimated, and unemployment overestimated. To understand this discrepancies, one last mechanism remains to be uncovered for men, which is illustrated in Figure 17. Here we show the counterfactual simulation where only transitions from full-time employment are allowed to change. For male workers, we observe that full-time goes up and unemployment goes down. This may reflect the effect of employer-employee negotiations, in particular wage moderation, which have made firms more resilient to productivity shocks and less likely to layoff full-time workers. Moreover, the magnitude of the reduction in male unemployment induced by unemployment and non-participation outflows, on one hand, and that induced by full-time employment outflows, on the other hand, are similar.

The above arguments then suggests that the Hartz reforms and the negotiations of trade unions and employers associations on wages may have been going hand in hand to push

unemployment down in the ten years that followed the joint efforts of workers, employers and government to revitalize the German economy in the early 2000s. Indeed, Figure 18 shows that when taking into account the change in the transitions outflow probabilities from full-time employment, unemployment and non-participation jointly the fit is now very good for for male workers. We now turn to explore the effects of wage moderation and the Hartz reforms in more detail by means of a theoretical model.

6 The importance of wage moderation and the Hartz reforms

The gross and net flows documented in the previous sections reveal that the German labour market can be characterised by a dynamic system which exhibits a clear pattern. For men, full-time employment decreases over time mainly because of net outflows into unemployment, and unemployment decreases after 2005 because of net flows into non-participation, which is another term for long-term unemployment. For female workers, labor force participation increases because non-participation effectively siphoned (long-term) unemployed workers into part-time, low paying jobs. However, for a considerable number of female workers marginal employment represents a steeping stone into contributing part-time and full-time employment.

What are the main causes behind these flows? Our counterfactual analysis suggests that the Hartz reforms, possibly by increasing monitoring and incentives to accept any kind of job and making unemployment a less desirable state, pushed many individuals into non-participation. Fewer workers flow from unemployment to employment essentially because there are fewer workers unemployed.

However, these reforms do not fully explain the labour market dynamics of male workers. The Hartz reforms boosted the creation of part-time jobs that unemployed women were happy to accept, but not men. For men, registered unemployment went down but unregistered unemployment went up, roughly in equal proportions. We do see a decrease in the gross flows from full-time employment into unemployment after 2002. This is consistent with wage moderation reducing firms' incentives to layoff otherwise unprofitable workers. A decrease in labour costs should also tend to increase flows from unemployment to full-time employment as firms increase their hiring. However, we do not see that in the data. Flows from unemployment to full-time employment also decreased after 2002-2003.

This is puzzling. Are the observed flows evidence that something else happened in the early 2000s on the labor demand side? To answer this question we now design and calibrate a simple search and matching model in the Diamond-Mortensen-Pissarides (DMP) tradition to understand the interplay between wage moderation and the Hartz reforms in more detail. Our aim is keep the model as parsimonious as possible, but still with the ability to meaningfully capture changes in policy variables.

6.1 A search-matching model

Consider a DMP economy in continuous time where a unit mass of risk neutral workers populate the economy. Workers can be in either of four labour market states: non-participation n , unemployment u , part-time employment p , or full-time employment f , such that $1 = n + u + p + f$. We simplify the model by subsuming marginal into part-time employment.¹⁸ Non-participants receive flow income z_n , while unemployed individuals receive $z_u > z_n$. We assume that non-participation and unemployment are essentially two exchangeable unemployment states, and the two-way flows documented in Section 4 are modelled as two exogenous and independent Poisson processes, such that at rate χ_u a non-participant becomes unemployed and at rate χ_n an unemployed worker becomes non-participant.

There is also a mass of risk neutral firms, whose size is determined by free-entry. Firms post vacancies based on two types of contracts: part-time and full-time. Let v_p and v_f denote the measure of vacancies associated with each type of contract. The flow costs of posting each type of vacancies are c_p and c_f . Once filled these jobs have flow marginal productivities x_p and x_f , respectively, such that $x_f \geq x_p > z_u$. To capture that in the data we observe transitions from full-time or part-time employment to unemployment and non-participation, we allow for heterogeneity in job destruction rates. Let δ_p^n denote the (Poisson) rate at which a part-time job (p) is destroyed such that the worker becomes a non-participant and δ_p^u denote the rate at which a part-time job is destroyed and the worker becomes unemployed. Similarly, let δ_f^n (δ_f^u) denote the job destruction rate of a full-time job (f) such that the worker becomes non-participant (unemployed). In addition we will assume that f -workers do not consider p -jobs as a valid alternative, but at rate δ_f^p they get involuntarily reallocated to a part-time job. This could be the outcome of a displacement shock after which the f -worker found a p -job very quickly and hence can be considered as an involuntary job-to-job transition with a wage cut.

Endogenous meetings. Matches between firms and workers are random and mediated by two constant return to scale matching functions, one for each type of contract:

$$m_p(n + us_u^p, v_p), \quad m_f(n + us_u^f + ps_p^f, v_f),$$

¹⁸This has two consequences for our analysis. The first one is that we will not be able to capture the stepping stones dynamics documented between mini-jobs and contributing part-time work. However, as briefly discussed in Section 4.4, nearly half of these transitions involved moonlighting, whereby the mini-jobber changed his/her main employment to a contributing part-time contract but did not leave his/her mini-job. This, we believe, was due to the reforms introduced by Hartz II, which allowed worker to keep their mini-job as a secondary employment tax-free. Capturing these complexities, although interesting, is beyond the scope of our exercise. The second implication has to do with the outside option of part-time workers in the Nash bargaining protocol, which we will assume to be unemployment. This simplifying assumption does not capture the fact that mini-jobbers are not entitled to benefits. Nevertheless we take this into account when computing the effective unemployment benefits from the data for our calibration.

where s_i^j refers to the relative search intensities of $i = n, u, p$ workers searching for $j = p, f$ jobs, after an arbitrary normalisation for n individuals.¹⁹ Under constant returns to scale in matching, the respective labour market tightness θ , job filling rates $q(\theta)$ and job finding rates $\lambda(\theta)$ are given by

$$\begin{aligned}\theta_p &= \frac{v_p}{n + us_u^p}, & q(\theta_p) &= \frac{m_p}{v_p} = q_p, & \lambda(\theta_p) &= \frac{m_p}{n + us_u^p} = \theta_p q(\theta_p) = \lambda_p, \\ \theta_f &= \frac{v_f}{n + us_u^f + ps_p^f}, & q(\theta_f) &= \frac{m_f}{v_f} = q_f, & \lambda(\theta_f) &= \frac{m_f}{n + us_u^f + ps_p^f} = \theta_f q(\theta_f) = \lambda_f.\end{aligned}$$

Note that the above specification omits any explicit gender differences among worker types. This simplification is done as the distinction between part-time and full-time contracts already captures these differences quite well as documented in Sections 3.1 and 4.²⁰

Unemployment values. We think of unemployment and non-participation as just two non-employment states with their own flow benefit z , and their own transformation probability χ into the other non-employment state. Using standard arguments, the Bellman equations that describe the expected values of unemployment and non-participation are given by

$$rU_n = z_n + \lambda_p(W_p - U_n) + \lambda_f(W_f - U_n) + \chi_u(U_u - U_n), \quad (1)$$

$$rU_u = z_u + \lambda_p s_u^p(W_p - U_u) + \lambda_f s_u^f(W_f - U_u) + \chi_n(U_n - U_u), \quad (2)$$

where r denotes the discount rate and W_p, W_f the worker's expected values from employment in part-time and full-time jobs.

Vacancy creation. The expected values of part-time and full-time vacancies are given by

$$rV_p = -c_p + q_p(J_p - V_p),$$

$$rV_f = -c_f + q_f(J_f - V_f),$$

and free entry implies $V_p = V_f = 0$. The expected values of filled part-time and full-time jobs given wages w_p and w_f are in turn

$$rJ_p = x_p - w_p - (\delta_p + \lambda_f s_p^f)J_p, \quad (3)$$

$$rJ_f = x_f - w_f - \delta_f J_f, \quad (4)$$

where $\delta_p = \delta_p^n + \delta_p^u$ and $\delta_f = \delta_f^n + \delta_f^u + \delta_f^p$.

¹⁹For simplicity we neglect the source of congestion represented by full-time workers being reallocated to a part-time job (exogenous probability δ_f^p).

²⁰The caveat to the above statement is that around of 40% of females workers are employed in full-time contracts (see Figure 3a). Nevertheless, the important female labour market dynamics that we want to highlight with our model is between non-participation and part-time employment and to full-time employment.

Employment values and wages. In the case of employed workers the expected values of part-time and full-time employment, given wages w_p and w_f , are

$$rW_p = w_p + \delta_p^u(U_u - W_p) + \delta_p^n(U_n - W_p) + \lambda_f s_p^f(W_f - W_p), \quad (5)$$

$$rW_f = w_f + \delta_f^u(U_u - W_f) + \delta_f^n(U_n - W_f) + \delta_f^p(W_p - W_f). \quad (6)$$

As it is standard in the DMP framework, wages w_p and w_f are determined by Nash bargaining. To avoid having two part-time and three full-time wages, depending on the worker's current labour market state at the moment of search, we assume that part-time and full-time wages are obtained using unemployment as the common outside option. This simplification implies that

$$W_p - U_u = \frac{\beta_p}{1 - \beta_p} J_p = \frac{\beta_p}{1 - \beta_p} \left[\frac{x_p - w_p}{r + \delta_p + \lambda_f s_p^f} \right],$$

$$W_f - U_u = \frac{\beta_f}{1 - \beta_f} J_f = \frac{\beta_f}{1 - \beta_f} \left[\frac{x_f - w_f}{r + \delta_f} \right],$$

where β_i for $i = p, f$ denotes the worker's exogenous bargaining power parameter for each type of contract.

Equilibrium solution. The above model can be solve by first noting that equations (6) and (5) yield

$$W_f - U_u = \frac{w_f - rU_u + \delta_f^n(U_n - U_u) + \delta_f^p(W_p - U_u)}{r + \delta_f}, \quad (7)$$

$$W_p - U_u = \frac{w_p - rU_u + \delta_p^n(U_n - U_u) + \lambda_f s_p^f(W_f - U_u)}{r + \delta_p + \lambda_f s_p^f}. \quad (8)$$

Solving for J_p and J_f using equations (3) and (4), and using the Nash bargaining conditions yields the following wage equations:

$$w_f = \beta_f x_f + (1 - \beta_f) \left[rU_u - \delta_f^n(U_n - U_u) - \delta_f^p \left(\frac{\beta_p}{1 - \beta_p} \right) \left(\frac{x_p - w_p}{r + \delta_p + \lambda_p s_p^f} \right) \right], \quad (9)$$

$$w_p = \beta_p x_p + (1 - \beta_p) \left[rU_u - \delta_p^n(U_n - U_u) - \lambda_f s_p^f \left(\frac{\beta_f}{1 - \beta_f} \right) \left(\frac{x_f - w_f}{r + \delta_f} \right) \right]. \quad (10)$$

Note that the equation for w_f is the same as in the canonical DMP model with the exception of the two last terms in the squared brackets, which capture that full-time workers might end up as non-participants or in part-time employment after a job destruction shock. The equation for w_p also captures that part-time workers might end up as non-participants after a job destruction shock, but also that they can become full-time workers after meeting a full-time vacancy.

One can easily verify that plugging the wages from equations (9), (10) in equations (7) and (8), and then using equations (1) and (2) allows to solve for values $W_i, i = p, f, U_j, j = u, n$.

Table 1: Calibration moments and parameters

	1999-2004	2007-2014		1999-2004	2007-2014
Worker transition rates			Matching function		
λ_p	0.0267	0.0391	η	0.35	0.35
λ_f	0.0378	0.0481	ϕ_p	0.084	0.103
χ_u	0.0451	0.0517	ϕ_f	0.101	0.110
s_u^p	0.3475	0.2433	Vacancy costs		
s_u^f	0.9663	0.6022	c_p	$7.657x_p$	$8.938x_p$
χ_n	0.0963	0.1299	c_f	$5.824x_f$	$7.276x_f$
δ_p^u	0.0043	0.0027	Flow payoffs		
δ_p^n	0.0214	0.0224	x_p	22.6	25.5
s_p^f	0.1504	0.1331	x_f	22.6	25.5
δ_f^u	0.0064	0.0041	w_p	13.98	12.45
δ_f^n	0.0108	0.0125	w_f	17.73	17.13
δ_f^p	0.0015	0.0025	z_u	7.81	6.21
Vacancy transition rates			z_n	3.62	0
q_p	0.7140	0.6231	Bargaining		
q_f	0.6189	0.5161	β_p	0.177	0.143
			β_f	0.485	0.393

Then, the free entry conditions $c_i/q_i = J_i$ for $i = p, f$, give equilibrium solutions for the labour market tightness, θ_p and θ_f .

6.2 Calibration

We now turn to analyse the data through the lenses of the above model. Our aim is to use our framework to evaluate the impact of the Hartz reforms and that of wage moderation in explaining the stock of non-participants, unemployed and employed in part-time and in full-time jobs. For this purpose we separately calibrate the model for the 1999-2004 and the 2007-2014 periods. Our assumption is that both periods represent different steady-states and that the reforms implemented during the first period took the Germany labour market to the 2007-2014 steady-state. We leave a few years out between these two periods to allow for the effects of the reforms (if any) to set in.

We set a time period to be a month and fix $r = 0.0042$ to represent a yearly discount rate of 5.2%. Table 1 shows the vector $\Omega = \{\lambda_p, \lambda_f, s_u^p, s_u^f, s_n^p, s_n^f, s_p^f, \delta_p^u, \delta_p^n, \delta_f^u, \delta_f^n, \chi_u, \chi_n\}$ of worker transition rates, which are identified directly from the average monthly transition rates observed in the SIAB data.

We can also directly compute the job filling rates for part-time and full-time jobs in Germany using the IAB Job Vacancy Survey (JVS). The JVS is a representative cross-sectional survey of establishments that has been running since 1990s' and that collects information about their search and hiring practices. It reports daily vacancy durations as the difference between the date the establishment started searching for a worker and the date the worker accepted, as well as providing information on whether the job was part-time (including mini-

jobs) or full-time and the age of the worker appointed.²¹ Using only those vacancies filled by workers between 25-54 years old, we find that the average duration of a part-time (full-time) vacancy is 42.02 (48.47) days and 48.15 (58.13) days during the 1999-2004 and 2007-2014 periods, respectively. Table 1 then shows the corresponding monthly job filling rates, q_i .

As standard in the DMP literature, we consider a Cobb-Douglas specification such that $\lambda(\theta_i) = \phi_i \theta_i^{\eta_i}$, where ϕ_i denotes matching efficiency and η_i the elasticity of λ_i with respect to labour market tightness θ_i for $i = p, f$. We further assume that $\eta_p = \eta_f = \eta$ and following Kohlbrecher et al. (2016), who estimate a matching function for Germany using SIAB and official vacancy rates on a monthly basis from 1993 to 2007, set $\eta = 0.35$ (see also Shimer, 2005, for a similar value). The matching efficiency parameters ϕ_i can then be directly recovered by using the values of λ_i and q_i to obtain $\theta_i = \lambda_i/q_i$ for $i = p, f$ and the definition of the job finding rate, which leads to the parameter values reported in Table 1.

To obtain estimates of the marginal productivities of part-time and full-time jobs, we first regress quarterly real GDP on total full-time hours worked and total part-time hours worked to investigate whether there are significant differences between x_p and x_f within a period. Consistently across many specifications we find that we can safely reject the hypothesis of $x_f \neq x_p$. In light of this finding we calculate average real GDP per hour (in 2010 prices) separately for each periods and use these values as our measures of productivity in our benchmark calibration, such that $x_f = x_p = 22.6$ euros per hour in 1999-2004 and $x_f = x_p = 25.5$ euros per hour in 2007-2014 as reported in Table 1.²² Using information on hourly real wages for full-time and part-time workers from the GSEOP (also in 2010 prices), we then calibrate the flow costs of filling a vacancy through the corresponding free-entry conditions such that $c_p = (x_p - w_p)q_p/(r + \delta_p + s_p^f \lambda_f)$ and $c_f = (x_f - w_f)q_f/(r + \delta_f)$. Table 1 show that these represent between 5.8 and 7.3 times the productivity of full-time contracts and between 7.7 and 8.9 times of productivity of part-time contracts.²³

We calibrate the values of the flow payoffs while non-employed, z_n and z_u , by interpreting them as the social assistance benefits and unemployment insurance benefits, respectively. The former is calculated as the real hourly social assistance per household member (in 2010 prices) obtained from the GSOEP. Table 1 shows that these fall from 3.62 euros an hour to zero after the Hartz reforms. The computation of the unemployment insurance benefits is

²¹Most of the information collected in the JVS pertains to the last vacancy the establishment filled during the last 12 months in relation to the interview data, which lies in the last quarter of a year. To ensure the representativeness of our estimates, we use establishment weights which are computed as the product of the survey weights for each establishment and the total number of hires the establishment made in the last 12 months.

²²These values confirms that average productivity in Germany hardly increased throughout the 1999-2014 period as suggested by Dustmann et al. (2014).

²³As an alternative calibration we also used the estimated (but not statistically different from each other) values of x_p and x_f obtained from regressing quarterly GDP on total full-time hours worked and total part-time hours worked and a quadratic time trend for the period 1999-2014. These values are $x_p = 18.66$ and $x_f = 21.13$. Using the latter does not meaningfully change our main conclusions. One can also fix the values of c following the evidence of Silva and Toledo (2009) for the US and usage of Hall and Milgrom (2008) who suggest a c around 35% of labour productivity. Using this value, however, yields counterfactually high values of average wages.

Table 2: Fit of the model

Fit of the model					
	1999-2004	2007-2014		1999-2004	2007-2014
Model			Data		
n	0.1658	0.1469	n	0.1633	0.1458
u	0.0835	0.0623	u	0.0821	0.0646
p	0.1931	0.2440	p	0.1757	0.2262
f	0.5576	0.5468	f	0.5790	0.5634
v	0.0241	0.0304	v	0.029	0.028

more involved as we have to take into account the proportion of unemployed workers who are eligible for receiving the benefits and how these benefits differ across the short-term and long-term unemployed. Here we take into account, for example, that mini-jobbers are not entitled to unemployment benefits and that not all workers would pass the means test.²⁴ For the period 1999-2004, our calculations yield a value of $z_u^f = 8.27$ per hour for those who lost a full-time job and $z_u^p = 4.98$ per hour for those who lost a part-time job. For the period 2007-2014, we obtain a value of $z_u^f = 6.81$ per hour for those who lost a full-time job and $z_u^p = 3.78$ per hour for those who lost a part-time job. Since in our model we abstract from differences in z_u by the type of contract the worker held immediately prior displacement, we take $z_u = fz_u^f + pz_u^p$, where f and p denote the proportions of worker employed in a full-time and part-time contract, respectively, as reported in Table 1.²⁵

Finally, we use the wage equations to recover the workers' bargaining powers β_p and β_f , where given the values of the rest of the parameters we use the Bellman equations and wage bargaining conditions described earlier to solve for U_u and U_n . Note that we obtain relative low values of β_p across periods, which reflect the low values of w_p obtained from aggregating contributing part-time and marginal employment into a single category.²⁶

6.3 Results

Table 2 shows that the fit of the model is very good. It shows the values of n , u , p and f obtained from the flow-balance equations implied by our model together with their data coun-

²⁴The flow income of unemployed workers is computed as an expected flow income. It accounts for the probability of entitlement to (i) unemployment insurance benefits, (ii) unemployment assistance benefits and (iii) social assistance. All required probabilities are either obtained using GSEOP data or taken from the estimates of Launov and Wälde (2013). Detailed calculations are available upon request.

²⁵As an alternative we also consider a calibration where in addition to social assistance and unemployment insurance we take the value of leisure. Hall and Milgrom (2008) propose a way to calculate the value of leisure by maximizing consumption and hour pairs, requiring further assumptions on the parametrization of individuals utility function (including the levels of risk aversion and Frisch elasticity) which lie outside our model. Nevertheless, this procedure leads to a value of leisure of around 35% of the average w_p across the 1999-2014 period and hence values of $z_u = [10.46, 17.90]$ and $z_n = [8.24, 4.63]$. Although under this calibration strategy we obtain much larger flow payoffs of non-market time, our main conclusions remain unchanged.

²⁶Using GSEOP data we obtained that the average hourly real wage for contributing part-time and mini-jobs is 15.07 and 10.53 euros, respectively, during the 1999-2004 period, and 14.05 and 8.48 euros during the 2007-2014 period.

Table 3: Counterfactual effects of labour market reforms and wage moderation

Full model			Counterfactual exercises				
	Baseline 99-04	Target 07-14	Matching Efficiency	Long-term UI	Match. Eff. + UI	Wage Moderation	Labour Mrkt + Wage Mod.
Model							
n	0.1658	0.1469	0.1401	0.1595	0.1397	0.1500	0.1271
u	0.0835	0.0623	0.0718	0.0646	0.0578	0.0729	0.0549
p	0.1931	0.2440	0.2316	0.2170	0.2389	0.2138	0.2397
f	0.5576	0.5468	0.5565	0.5589	0.5636	0.5634	0.5783
v	0.0241	0.0304	0.0270	0.0324	0.0317	0.0370	0.0425
v_p	0.0073	0.0102	0.0109	0.0128	0.0133	0.0132	0.0167
v_f	0.0168	0.0202	0.0161	0.0196	0.0184	0.0238	0.0258

terparts. The model reproduces very well the average unemployment and non-participation rates in both periods, but slightly under-predicts (over-predicts) the share of full-time (part-time) workers. Table 3 also shows the values $v = v_p + v_f$, where v_i can be obtained from the definition of labour market tightness for $i = p, f$. The aggregate vacancy rate v implied by our model is inline with the official vacancy rates reported by EUROSTAT for each period.

The effects of the Hartz reforms. We now turn to investigate the effects of the Hartz reforms on changes in u , n , p and f . We do this in three stages. In the first stage we model the set of reforms in Hartz I, II and III as an increase in matching efficiency. As documented in Section (2.1) these reforms explicitly aimed at improving the pairing of workers and vacancies through job centres (Hartz III); as well as making it easier for firms to post and workers to find part-time employment, particularly in the form of a mini-job by creating the *Minijobzentrale*, lifting their maximum number of hours and increasing their monthly wages (Hartz II); they finally deregulated and enhanced temporary employment, and implemented occupational training programmes (Hartz I). We ask whether these reforms on their own are able to predict the stocks observed in the 2007-2014 period. To do this, we simulate the economy holding constant all the parameters at their 1999-2004 values except for ϕ_p, ϕ_f , which we set to their 2007-2014 values.

In the second stage we model Hartz IV as a change in the flow benefits of non-employment and the rate at which the unemployed transit into non-participation. This is motivated by the fact that the Hartz IV reforms reduced the unemployment insurance and social assistance payments, and made it more demanding for unemployed workers to keep collecting benefits, effectively increasing the cost of registration with the Federal Employment Agency. To investigate whether Hartz IV on its own can predict the stocks observed in the 2007-2014 period, we set z_u, z_n and χ_n to their 2007-2014 values, while keeping the rest of the parameters constant at their 1999-2004 values. In the last stage we investigate the combined effect of all these reforms together by setting only the respective parameters to their 2007-2014.

The results from these exercises are reported in Table 3. They take as a point of departure the values of u , n , p and f reported under the 1999-2004 columns and need to be compared

relative to the values of u , n , p and f reported under the 2007-2014 columns. We find that changing matching efficiency (Hartz I-III) had the strongest effect on non-participation and part-time employment and the least effect on unemployment. They explain all of the reduction in non-participation, nearly all the increase (decrease) in part-time (full-time) employment, but about half of the reduction in unemployment. In contrast, a more strict and less generous unemployment insurance system (Hartz IV) had the biggest impact on unemployment. On its own it explains nearly all of the reduction in unemployment, but a smaller proportion of the change in n and p . Note that the effects of Hartz IV are due to *both* the increase in χ_n and the reduction in z_n and z_u . The latter implies a strong increase in vacancy creation (as workers' outside options fall and firms can command higher rents) and hence an increase in the job finding rates for both types of jobs. Changing z_n and z_u on their own can explain 33% of the reduction in unemployment and 80% of the decrease in non-participation. The effect of χ_n adds the extra force needed to reduce unemployment further.

Taken together, improved matching efficiency and less generous long-term unemployment insurance (column "Match. Eff. + UI" in Table 3) account for the observed reduction in non-participation and unemployment and at the same time most of the observed increase in part-time work. These results are remarkably consistent with the simulations based on the stationary distributions reported in Section (5.2), as well as with the flow analysis presented in Section (4). However, our counterfactual exercises imply that these reforms should have generated an increase in full-time employment from 0.558 to 0.564, which partially accounts for the overshooting in the reductions of n and u .

The effects of wage moderation. Next we investigate the effects of wage moderation on the changes of the u , n , p and f stocks. We model wage moderation as a decrease in the bargaining power of full-time and part-time workers, a decrease in the job separation probabilities, and a decrease in the search intensities of the unemployed and part-time workers. These latter changes would occur endogenously if we were to allow for fluctuations of match-specific productivities as modelled by Mortensen and Pissarides (1994) and endogenise workers' search intensities. In this latter setting, a reduction in workers' bargaining power would imply larger match rents and hence a reduction in the endogenous separation cut-off productivity. In turn, since firms appropriate more of these match surplus and offer lower wages, workers would naturally decrease their job search effort as the value of employment becomes less attractive. Since we are deliberately keeping our analysis as parsimonious as possible, here we do not develop this version of the model but captures its features in reduced form. We analyse the effect of wage moderation by simulating our economy and calculating the steady state measures of u , n , p and f holding all the parameters constant at their 1999-2004 values except for β_i , δ_i^u , δ_i^n , s_u^i ($i = p, f$) and s_p^f which we set to their 2007-2014 values.

The results of this exercise are reported in Table 3, column "Wage Moderation". As

before we take as a point of departure the values of u , n , p and f reported under the 1999-2004 columns and need to be compared relative to the values of u , n , p and f reported under the 2007-2014 columns. Under this counterfactual part-time workers' wages hardly changed between the two periods (from 13.98 to 13.99 euros), while full-time workers' wages experienced a slight decrease (from 17.73 to 17.35 euros).²⁷

A key finding is that wage moderation does have an important effect on the reduction in unemployment and non-participation. It can explain about 50% of the reduction in unemployment and about 80% in the reduction of non-participation between the two periods. This occurs due to both the inflow and outflow margins, as firms create more vacancies due to the reduction in the risk of job separation and the increase in per period profits due to lower workers' bargaining power. Our simulations show that firms reacted to wage moderation by creating more part-time jobs, accounting for 40% of the rise in part-time employment. Like in the case of the Hartz reforms, however, firms also reacted to wage moderation by creating more full-time jobs, increasing full-time employment from 0.558 to 0.563.

The combined effects of Hartz and wage moderation. The last column of Table 3 shows the combined effect of the labour market reforms and wage moderation. In this case we simulated the economy and calculated the steady state measures of u , n , p and f holding all the parameters constant at their 1999-2004 values except for all of the parameters associated with these reforms, which we set to their 2007-2014 values. Their combined effect nearly explains the full change in part-time employment, predicting 92% of its increase. However, they also imply a strong increase in full-time employment, leading us to over-predict the reductions in the shares of non-participation and unemployment by 200% and 35%, respectively.

These results suggest that there should be a third force in place explaining the dynamics of the labour market stocks. Our model attributes this force to a rise in the cost of posting vacancies as shown in Table 1. Indeed accounting for the simultaneous increases in productivity and the flow costs of posting a vacancy, the model perfectly predicts the drop in unemployment and non-participation.²⁸ This demand-side effect mainly affects full-time employment. The obvious culprit is the financial crisis which occurs roughly at the beginning of our second period 2007-2014. The German economy seems to be doing better, as

²⁷Changes in the wage moderation parameters have two opposing effect in our model. The reduction in workers' bargaining power directly reduces wages, giving higher rents to firms. In turn this increases vacancy creation, job finding rates and wages, the latter through a higher expected value of unemployment giving workers a higher outside option. This effect is exacerbated by lower job destruction rates and mitigated by the reduction in workers' search intensities. Taken together all the above forces cancel out, maintaining the expected values of part-time and full-time employment essentially constant across the two periods, where the expected value of part-time employment stayed at 3200 euros and the expected value of full-time employment stayed at 3400 euros.

²⁸Note that in this case the model still implies an increase in full-time employment at the expenses of a decrease in the predicted increase in part-time employment. This is expected as in the previous simulation we did not account for the slight increase in δ_f^p . Taking into account this last component, the model then reduces the share of full-time and increases the share of part-time employment in a way that is consistent with our original calibration.

far as full-time employment is concerned, after 2014; full-time employment thus reached an all-time high in the 3rd quarter of 2017 (30031.60 thousand) after the record low of 26748.40 thousand in the first quarter of 2006 (EUROSTAT).

7 Conclusion

In this paper, we show that prime-age unemployment in Germany fell largely because a greater fraction of unemployed workers did no longer register as jobseekers. This in principle should have increased non-participation. However, labour force participation actually increased because many unregistered-unemployed female workers ended up accepting low-paid, part-time work, all kinds of low-quality jobs that were offered in quantity in absence of a minimum wage bound. Male workers were less keen to accept marginal and part-time jobs, and spent more time unemployed, unregistered. Our flow analysis helps understand why, adding registered and unregistered male unemployment, the male non-employment rate did not fall after 2005, while full-time employment went down. For female workers, total non-employment went down and part-time employment went up.

However, tracking worker flows is useful for description, but it says little about the economic mechanisms at work. To dig further, we proceed to a first set of counterfactual analyses. We take the stocks and the flows as of 2002, and adjust outflows as observed later separately for registered unemployment, unregistered unemployment and full-time employment. For women, outflows from unregistered unemployment explain the rise of labour force participation and part-time employment; and registered unemployment outflows explain the fall of unemployment. For men, we find that this is not enough. In order to obtain the right level of unemployment, it is necessary to take into consideration that full-time employment flows (job destruction) have decreased after 2002.

This is a first indication that the labour market reforms of 2002-2004, the Hartz reforms, may not be the only cause for the fall of unemployment in Germany after 2000. The negotiations between worker unions and employers associations at the turn of 2000, that lead them to agree on wage moderation, may or should matter. In order to disentangle labour market reforms from wage moderation, we proceed to a final exercise. We construct a stylised model of the labour market that allows to separate interventions affecting matching efficiency and long-term unemployment insurance (the main tools of the Hartz reforms) from wage moderation and labour hoarding (wage moderation). We find that both interventions have rather similar effects on unemployment. Moreover, the two together drive unemployment below and full-time employment above the observed levels. The reason why German economic actors (workers, employers and government) were not that much successful is because demand was weak. We capture this third mechanism via the cost of vacancy creation, which we find increasing when comparing the periods 1999-2004 and 2007-2014.

Of course this is a very complex machinery that we are trying to understand. Many countervailing forces operate at the same time. This is the reason why we tried to make

our analysis as simple and transparent as possible. We end our paper on an optimistic note. Germany worked hard to implement structural reforms for more than ten years. We suspect that it could have been even more successful had global demand been more favourable. The most recent period after 2014, which is not in our data, witnessed the implementation of a legal minimum wage that does not seem to have generated serious drawbacks; we also see full-time employment increasing. This gives us confidence that our empirical analysis and our simple model may have captured an important part of the truth.

A Data Appendix

This appendix provides further details on construction of stocks, flows and transition matrices.

A.1 Stocks

Stocks comprise only individuals with simultaneous presence in at most two states of the labour market at the date of sampling. For every year the reported stocks are the averages of the twelve stock samples drawn at the last date of each month. The SIAB does not contain civil servants in government employment (*Beamte*) since this category of workers is exempt from paying contributions to unemployment insurance by German law. We also drop apprentices (or give priority to another category in case apprenticeship is concurrent with any other reported state of the labour market). Given that our ultimate focus is on the prime-aged population, information loss due to dropping apprentices is negligible. The SIAB does not keep any record of non-participation by construction. The stock of prime-aged non-participants is created with the help of labour force participation rates reported in the OECD Labour Force Statistics.

Conditional stocks, split by gender and education, are constructed using the gender and education variables reported in the SIAB. Since the original records of education in the SIAB are known to be of poor quality, we use the imputation procedure (*ip2a*) of Fitzenberger et al. (2006) to improve these. For constructing conditional stocks of non-participants, we use the gender-specific labour force participation rates available in the OECD data for the prime-aged population. As the relevant OECD data do not contain information about education, we resort to sampling the stock of prime-age nonparticipants from the GSOEP and take the distribution of education from that stock. The definition of education categories in the GSOEP and SIAB is identical and relies on the ISCED97 classification.

Establishment information in the SIAB is always reported at the June 30 of each year. Therefore, the stocks that we use for all the regressions are the stocks sampled on that date.

A.2 Flows

For any month within a year we consider stock samples at the last day of the month and at the last day of the preceding month. For any individual who changes state between the last

days of the two adjacent months we record a transition to the new state. If an individual is absent in the stock of the preceding month but present in the stock of the current month, we record a transition from non-participation. Likewise, if an individual is present in the stock of the preceding month but absent in the stock of the current month, we record a transition to non-participation. Averaging over all months within a year gives us the flow statistic for that particular year.

Since the SIAB does not have any record of non-participation, we cannot observe stayers in non-participation. While unimportant for the discussion of Sections 4.1-4.5, identification of the stock of stayers will be necessary to construct transition matrices. We discuss this identification in Section A.3 below.

As a robustness we also constructed the non-participation flows considering an alternative in which one verifies transition to non-participation with the help of the variable that indicates the reason why the individual file is closed. This variable is called “grund” in the SIAB. Whenever an individual is present in the stock of the preceding month and absent in the stock of the current month, this variable must indicate the transition to the state that is neither employment of any form nor unemployment. If it does not, we record the new state (any form of employment or unemployment, as suggested by “grund”) and look at the next month to verify that an individual is present in the stock. If yes, the destination state is kept. If still absent, the transition is recorded back as a transition to non-participation. Similar procedure can be used to construct flows from non-participation. We discover that in doing so we only marginally adjust the flows to and from non-participation. For example, “Unemployment to Non-participation” and “Non-participation to Unemployment” flows are reduced by about 1/16 of their presently reported size, which bears no consequence for the argument we develop in the paper. Given that our original approach is fully consistent with the way we construct stocks and given that it is not ruled out that “grund” may indicate the closure of the spell which is still in progress (e.g. transition to employment at a foreign company), we present the analysis using our original approach.

Conditional flows are constructed using the gender and education variables reported in the SIAB. These variables have been already discussed in Section A.1.

A.3 Transition matrices

The construction of the transition matrices is outlined in Section 5.1. Here we only explain how the number of stayers in non-participation (i.e. the count of monthly transitions from non-participation to non-participation) is imputed.

By definition, the change in stocks between the two adjacent months is equal to the sum of all inflows less the sum of all outflows. Therefore, observing the stocks and subtracting (i) outflows from the stock of the preceding month, and (ii) inflows from the stock of the current month, we should get the number of stayers in non-participation in the current month. In practice the numbers we get from (i) and (ii) despite being very close to each other are never identical. As a result we take the average of the two. Finally, since the information

on non-participants available from the OECD is reported only on the annual basis, whereas we need monthly frequency, we calculate our monthly stocks of non-participants under the assumption that the ratio of non-participants to full-time employed in the monthly samples is the same as the ratio of non-participants to full-time employed in the annual statistics.

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