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Academic literature has shown the positive impact of activity participation on older person's quality of life. Participation in social activities predicts decline in depressive symptoms (Croezen et al. 2013). Activities are strong individual predictors for well-being if the individuals experience a reciprocity in social productive activities (Siegrist & Wahrendorf, 2009). Learning in later life can boost intellectual power, assists in maintaining mental functions and helps to reverse memory decline (Cohen, 2006), at the same time learning occurs not through being taught but through active participation and personal agency (Golding, 2011). On the other hand there are evidences that such an inevitable life event as retirement has the potential to affect person's cognitive functioning (Bonsang, Adam & Perelman, 2012). There is no broad-line analysis about activity participation and self-realization practices among older citizens in Estonia and other countries in Europe.

Research questions:

1. How SHARE wave 4 countries differ in solitary and social type of activities and which structural factors indicate the risk of passivity.
2. Are men with partner more passive in social activities than female.
3. How to describe the situation of older people activities on the bases of principles of criticism of critical educational gerontology which states that people with lower educational level and representatives of fourth age tend to drop out of active participation.

Data and methodology

Social activities (SHARE module AC): 1. Voluntary or charity work. 2. Attendance of training course. 3. Participation in a sport or social club. 4. Taken part in church. 5. Taken part in a political or community organization. 6. Playing games such as cards or chess.

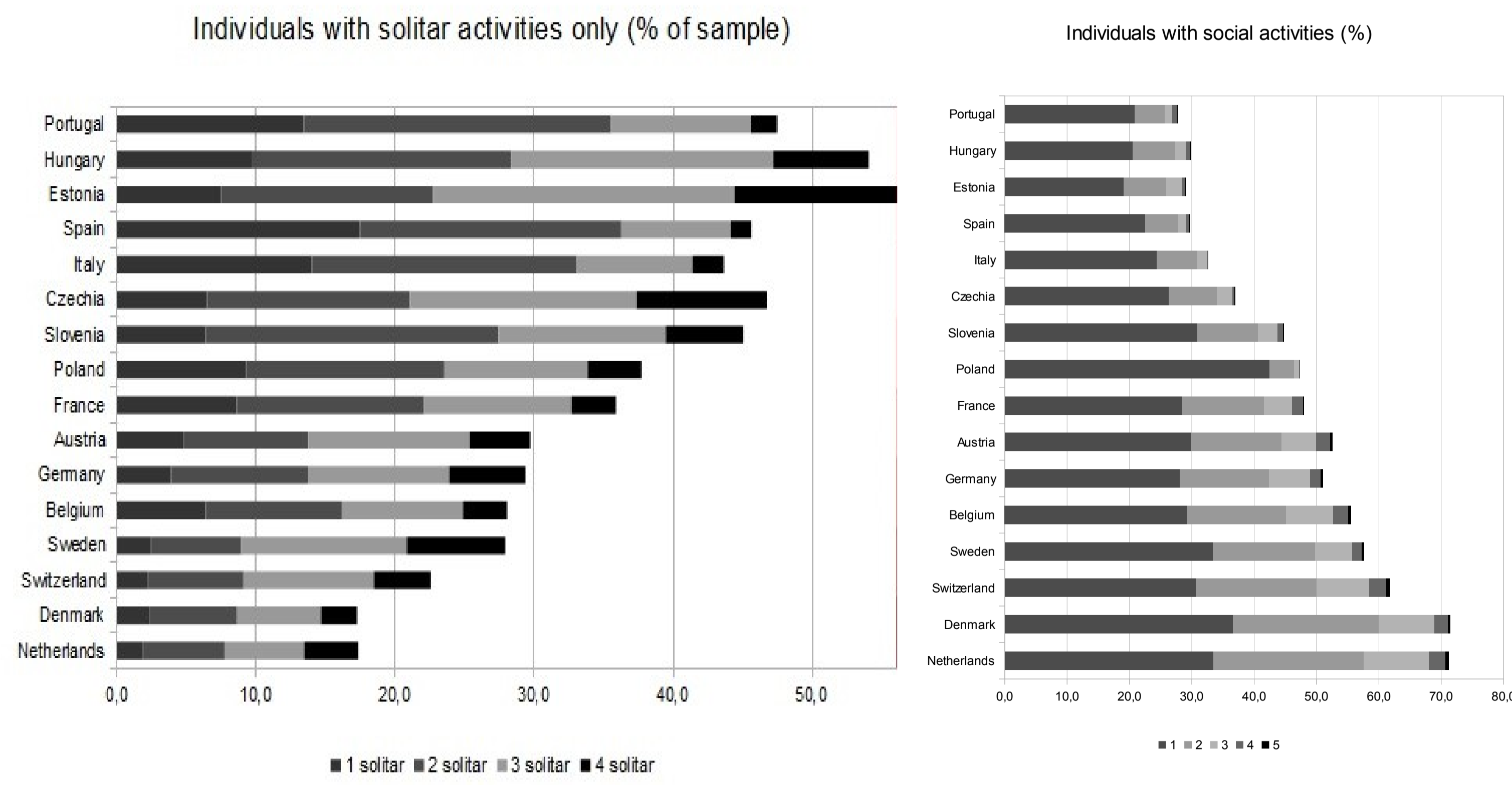
Solitar activities (SHARE module AC): 1. Reading books or newspapers. 2. Doing crossword, sudoku etc.

(SHARE module BR): 3. Vigorous physical activity, such as sports, heavy housework. 4. Moderate activities such as gardening, cleaning the car, or doing a walk.

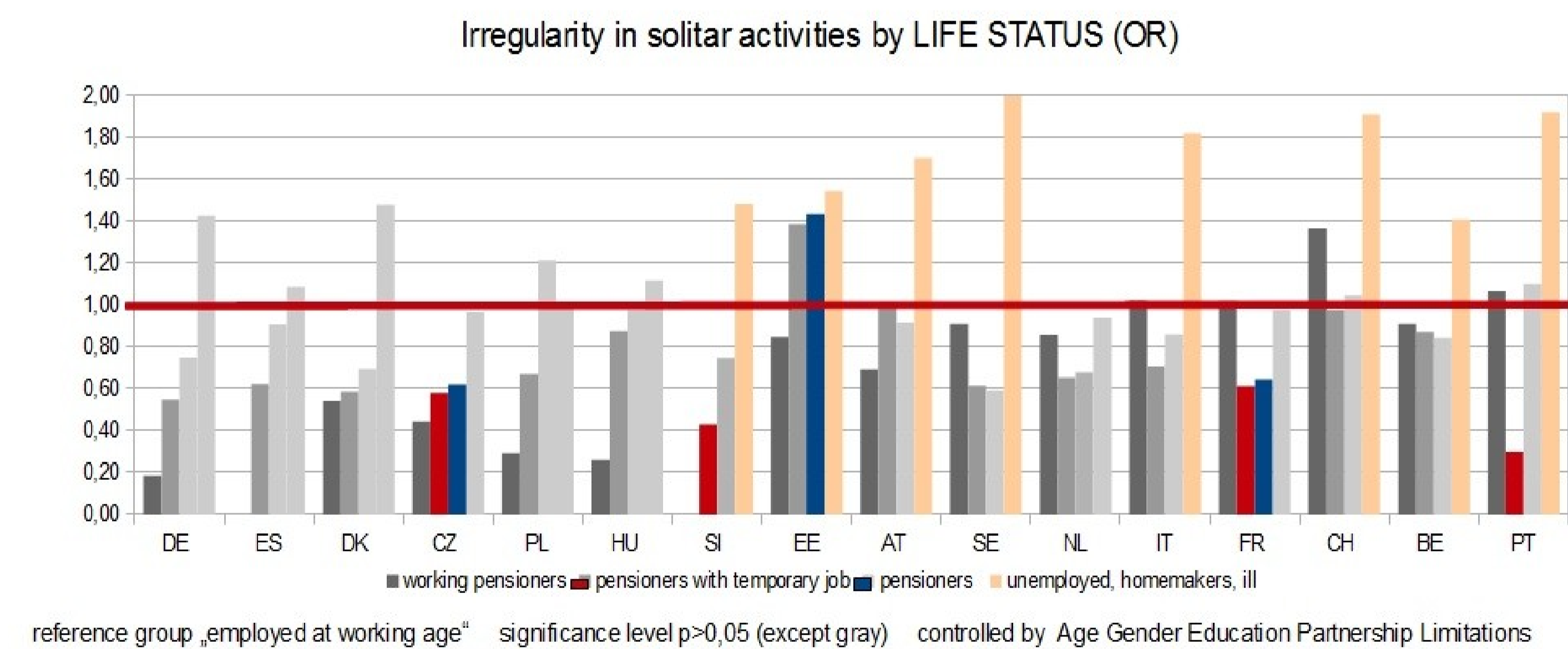
Category variables: age group (5y step), gender (m / f), education (low / medium / high), partnership (alone / partner in the household), life status (SHARE module EP: employed at working age / working pensioner / pensioner with temporary job / pensioner without paid job / other (unemployed, homemaker, ill)), limitations (SHARE module PH: no limitations / medium limitations / severely limited).

Logistic regression is implemented as a research method which adjusts category variables.

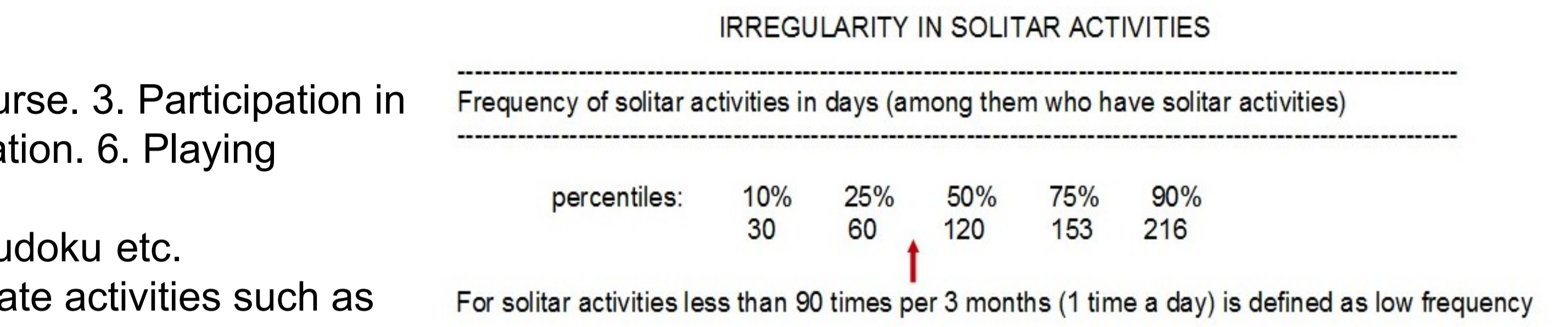
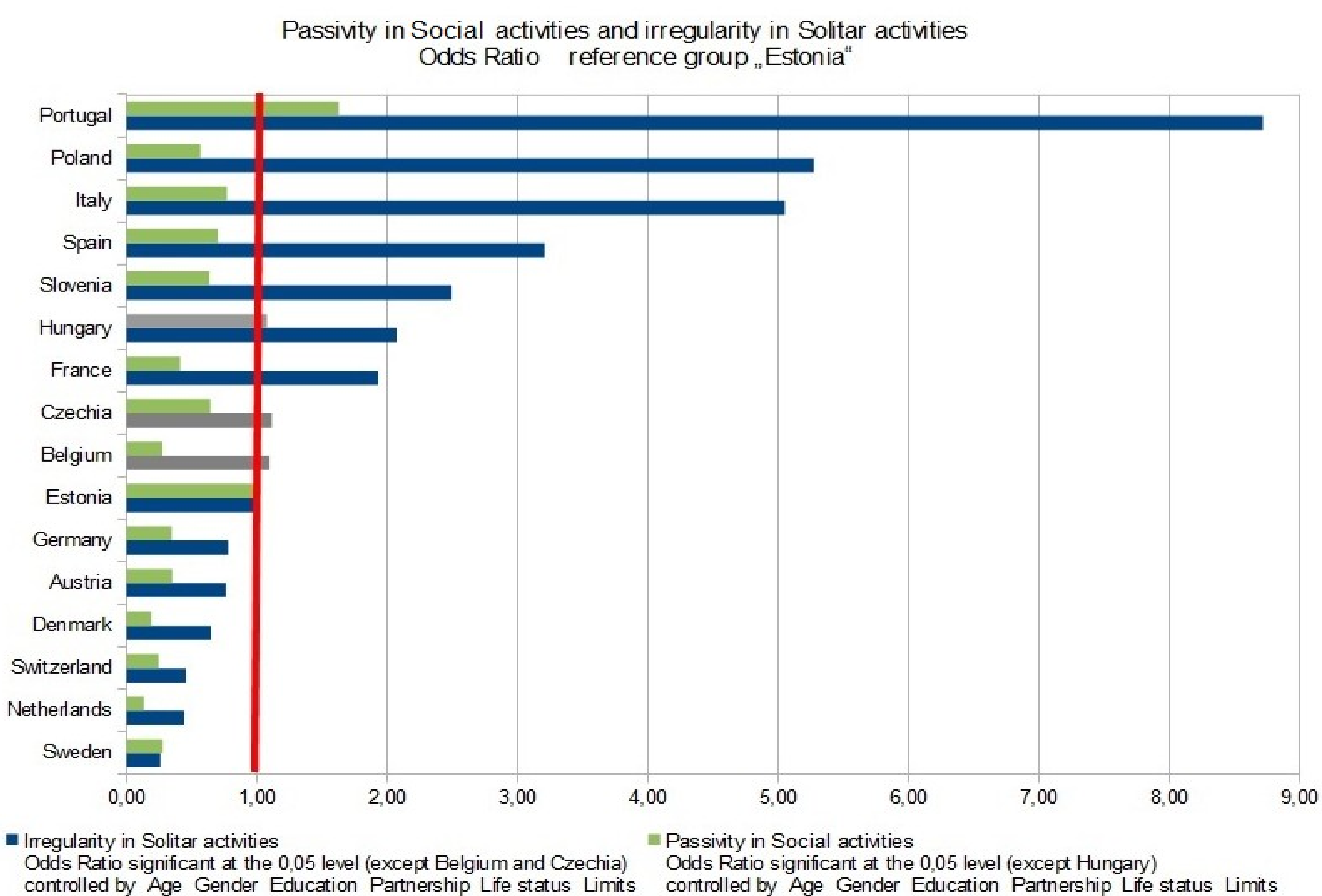
Descriptive statistics



More than 55% of Estonians have only solitary type of activities and no social activities. This is the leading position among SHARE w4 countries. (Countries in the Figure are listed in the sequence of total sum of no and solitary activities only.)



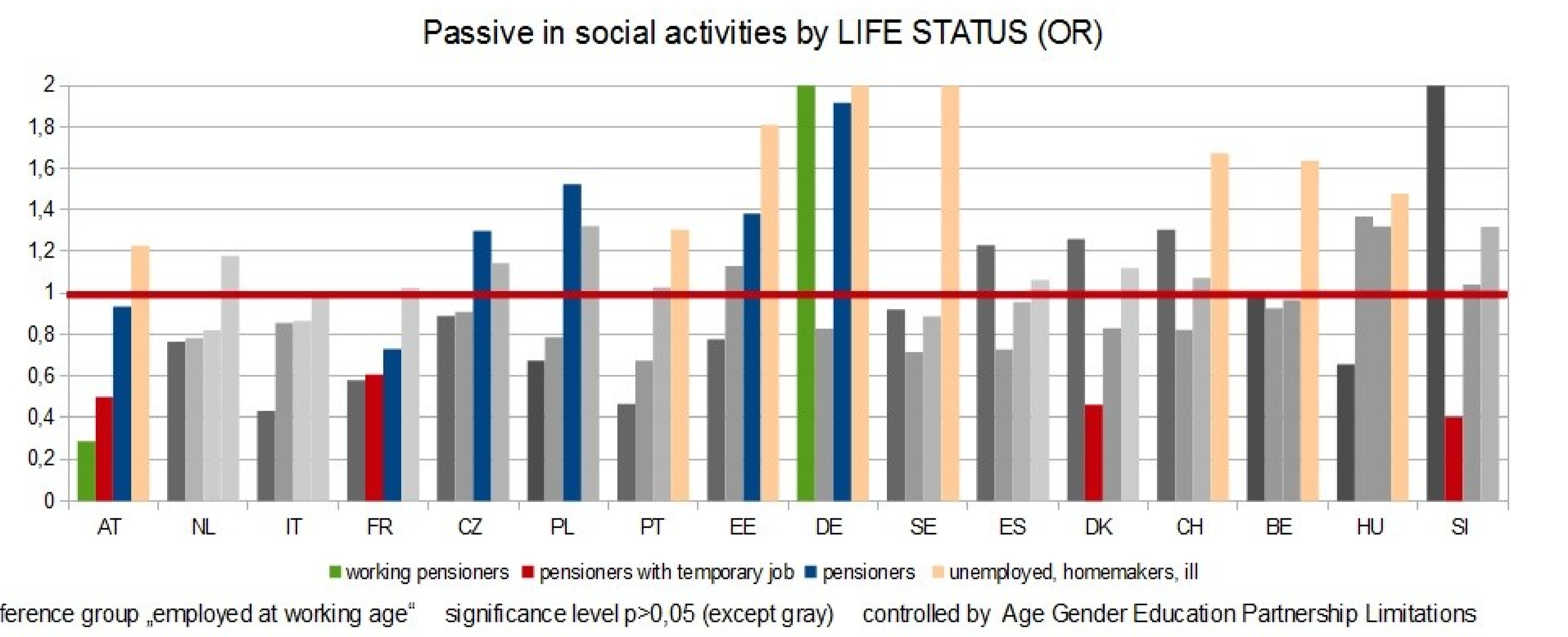
In EE pensioners have higher probability to be passive both in social activities and in solitary activities comparing with employed people. CŽ, PL and DE indicate the same tendency regarding to social activities but in CŽ pensioners have lower probability to have irregular solitary activities than employed people at working age. In EE, CŽ and PL the same „pattern“ of passivity appears – the less the person has working responsibilities the less active (s)he is in both type of free time activities. This pattern has followed only by half of countries.



Results

Passive in social activities (no social activities)						
Significance level p<0,05 controlled by Age Gender/partnership Education Limitations						
COUNTRY	GENDER	PARTNERSHIP	EDUCATION		LIMITATIONS	
	Comparing with „female with partner“ F(p)*		Comparing with „high educational level“ significant difference between educational level of		Comparing with „no limitations“ significant difference between self-rated level of limitations	
	F(a)	M(p)	M(a)	low	medium	severe limited
Germany	no difference			low	medium	no difference
Belgium	no difference			low	medium	no difference
Sweden	no difference			low		severe
Spain	no difference			low		severe
Italy	no difference			low		severe
Denmark			2,54	low	medium	limited
Netherlands			2,26	low		limited
Switzerland			1,75	low	medium	limited
France			1,53	low	medium	limited
Austria	0,81		1,34	low	medium	severe limited
Czechia	0,81			low	medium	severe
Slovenia	0,80			low	medium	no difference
Portugal		0,73		no difference		no difference
Estonia	0,86			low	medium	severe
Hungary	0,76			low	medium	severe
Poland		1,30		no difference		no difference

In EE and HU females without partner have lower probability to be passive in social activities than females with partner. In AT, CŽ, SI and PT men with partner have lower probability to be passive in social activities than female with partner.



A very big difference between countries appears on irregularity in solitary activities, whereby people from countries like DE, AT, CH, NL and SE tend to be many times more engaged in solitary activities than people from PT, PL, IT, ES and SI. The difference between countries on engagement in social activities has a moderate fluctuation, whereby EE is followed only by PT which indicates the highest passivity in social activities.

Men with partner are not more passive in social activities than female, except PL. In four countries the opposite tendency appears.

In half of countries, including EE, severely limited people tend to be more passive in social activities than people with no limitations. In 14 countries (but not in PT and PL) people with low educational level have a higher probability to be passive in social activities and in 10 countries out of 16 the same appears also for people with medium level of education.

Pensioners in EE tend to be much more passive than similar groups in other countries. Country patterns of passivity related to life status need to be investigated in further research.