Gender Differences in Intergenerational Occupational Persistence and Mobility in Central Europe*

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Abstract: This article investigates intergenerational occupational persistence and mobility across Central Europe (Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) based on EU-SILC survey data from 2005, 2011 and 2019. Social Stratification in Eastern Europe survey data from 1993 is also used as a historical comparison. These surveys are uniquely suited for the analysis of occupational mobility because of their large sample sizes and the inclusion of detailed parental occupation data. I report gender differences in total and net mobility rates based on the analysis of 7×7 occupational mobility tables as well as predicted probabilities (derived from log odds from multinomial regression) of attaining specific occupational destinations based on parental occupational origins. The reproduction of occupational status is particularly strong in professional occupations (for both men and women), trade and crafts (for men) and sales/clerical occupations (for women), which seem to be in dynamic equilibrium. Compared with men, women's increases in social fluidity (and higher rates of upward mobility) are shaped much more strongly by changes in occupational structure, although this has weakened in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Finally, I find that women have much greater chances than men of upward mobility in attaining professional occupations from lower family origins, and this trend seems to have been strengthening in recent years.

Keywords: occupational persistence, occupational mobility, social mobility, social reproduction

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Introduction

The Visegrad states of Central Europe (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) have been subject to many political transformations in recent decades, including the collapse of communism, large-scale privatisation and market reforms, liberal (and illiberal) constitutional changes and accession to the European Union. Although it is easy to presume that the expansion of economic opportunities that have accompanied these changes would lead to greater social mobility, this is not necessarily the case. If social elites benefit the most from the changing opportunity structure, then political and economic transformation does not entail changing social mobility at all, as many sociologists have found in other and past contexts (Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1992); rather, this entails the persistence of the same elites in new clothes (Eyal et al., 1998). One reason for this seemingly counterintuitive finding is the way social mobility and other dimensions of relative inequality are measured: in terms of odds ratios, which are insensitive to the marginal distribution of social origins and destinations, such as changes in social class structure or any other analysed societal outcome. In fact, the current consensus among sociologists of the region is that the transition from communism to democracy did not entail any substantial change in social mobility at all (Bukodi & Goldthorpe, 2010; Džambazovič & Gerbery, 2018; Jackson & Evans, 2017).

The present article revisits the important question of whether and how social mobility has changed in Central Europe through the use of new data, a detailed look at change between specific strata and special attention to the role of gender. The article examines both occupational mobility and persistence, which are two sides of the same coin. *Occupational persistence*, also referred to as occupational reproduction, is indicated by the strength of the association between parents' occupational status and that of their children (Hout, 2018), such as the odds that the children of lawyers will also attain the same or similar professional occupations. The opposite of occupational persistence is *occupational mobility*: Individuals who hold occupational titles different from their parents exhibit intergenerational occupational mobility. That mobility may be *upward* or *downward*, depending on the assumptions we make about the rank order of occupations. An open society has a lot of intergenerational occupational mobility, while a closed society has a lot of persistence.

Early studies of intergenerational social mobility focused exclusively on men (e.g., Blau & Duncan, 1967), particularly mobility between fathers and sons, in part because of data limitations on women's occupations stemming from lower workforce participation. Although women's participation in the labour market substantially increased across postwar generations, social mobility researchers have continued to neglect gender differences in social mobility (Luke, 2019) and in fact theorise and generalise trends in international social mobility based on men's data (Bukodi & Goldthorpe, 2022). Even when data on women's mobility are available, it is not given the same analytical treatment as men's mobility, and direct comparisons of men's and women's relative mobility rates are often not

made (e.g., Bukodi & Paskov, 2020). Even though social mobility research has a deep analytical tradition, there are major opportunities for better understanding international social mobility through the lens of gender.

That being said, the present study of intergenerational occupational persistence and mobility makes use of well-established methods in social stratification research (DiPrete & Grusky, 1990; Duncan & Hodge, 1963; Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1992; Goodman, 1979; Hout, 1988). However, there have been relatively few studies of intergenerational occupational mobility in Central Europe over the past several decades (the most notable exceptions are Gugushvili, 2017; Jackson & Evans, 2017; Mach, 2004; Róbert & Bukodi, 2004; Želinský et al., 2016), especially those comparing the countries under investigation here: the Visegrad states of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, along with their most similar neighbour that was spared (thanks to the Austrian State Treaty of 1955) the experience communist authoritarianism. Even if the methods used in the present article are not new, the data and results presented here provide a fresh look into the question of the openness of Central European societies in recent years.

In the present article, I will first provide an overview of a cross-section of the key research on intergenerational social mobility in Europe, highlighting some of the important findings about postcommunist societies that inform the hypotheses enumerated below. In the data section, I introduce the 1993 Social Stratification in Eastern Europe survey and the 2005, 2011 and 2019 EU-SILC (European Union—Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) surveys, which are very large datasets with strong cross-national comparability and detailed information on the variables of interest, particularly parental occupation. In the results section, I present findings on intergenerational occupational persistence as well as absolute and relative intergenerational mobility. *Absolute mobility* refers to the extent to which individuals end up in different occupations from their parents, while *net mobility* or *social fluidity* refers to the strength of the association between occupational origins and destinations. The weaker the association between origins and destinations, the greater the social fluidity or 'openness' of the society in this key dimension of social stratification (Breen & Jonsson, 2007; Breen & Luijkx, 2004; Featherman et al., 1975). Net mobility is a summary statistic reflecting the *relative mobility rates* between the origins and destinations for specific occupational trajectories (49 such data points for a 7×7 mobility table for each social group of interest). I depart from the more technical social mobility literature by emphasising substantive differences between these five countries by gender and with respect to mobility between specific occupational categories.

Changes in social mobility in Central Europe

Although occupations are more detailed and less complex than the categories of social class, they are analysed in the social stratification literature in similar ways. That is, in the analysis of a social mobility table, the same analytical approach can

be used regardless of whether occupational or social class origins and destinations are being examined. Depending on issues of data availability, many social mobility researchers have focused on occupational mobility (e.g., Connelly et al., 2016; Simkus, 1995). The use of occupational categories also has the advantage of being easy to understand what they refer to in the real world, are not subject to theoretical assumptions of different class schemas and do not require the additional variables required for constructing class schemas. For these reasons, the present article focuses on occupational mobility. However, because the literature on occupational and social class mobility is in fact the same (as they deal with the exact same issues and use the same methods), I will bring these strands of research together. Therefore, in this section, I will refer to the more general concept of social mobility or indicate whether occupational or class mobility was examined, when relevant.

In the late Cold War period, analyses of intergenerational social mobility in Europe showed divergent trends. Thélot (1983) found increasing relative mobility in France, as did Erikson et al. (1983) for Sweden and Ganzeboom et al. (1989) for the Netherlands. On the other hand, Erikson et al. (1983) did not find evidence of more fluidity in either France or England. These studies contested the FJH hypothesis (Featherman et al., 1975) that industrialised nations with capitalist economies and nuclear families would have roughly similar patterns of social mobility. These divergent results on trends in social mobility in the second half of the twentieth century were systematically revisited in Erikson and Goldthorpe's (1992) *A Constant Flux,* the culmination of the Comparative Analysis of Social Mobility in Industrial Nations (CASMIN) project, which involved the analysis of both absolute and relative social mobility in 12 industrialised nations, including Hungary and Poland, where relative mobility rates were stable during the communist period. The key finding of their breathtaking work is that, over time, intergenerational social mobility does not systematically increase or decrease, nor are countries converging towards a similar mobility regime; instead, relative social mobility resembles a constant flux across countries.

In a similar seminal work, Breen's (2004) *Social Mobility in Europe* used the same statistical techniques as Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992) but with more recent data covering the 1990s. Breen found constant flux in the mobility rates in Germany, Great Britain and Sweden, for example—for both men and women—but also found very modest increases in social fluidity (i.e., more relative mobility) in Hungary and Poland during the late communist period. However, those results were based on only several surveys, and the increase in fluidity was very modest. The most recent surveys covered by Breen in both countries indicate a flattening out of the relative mobility trend.

Our understanding of social mobility in European communist regimes is very much influenced by Hungarian and Polish data: These political regimes were the most reformist in the Eastern bloc in the 1980s, enabling sociologists to access large demographic datasets before it was possible in the 'normalisation'

era of the more hardline Czechoslovak regime, for example. Mach (2004) found that Polish socialist industrialisation in the 1940s and 1950s led to high rates of upward and absolute mobility, which also endured longer for women than for men. The modest trend of increasing social fluidity in the 1970s and 1980s in Hungarian and Polish data (Breen, 2004) have suggested that socialist countries were somewhat successful in the forceful reallocation of occupations according to the needs of the command economy. This is also confirmed by Grusky and Hauser's (1984) finding that country-level exogenous interventions impacted relative social mobility. The same authors (Hauser & Grusky, 1998) later found 27% more exchanges in the mobility table between manual and nonmanual sectors in socialist countries compared with nonsocialist ones. Most of this change was because of government-dictated changes in the occupational structure rather than to the changing associations between occupations (Simkus, 1985; Zagorski, 1976).

The impact of the command economy on occupational structure is referred to as 'counter-selection' (Jackson & Evans, 2017) because the ideological objective of these regimes was to counter the effects of family background in determining occupational and class positions. Matějů (1993) pointed out that some occupations in communist Czechoslovakia were only available to people from working-class families. However, these counter-selective policies did not make communist regimes any more open than Western countries (Erikson & Goldthorpe, 1992). Sociologists' reliance on survey data of a limited quality and size means that it is difficult to reach robust conclusions about social mobility during the communist period.

As Andorka and Zagorski (1980) pointed out, the collectivisation of agriculture led to increased absolute mobility in socialist countries. However, this also accounted for an important divergence in the Polish and Hungarian data: Because Poland was the only socialist country that failed in the collectivisation of agriculture—thus maintaining a large sector of family farms—there was more intergenerational persistence in agriculture in Poland compared with Hungary. Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992) also found strong persistence in the upper service class, which could be linked to a '*nomenklatura*' or 'political capital' effect, meaning that the children of politically privileged socialist managers, for example, were able to attain similar class positions. Toth and Szelenyi (2019) and Toth (2019) similarly observed social closure within the Hungarian upper-middle class today, pointing to the 'Great Gatsby Curve' linking inequality and immobility. Along this line of thought, higher intergenerational occupational persistence in professional occupations in Central Europe indicates social closure, but it is not yet clear whether this social closure has increased, decreased or remained stable during the postcommunist transformation.

It should be noted that much of what we know about relative social mobility in Hungary and Poland is based on simple 3×3 mobility tables that were used but also criticised by Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992). Breen (2004) was also hesitant to make bold conclusions based on these data. A part of the problem of

revisiting these old datasets is that the occupational categories used at the time were highly influenced by the socialist system and do not correspond to the ISCO categories developed in Western nations (Connelly et al., 2016). Analysing them, therefore, requires folding smaller occupations that lack comparability across time and space into much larger occupational categories that still make sense today, but doing so comes at the cost of losing a great deal of variance in the occupational categories.

This is also the case with the Czechoslovak datasets. For instance, despite the groundbreaking and important sociological achievements of Machonin's 1969 book *Czechoslovak society* (Machonin, 1969; 1970; Havelka & Machonin, 1997), the difficulty of collecting data on parental occupation, as opposed to characteristics of respondents, meant a much greater emphasis of Czech social stratification researchers on questions of social structure and differentiation than intergenerational mobility. Similar to Polish and Hungarian scholars, data limitations and the political salience of the 'class struggle' (including the need to censor variables that might call into question the victoriousness of the proletariat) entailed that Czech social stratification researchers were able to examine largely 2×2 intergenerational mobility tables, contrasting manual and nonmanual male workers (e.g. Charvát, 1978). These limitations continued in e.g. Machonin et al.'s (2000) important study on the development of the social structure in Czech Society from 1988 to 1999, analysing *intragenerational* mobility (change in a respondent's occupation from 1988 to 1999) in only five occupational categories, and did not analyse intergenerational occupational or class mobility (analysing educational mobility instead, and without respect to gender). In fact, a more detailed and sophisticated account of intergenerational social mobility using well-established contemporary methods did not emerge until Katrňák's and Fučík's (2010) exceptional study.

If command economies forced social mobility, it is likely that the transition to market economies in the early 1990s led to a reversal of direction. After the collapse of communism, countries in Central and Eastern Europe engaged in comprehensive market reforms: the liberalisation of markets, the stabilisation of public finances and the weaning away of enterprises from state subsidies and the comprehensive privatisation of enterprises, housing, land and other aspects of the property market (Gerber & Hout, 1998). Although the specific policies implemented in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic were different, by the early 2000s, all countries emerged from deep recessions because of these comprehensive reform packages and had functional, growing markets that enabled them to enter the European Union in 2004.

Therefore, the 1990s witnessed a modest strengthening of the association between family origin and occupational destinations or a 'return to social origin', as Katrňák and Fučík (2010) aptly expressed it. Much of Czech social stratification research in the 1990s conceived of occupations as hierarchically structured, thus entering into models of status attainment as an Index of Socio-economic Status (ISEI) or as a component of a composite variable of family SES. This reflects the

lasting attraction of the Blau–Duncan model of status attainment and other indices of occupational status compared with the conceptualisation of occupations or social classes as discrete categories to be analysed via contingency tables. Thus, Katrňák and Fučík (2010) were the first Czech sociologists to estimate absolute and relative social mobility according to mobility tables, finding that the 1990s in the Czech Republic was marked by a decrease in social fluidity. This finding coincides with Czech research on educational inequality: Although educational expansion increased opportunities to study tertiary education, this did not lead to an increase in social fluidity (Simonová & Katrňák, 2016), largely because of the offsetting role of family origin. In other words, a modest decrease in Czech social fluidity may be linked to a modest increase in Czech educational inequality, akin to what the Great Gatsby Curve might predict (Jerrim & Macmillan, 2015).

These results on declining social fluidity are surprising because there has been a growing consensus that, in the 1990s, social fluidity increased in many developed countries (Breen & Jonsson, 2005; Breen & Luijkx 2004; Jonsson et al., 2011). One reason for this increase in social fluidity could be the role of educational expansion (Pfeffer & Hertel, 2015), which may provide students of different occupational origins with the qualifications needed for upward mobility. Nonetheless, the different trajectory of the trend in social mobility in Central Europe in the 1990s could be because of 'marketisation' (Jackson & Evans, 2017) or that Central Europe was 'catching up' to Western patterns. In the case of educational fluidity, Jackson and Evans (2017), Katrňák and Fučík (2010) and Simonová and Katrňák (2016) saw a levelling out or reversal of this divergence in the early 2000s.

In terms of the role of these structural changes on occupational persistence and mobility, we can note that the 1990s witnessed not only educational expansion but also an increase in income inequality (Večerník, 1996; Večerník & Matějů, 1999). In addition, educational expansion cannot keep pace with the demand for skills in certain occupations, leading to a rapid increase in wage returns to education across the region. It is likely that these increasing returns on education could strengthen—not weaken—social fluidity, depending on the strength of the association between family origin and education. Some research on educational inequality in the 1990s indicated a small decrease in the bond between parental educational attainment and that of their offspring (Simonová, 2003), while others indicated persistent inequality (Smith et al., 2016). Therefore, we can conclude that the empirical findings on social mobility from both educational and occupational perspectives are far from definitive, and ultimately, more insights can be gained by new analyses and methodological innovations in approaches.

However, what about the more recent period after the EU accession of Central European countries in 2004? By that time, Visegrad states had more or less completed their expansion of tertiary education, and the rising returns to education in these countries also began to level off. For these reasons, we can expect that social fluidity could have also remained stable, showing no clear direction in one way or another. In fact, Jackson and Evans (2017) found decreases in social

fluidity across postcommunist countries, with a 9% increase in the chances of occupational persistence from the early 1990s to mid-2000s. However, their research suffers from low cell counts in some cross-tabulations, which may impact the robustness of their results. Therefore, we should be cautious about making bold proclamations about declines in social fluidity in postcommunist Central Europe before more analyses with different data sources are conducted. For the period under study (particularly 2005–2019), there is very little published research on occupational persistence and mobility beyond Jackson and Evans' study. Although our baseline assumption is that of stability (relative flux in occupational mobility) or modest increases in occupational persistence, the fact is that we do not know the impact of the Great Recession and other recent economic factors on these trends.

The limited research on occupational persistence and mobility in Central Europe has also suggested that little is known about gender differences in persistence and mobility. The very first studies of women's relative mobility rates found that 'there are no major differences in the patterns for males and females… Generalizations about occupational mobility which have been made for males apply to females' (DeJong et al., 1971, p. 1040). More recent studies on social mobility have continued to find similar mobility patterns for men and women in Europe (Breen, 2004; Bukodi & Paskov, 2020), especially in terms of relative mobility rates. In their new theoretical summary of social mobility research, Bukodi and Goldthorpe 'focus on those findings that are largely common across gender, and the theory we subsequently advance is intended to be gender neutral' (2020, p. 273), thus dismissing any theoretical value to gender. Although this limited literature has suggested that we should not expect major gender differences in mobility rates, this should not lead us to conclude that gender should be ignored in social mobility research or that gender differences cannot be discovered with closer analytical scrutiny, especially in the newest available data.

Hypotheses

Based on the above literature, it is possible to anticipate only modest, if any, changes in social mobility in the postcommunist period. We can differentiate hypotheses into two groups: those relating to absolute and net mobility and those relating to gender differences between specific occupational groups across surveys and countries.

First, major economic change—such as the transition to market economies in Central Europe in the 1990s or the rapid economic growth of the 2000s and the subsequent Great Recession—likely increased *absolute mobility*, which is also called the total mobility in a society. This can be because of changes in the occupational structure (*structural mobility*), which can affect men and women differently. The difference between total mobility and mobility because of changes

in occupational structure is referred to as *net mobility*. Charvát (1978) provided a detailed explanation of these concepts of mobility regarding a dichotomous mobility table (a 2×2 table examining fathers and sons attaining manual vs. non-manual occupations).

Similarly, the rapid expansion of educational credentials in the region in the 1990s and 2000s, which contributed to a gender gap in educational attainments favouring women (Katrňák 2024), could have impacted the gendered distribution of qualified employees who can compete for higher-paying technical and professional occupations. Assuming that total mobility between men and women is more or less constant over time, we can hypothesise that women have experienced higher degrees of structural mobility (because of changes in educational and occupational structure) and that, therefore, men's net mobility rates would be higher than women's across the region (H1). However, we do not know whether men's higher net mobility translates into more upward mobility; on the contrary, the increasing pool of highly qualified women in the service sector might imply higher rates of upward mobility for women than for men (H2).

In terms of relative mobility rates, the literature above indicates that we should not observe any substantial gender differences (H3), despite quite significant changes in the labour market during the postcommunist transformation. This means that we should not expect gender differences in the odds ratios (or their derived predicted probabilities) of mobility between different occupational categories. Even though there has been an expansion of service sector jobs across the region, we do not have reasons to speculate gender differences in upward and downward mobility by gender, unless proven otherwise.

Because the four countries have undergone somewhat similar changes in the economic structure, we do not anticipate any major differences in their social mobility regimes (H4), thus anticipating common patterns and/or convergence, including with Austrian data.

Data and methods

The analysis of social mobility tables requires exceptionally large datasets because there must be a sufficient number of cases in all the cells of a contingency table of categories of parental and respondent occupation across both sexes and for each survey year. Representative samples of 5000+ respondents who provide detailed information on parental occupations are typically required. Because very few surveys in Central Europe have achieved this threshold, many scholars pooled together a diverse range of surveys: Katrňák and Fučík (2010), for example, used 28 surveys to study Czech intergenerational social mobility between 1990 and 2009.

To avoid issues in survey comparability and weights, I use only a few but large and high-quality datasets. Our first dataset is from the 1993 Social Stratifi-

cation in Eastern Europe After 1989 (SSEE) survey, which was organised by Ivan Szelenyi and Donald J. Treiman. Surprisingly, the survey has not been widely used in research on social mobility—despite having very detailed occupational and job history data—with the notable exception of Donanski (1997), who used it to demonstrate that there was no increase in social fluidity in postcommunist countries from the 1980s to 1993. We use the survey to establish a 'baseline' level of social mobility in the early 1990s for all four Central European countries.

In addition to the SSEE data, our way out of the problem of data quality comes by virtue of the Visegrad states' accession to the European Union in 2004. All EU countries implement the annual and cross-nationally comparable EU-SILC survey (Survey on Income and Living Conditions), which also contains a number of rotating modules on different topics. In the first year of Czech, Polish, Hungarian and Slovak participation in EU-SILC in 2005, a rotating module on the intergenerational transfer of poverty was implemented (and repeated in 2011 and in 2019), which also has information on the occupational and educational attainments of the respondents' parents. EU-SILC surveys are also large and typically implemented by government or statistical agencies, which ensures response rates and data quality of a very high standard. Because of the large sample sizes, it is possible to analyse social mobility tables from these surveys without having to merge them with other data sources.

There are, of course, limitations to SSEE and EU-SILC data, such as the lack of details about parents' work, such as whether they supervised others. Depending on the country, missing information on mother's occupation can reach 20–35% of respondents, which is sufficiently large of a problem that it is not possible to analyse mother's occupation separately and have sufficient sample size, especially when combined with other covariates. However, sociological research suggests that a mother's occupational status can have a major role in the life outcomes of offspring (Hout, 2018). I address this issue by integrating fathers' and mothers' occupations into the highest parental occupation and use this variable as the metric for occupational origin. Because some respondents can recall their mothers' occupations but not their fathers', this solution also modestly increases the sample size compared with using only the father's occupation.

Occupational categories have to be comparable across surveys and between parents (fathers and/or mothers) and their children (respondents). Although 2005 EU-SILC data contain information on parents' occupation at ISCO level 2, 2011 and 2019 EU-SILC data have information only at ISCO level 1, which are basically 10 broad categories of occupational status. One of the occupational categories—'armed forces' occupations—is problematic because of the small number of women in the military (not only of respondents but also their mothers). Therefore, I had two options: either omit respondents with these occupations (or if their fathers had these occupations) or merge them with another occupational category. Because many armed force occupations involve hands-on technical work, such as the operation and maintenance of technical equipment, I subsumed

these occupations into the occupational category of 'machine operators'. I did not find that this analytical choice impacted the results in any substantive way, but it does reduce the low cell counts in less common origin–destination combinations.

Clerical support workers and sales workers were also merged into a single category because both sets of work are considered in the sociological literature as low-status service occupations, and thus, it is not meaningful to examine change between them. These are also occupations that are predominantly filled by women, especially among the generations of respondents' parents, so merging these categories also ensured sufficient cell counts in origin–destination combinations for men.

Another challenge involves the category of 'skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers'. The problem here was not occupational gender segregation but rather the low cell counts for respondents in this category compared with their parents because the number of workers in these occupations declined significantly after the collapse of communism. The choice was to either omit these respondents or merge them with another occupational category. I decided to merge these occupations with the neighbouring category of 'crafts and related trades workers', thus bringing together forestry workers and electrical workers, for example. The workers in this larger occupational category also share the characteristic that many are self-employed or work in small enterprises. Merging these occupations also ensures that the category of 'crafts and related trades workers' has sufficient sample size across generations, genders and other categories of analysis. The analysed occupations are outlined in Table 1 and are identical for both the respondents and their parents.

The other variables used in the present article are very straightforward: 'Female' is a binary variable for whether the respondent is female (=1) or male (=0). I take age and age-squared into consideration as continuous variables (there would be low cell counts in marginal situations if we recategorise age into birth cohorts). I initially planned to include educational variables, but their inclusion proved problematic (i.e., low cell counts), and the important role of education on social mobility deserves separate treatment in its own article.

Besides parental and respondent occupation, gender and age—the only other variables included in the analysis—are variables for survey year and country. Because relative mobility may vary significantly by gender, we need to allow for interaction effects. Therefore, I include two-way interactions of gender × year, gender × parental occupation, year × parental occupation and the three-way interaction of gender × year × parental occupation.

Although researchers often relied on log-linear models, for this analysis, I follow DiPrete (1990) and Wu and Treiman (2007) in their recommendations for social mobility researchers to use multinomial logistic regression, which is useful for taking into account covariates, such as gender, education or age. Multinomial regression (MNR) also simplifies the effort to include interaction effects. To interpret the results, because the odds ratios of the main effects cannot be interpreted

Table 1. Categories of parental and respondent occupations

ISCO Major Groups (Codes)	Recoding for this analysis	ISCO Occupational Group	Examples
1	1	Managers	CEOs, elected officials, managers in public and private sectors
2	2	Professionals	Scientists, doctors, teachers, lawyers and other professional occupations
3	3	Technicians and Associate Professionals	IT technicians, legal assistants, research assistants, nurses, and other associate professionals
4	4	Clerical Support Workers	Secretaries, bank tellers, and other office assistants
5	4	Services and Sales Workers	Shop clerks, salespersons, cashiers, child care workers
6	5	Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Workers	Fishermen, skilled farmers, chicken growers, lumbermen, mixed crop growers
7	5	Craft and Related Trades Workers	Carpenters, construction workers, painters, welders, electricians, mechanics
8	6	Plant and Machine Operators And Assemblers	Factory workers at e.g. car plants, assembly line and equipment operators, truck drivers
9	7	Elementary Occupations	Cleaners and refuse operators, unskilled workers in factories, mines, food preparation, farming
0	6	Armed Forces Occupations	Officers and non-officers in the armed forces

separately from the interactions, I use the predicted probabilities derived from the odds ratios as computed for each respondent and then summarise these predicted probabilities for different occupational destinations by parental occupation, gender, country and survey year. The results are easy to interpret and can be converted to odds ratios if needed; they are also more complete than the common practice of reporting only the odds of movement between adjacent categories of the mobility table (Džambazovič & Gerbery, 2018).

Finally, any origin–destination change between occupational categories (on either side of the diagonal of the social mobility table) is considered occupational mobility, whether upward or downward. I do not make theoretically questionable assumptions that movement only into the highest or lowest occupational

categories should be considered upward or downward mobility. In addition, it should be noted that the analysis of relative mobility rates using MNR computes the odds ratios for each possible origin–destination combination and, therefore, is agnostic to the theoretical question of what should be considered upward or downward mobility.

Results

Occupational persistence and total mobility

Tables 2–6 provide the 7×7 occupational classification tables for all five countries. The results in this section can be replicated from that data. In Table 2 (Austria), the top value in each cell refers to the 2005 data, the middle value 2011 data and the bottom value 2019 data. This is the same for Tables 3–6 (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia), except that the top cell refers to 1993 data, with 2005, 2011 and 2019 data below it, for each cell.

Occupational persistence is measured as the percentage of respondents (sons or daughters) who report the same occupation as they reported for their father or mother, whoever had the higher status occupation. These percentages can be computed by dividing cases along the main diagonal of the mobility table by the total number of cases. We can observe modest cross-national variation in occupational persistence: It is particularly high among Polish men, 40% of whom attained the same occupational status as their parents in the 2005 data. Occupational persistence is generally lower in Austria and Slovakia compared with the other three countries. Occupational persistence among women is substantially lower than among men in Hungary and Poland, while the differences are much smaller in the other three countries (though, as a guiding principle, the social reproduction of occupational status is a bit higher among men than women). Contrary to Jackson and Evans' (2017) finding of decreasing fluidity, occupational persistence seems to indicate constant fluidity for both men and women in all countries between the observed time periods.

Total mobility is the opposite of occupational persistence; all respondents are categorised in one or the other (Table 7). Total mobility can be further differentiated into upward mobility (whether respondents have a 'higher' occupational status than their parents, as represented by the bottom left side of the main diagonal of the mobility table) and downward mobility. In all countries, the rates of upward mobility seem to reflect dynamic equilibrium (i.e., stability) for both men and women. However, women are substantially more upwardly mobile than men in all countries and years and experience less downward mobility. The ratio of upward to downward mobility is quite commonly twice as large for women as it is for men; this gender gap favouring women does not seem to change significantly over time, hence confirming hypothesis H2. This may be because of long-term changes in gender occupational segregation: Large numbers of women

Table 2. Occupational mobility table of parents to sons and daughters in Austria

Parents	Sons							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	36	13	10	21	17	4	8	109
	31	33	31	13	19	4	6	137
	31	47	29	22	11	7	2	149
2 Professionals	15	32	15	8	2	5	3	80
	26	76	49	23	16	3	5	198
	20	104	20	30	12	9	4	199
3 Technicians	25	28	76	38	23	15	7	212
	32	44	67	28	29	12	16	228
	26	59	56	35	41	11	4	232
4 Clerical / Sales	25	29	70	167	80	18	31	420
	110	134	169	142	160	62	55	832
	75	170	199	173	161	67	44	889
5 Craftsmen and traders	47	22	127	143	309	82	62	792
	95	79	187	148	357	141	145	1,152
	42	65	133	90	243	73	48	694
6 Machine operators	5	4	24	15	29	24	7	108
	11	12	31	30	36	19	8	147
	7	12	20	13	22	13	5	92
7 Basic occu- pations	14	13	41	47	81	38	69	303
	9	4	23	22	71	28	32	189
	6	4	20	31	35	26	16	138
total	167	141	363	439	541	186	187	2,024
	314	382	557	406	688	269	267	2,883
	207	461	477	394	525	206	123	2,393

Parents	Daughters							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	11	24	15	49	9	2	7	117
	11	44	42	39	3	0	11	150
	12	58	21	42	5	1	4	143
2 Professionals	6	32	11	27	0	0	1	77
	12	74	38	35	2	2	6	169
	9	120	37	35	3	0	5	209
3 Technicians	16	21	38	105	6	2	22	210
	18	57	52	78	6	0	16	227
	8	78	53	65	10	1	9	224
4 Clerical /	13	35	41	278	24	5	42	438
Sales	43	154	226	444	31	8	84	990
	45	269	207	394	33	14	73	1,035
5 Craftsmen	12	25	47	397	83	19	124	697
and traders	48	81	159	506	89	31	238	1,152
	27	130	98	325	82	26	125	813
6 Machine	2	7	9	77	9	5	22	131
operators	6	12	27	87	6	2	28	168
	4	17	17	46	4	3	14	105
7 Basic	9	5	22	127	24	6	101	294
occupations	4	7	21	95	14	11	65	217
	1	8	10	71	11	6	41	148
total	69	149	183	1,060	155	29	319	1,964
	142	429	565	1,284	151	54	448	3,073
	106	680	443	978	148	51	271	2,677

Note: Data in each cell refer to distributions for 2005, 2011 and 2019, from top to bottom.

Table 3. Occupational mobility table of parents to sons and daughters in the Czech Republic

	Sons							
Parents	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	34	26	22	8	38	19	6	153
	18	13	24	11	18	13	5	102
	25	25	28	14	18	12	2	124
	35	46	42	22	20	20	3	188
2 Professionals	29	49	31	7	24	10	3	153
	30	46	49	20	15	9	2	171
	38	89	80	25	48	34	7	321
	53	183	118	78	73	38	18	561
3 Technicians	34	46	47	14	57	28	4	230
	42	59	136	66	125	46	8	482
	32	65	141	46	112	50	8	454
	42	103	134	67	103	72	10	531
4 Clerical / Sales	55	41	66	39	150	60	19	430
	20	41	76	75	195	80	17	504
	40	44	140	87	244	139	34	728
	68	104	179	146	316	224	48	1,085
5 Craftsmen and traders	55	47	87	53	371	185	65	863
	37	29	93	77	389	164	46	835
	33	31	96	78	343	165	42	788
	27	40	82	88	300	193	47	777
6 Machine operators	26	10	34	16	112	61	22	281
	6	6	20	16	60	37	9	154
	9	13	20	27	94	64	20	247
	4	14	28	22	94	96	22	280
7 Basic occupations	17	7	24	17	95	47	32	239
	4	3	21	7	50	31	15	131
	2	2	12	8	37	14	12	87
	1	8	4	15	50	36	22	136
total	250	226	311	154	847	410	151	2,349
	157	197	419	272	852	380	102	2,379
	179	269	517	285	896	478	125	2,749
	230	498	587	438	956	679	170	3,558

Parents	Daughters							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	22	42	52	60	9	8	25	218
	9	26	42	41	11	2	4	135
	9	29	68	42	9	7	6	170
	14	68	35	65	6	5	10	203
2 Professionals	18	67	50	41	11	1	5	218
	9	62	62	35	5	5	4	182
	17	116	155	96	10	9	9	412
	18	230	93	172	20	14	17	564
3 Technicians	19	35	113	79	17	10	24	297
	14	76	197	125	27	12	22	473
	23	102	245	193	29	25	17	634
	19	161	116	209	20	21	24	570
4 Clerical /	24	63	114	163	44	29	62	499
Sales	15	56	129	230	48	30	30	538
	32	85	269	365	74	60	68	953
	32	200	178	507	57	78	90	1,142
5 Craftsmen	46	54	155	253	186	140	191	1,025
and traders	21	35	164	278	182	71	122	873
	26	40	182	331	134	128	130	971
	15	92	96	316	76	115	122	832
6 Machine	12	12	42	99	38	63	69	335
operators	3	11	35	54	27	31	38	199
	6	14	58	127	43	56	51	355
	4	33	34	124	24	59	65	343
7 Basic	5	10	32	60	42	42	90	281
occupations	2	5	17	33	15	10	44	126
	2	3	17	34	18	14	33	121
	3	9	14	48	9	12	36	131
total	146	283	558	755	347	293	466	2,848
	73	271	646	796	315	161	264	2,526
	115	389	994	1,188	317	299	314	3,616
	105	793	566	1,441	212	304	364	3,785

Note: Data in each cell refer to distributions for 2005, 2011 and 2019, from top to bottom.

Table 4. Occupational mobility table of parents to sons and daughters in Hungary

	Sons							
Parents	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	15	10	9	11	32	9	4	90
	54	38	26	39	45	29	9	240
	38	84	38	35	53	31	8	287
	8	15	13	8	13	10	2	69
2 Professionals	16	35	12	21	25	10	2	121
	61	85	27	30	45	19	6	273
	36	205	76	46	64	25	24	476
	12	59	27	27	21	21	6	173
3 Technicians	8	19	15	16	30	8	9	105
	40	34	30	42	88	39	9	282
	40	101	75	80	130	72	34	532
	8	33	22	33	36	27	5	164
4 Clerical / Sales	23	24	25	52	126	42	25	317
	69	40	52	93	204	120	35	613
	72	116	125	200	379	254	102	1,248
	11	41	46	75	128	97	27	425
5 Craftsmen and traders	43	37	60	74	428	137	130	909
	113	57	67	161	666	276	176	1,516
	51	86	117	191	842	409	278	1,974
	10	24	28	81	273	125	71	612
6 Machine operators	3	6	10	11	68	35	17	150
	29	4	19	39	140	72	30	333
	19	31	37	63	301	208	131	790
	1	5	11	33	94	81	37	262
7 Basic occupations	14	11	22	29	145	65	93	379
	14	2	6	30	125	48	75	300
	11	12	25	45	217	112	176	598
	3	5	6	17	59	28	56	174
total	122	142	153	214	854	306	280	2,071
	380	260	227	434	1,313	603	340	3,557
	267	635	493	660	1,986	1,111	753	5,905
	53	182	153	274	624	389	204	1,879

Parents	Daughters							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	9	28	14	32	4	0	2	89
	35	75	52	61	8	3	14	259
	29	114	66	88	10	3	17	327
	7	34	16	15	3	3	6	84
2 Professionals	3	44	21	21	6	0	3	98
	35	108	44	56	9	2	5	259
	28	282	97	125	12	15	15	574
	4	83	47	33	5	5	7	184
3 Technicians	4	27	29	56	18	2	6	142
	29	57	80	76	21	2	10	275
	36	153	129	212	21	20	34	605
	4	63	58	71	9	11	16	232
4 Clerical /	19	48	54	113	45	6	35	320
Sales	56	94	140	245	75	26	55	691
	60	255	241	573	92	90	117	1,428
	16	105	114	240	28	45	62	610
5 Craftsmen	26	72	103	286	234	50	256	1,027
and traders	88	87	216	478	303	99	366	1,637
	53	217	246	638	249	293	417	2,113
	8	58	117	226	89	131	152	781
6 Machine	2	13	23	48	38	20	38	182
operators	13	18	63	102	62	26	76	360
	30	79	93	281	81	154	178	896
	6	13	46	116	36	62	89	368
7 Basic	6	14	30	80	103	29	183	445
occupations	13	12	29	86	89	27	105	361
	12	44	61	150	90	114	232	703
	0	9	24	35	27	36	103	234
total	69	246	274	636	448	107	523	2,303
	269	451	624	1,104	567	185	631	3,831
	248	1,144	933	2,067	555	689	1,010	6,646
	45	365	422	736	197	293	435	2,493

Note: Data in each cell (from top to bottom) refer to distributions for 1993, 2005, 2011 and 2019.

Table 5. Occupational mobility table of parents to sons and daughters in Poland

	Sons							
Parents	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	58	40	28	25	39	13	10	213
	66	68	64	45	61	51	12	367
	61	56	43	46	44	29	13	292
	62	117	63	43	57	59	8	409
2 Professionals	29	45	14	18	17	8	3	134
	62	206	80	77	90	55	16	586
	50	148	70	47	60	47	13	292
	74	234	106	92	112	85	16	719
3 Technicians	40	19	19	33	34	9	3	157
	67	117	124	98	180	102	23	711
	49	74	91	56	114	72	21	477
	73	138	109	87	143	104	25	679
4 Clerical /	51	19	33	59	82	32	18	294
Sales	74	109	141	182	476	235	76	1,293
	68	92	125	132	341	194	61	1,013
	69	148	129	194	341	247	69	1,197
5 Craftsmen	134	45	57	103	480	152	65	1,036
and traders	217	160	278	388	2,956	897	393	5,289
	151	115	173	244	1,834	578	269	3,364
	85	136	184	249	1,642	573	211	3,080
6 Machine	16	7	5	17	55	32	8	140
operators	33	33	60	87	282	178	76	749
	32	27	48	59	257	147	46	616
	27	35	43	62	181	156	44	548
7 Basic	13	5	6	23	76	25	23	171
occupations	19	8	23	45	224	96	79	494
	16	9	14	21	156	72	53	341
	10	13	16	39	129	63	55	325
total	341	180	162	278	783	271	130	2,145
	538	701	770	922	4,269	1,614	675	9,489
	427	521	564	605	2,806	1,139	476	6,538
	400	821	650	766	2,605	1,287	428	6,957

Parents	Daughters							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	26	48	50	60	16	3	12	215
	48	125	69	114	20	5	23	404
	47	146	56	101	12	5	11	378
	71	183	68	108	25	5	13	473
2 Professionals	12	58	25	27	2	1	2	127
	32	368	100	121	19	9	20	669
	43	231	80	96	13	4	13	480
	56	439	127	196	32	10	22	882
3 Technicians	23	35	50	42	7	2	7	166
	39	239	187	223	62	15	48	813
	36	173	125	177	35	14	36	596
	49	280	165	245	46	24	51	860
4 Clerical / Sales	23	54	77	117	21	6	29	327
	52	277	202	504	166	45	124	1,370
	60	235	160	417	128	51	118	1,169
	83	291	182	606	160	49	150	1,521
5 Craftsmen and traders	57	80	168	309	345	55	140	1,154
	143	589	598	1,447	1,964	228	825	5,794
	99	383	376	931	1,085	167	514	3,555
	99	430	287	1,005	994	173	459	3,447
6 Machine operators	7	8	29	60	21	14	22	161
	15	90	98	261	145	46	108	763
	20	88	76	246	75	48	105	658
	24	97	66	243	122	45	139	736
7 Basic occupations	7	13	17	62	29	13	50	191
	14	48	56	142	106	26	162	554
	11	24	28	108	88	19	99	377
	8	29	31	157	70	19	111	425
total	155	296	416	677	441	94	262	2,341
	343	1,736	1,310	2,812	2,482	374	1,310	10,367
	316	1,280	901	2,076	1,436	308	896	7,213
	390	1,749	926	2,560	1,449	325	945	8,344

Note: Data in each cell (from top to bottom) refer to distributions for 1993, 2005, 2011 and 2019.

Table 6. Occupational mobility table of parents to sons and daughters in Slovakia

Parents		Sons						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	24	15	18	3	25	13	4	102
	50	40	61	30	63	27	10	281
	37	30	41	20	26	15	5	174
	17	29	22	20	15	14	2	119
2 Professionals	23	33	19	3	27	9	3	117
	52	77	83	37	62	24	15	350
	39	86	83	49	54	29	6	346
	32	72	75	64	43	54	20	360
3 Technicians	25	24	28	17	44	18	5	161
	36	45	77	46	96	71	13	384
	34	55	118	56	98	90	13	464
	14	66	74	80	68	54	17	373
4 Clerical / Sales	31	20	36	29	124	62	13	315
	48	49	98	74	169	121	37	596
	35	62	141	130	224	168	45	805
	42	69	127	168	205	154	67	832
5 Craftsmen and traders	69	47	75	81	395	165	69	901
	46	43	90	65	316	222	77	859
	32	35	77	82	305	157	37	725
	14	44	56	91	210	124	59	598
6 Machine operators	21	14	16	22	116	69	18	276
	33	15	27	43	154	122	36	430
	15	12	33	36	108	90	33	327
	10	12	26	54	80	71	34	287
7 Basic occupations	21	12	14	17	108	67	35	274
	46	26	37	39	180	116	79	523
	6	10	30	20	129	65	38	298
	7	11	16	41	72	53	47	247
total	214	165	206	172	839	403	147	2,146
	311	295	473	334	1,040	703	267	3,423
	198	290	523	393	944	614	177	3,139
	136	303	396	518	693	524	246	2,816

Parents		Daughters						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	total
1 Managers	12	22	33	33	9	3	10	122
	26	110	79	81	11	6	9	322
	8	51	74	37	4	2	3	179
	9	37	27	37	8	4	5	127
2 Professionals	5	51	37	21	3	1	3	121
	17	148	87	75	13	8	14	362
	23	115	111	78	7	4	6	344
	23	148	66	139	11	11	13	411
3 Technicians	2	26	47	38	15	9	9	146
	30	110	117	142	23	15	19	456
	26	122	185	186	16	17	15	567
	17	97	98	166	22	15	23	438
4 Clerical / Sales	13	41	67	122	36	26	27	332
	33	106	142	241	35	32	44	633
	37	102	254	309	51	43	42	838
	37	97	149	402	54	75	63	919
5 Craftsmen and traders	34	58	148	250	213	101	137	941
	37	120	159	293	134	83	111	937
	30	74	186	278	70	63	107	808
	13	60	76	224	75	82	75	605
6 Machine operators	9	22	49	90	44	38	34	286
	20	52	91	169	57	54	56	499
	7	29	88	131	27	33	45	360
	5	15	39	128	36	45	33	301
7 Basic occupations	15	13	23	70	49	27	70	267
	24	53	90	168	71	55	139	600
	7	19	73	106	39	33	62	339
	5	5	23	77	31	36	54	231
Total	90	233	404	624	369	205	290	2,215
	187	699	765	1,169	344	253	392	3,809
	138	512	971	1,125	214	195	280	3,435
	109	501	478	1,173	237	268	266	3,032

Note: Data in each cell (from top to bottom) refer to distributions for 1993, 2005, 2011 and 2019.

with parents in blue-collar occupations—which were commonly assigned to both men and women in the communist period in somewhat equal numbers—now pursue careers in the service sector, such as sales or administrative occupations, which would be coded as upwardly mobile. Men, in contrast, are more likely to reproduce the occupational destinations of their parents. The data do not allow us to infer about the causes of this gender gap, however.

Net mobility and its gender gap

The fundamental problem of analysing total mobility is that it confounds changes in the occupational structure experienced by two different generations with coefficients of association between occupations. Women can have more mobility than men simply because of gender segregation in the labour market, which should not be confused with social fluidity. Recessions, government interventions, secular trends in economic development away from reliance on heavy industry towards a service-based economy and other factors can all impact the occupational structure and, thus, absolute mobility, without implying that social fluidity has changed.

Table 8 decomposes total mobility into the share that can be attributed to changes in occupational structure between generations. Structural mobility can be interpreted as a kind of 'forced' mobility: Sons and daughters have different occupations than their parents simply because the kinds of jobs open to them in the labour market have changed. Structural mobility can be computed directly from the cell counts at the margins of the mobility table, such as by subtracting from the total number of cases the marginal cell counts in the occupational categories that are smaller (either for parents or for children) and dividing that number by the total number of cases.

What is particularly striking is that structural mobility is substantially higher for women than for men in all countries and years. Given that a great deal of economic transformation took place between the survey years (when the respondent reports their occupation) and the time reference of parents' main occupation when the respondent was young, we would expect much larger shares of structural mobility. Instead, the lion's share of men's mobility is, in fact, because of social fluidity (net mobility) between origins and destinations.

In contrast, a large share of women's total mobility is structural in origin—women pursue different occupations than their parents, for example, because of gender differences in the labour market or differences in family–work preferences. There does not seem to be any cross-national or temporal patterns in this. When we subtract out these structural effects, we can observe that women's social fluidity is systematically lower than men's, hence confirming Hypothesis 1, with the women in postcommunist countries enjoying over 10% less social fluidity in Poland and Hungary, for example. What is very important to note, however, is that men's advantage in net mobility seems to be declining in Austria, the Czech

Table 7. Occupational persistence and total mobility in Central Europe,
  men | women, %

	Persistence	Total mobility	Upward	Downward	Ratio up/ down
			Austria		
2005	35.2 | 27.9	64.8 | 72.1	41.6 | 46.3	23.2 | 25.8	1.80 | 1.80
2011	25.1 | 24.0	74.9 | 76.0	45.1 | 51.9	29.8 | 24.1	1.52 | 2.15
2019	26.6 | 26.3	73.4 | 73.7	44.9 | 52.0	28.5 | 21.7	1.58 | 2.39
			Czech Republic		
1993	26.9 | 24.7	73.1 | 75.3	39.1 | 41.3	34.0 | 34.0	1.15 | 1.21
2005	30.1 | 29.9	69.9 | 70.3	30.6 | 39.9	39.3 | 30.2	0.78 | 1.32
2011	27.7 | 26.5	72.3 | 73.5	30.4 | 39.9	41.9 | 33.6	0.72 | 1.19
2019	25.7 | 22.8	74.3 | 77.2	29.9 | 40.5	44.4 | 36.7	0.67 | 1.10
			Hungary		
1993	32.5 | 27.4	67.5 | 72.6	34.4 | 44.6	33.1 | 27.9	1.04 | 1.60
2005	30.2 | 23.5	69.8 | 76.5	32.3 | 46.8	37.4 | 29.6	0.86 | 1.58
2011	29.5 | 24.8	70.5 | 75.2	30.6 | 44.6	39.8 | 30.6	0.77 | 1.45
2019	30.5 | 25.8	69.5 | 74.2	29.6 | 42.6	39.9 | 31.6	0.74 | 1.35
			Poland		
1993	33.4 | 28.2	66.6 | 71.8	36.3 | 47.2	30.3 | 24.6	1.20 | 1.91
2005	40.0 | 31.6	60.0 | 68.4	26.6 | 44.6	33.5 | 23.8	0.79 | 1.87
2011	37.7 | 28.4	62.3 | 71.6	28.3 | 45.5	34.0 | 26.1	0.83 | 1.74
2019	35.2 | 29.1	64.8 | 70.9	27.4 | 43.5	37.4 | 27.4	0.73 | 1.59
			Slovakia		
1993	28.6 | 25.0	71.4 | 75.0	40.2 | 47.6	31.4 | 27.4	1.28 | 1.74
2005	23.2 | 22.6	76.8 | 77.4	37.6 | 49.8	39.1 | 27.6	0.96 | 1.80
2011	25.6 | 22.8	74.4 | 77.2	33.6 | 49.2	40.7 | 28.0	0.83 | 1.76
2019	23.4 | 27.4	76.6 | 72.6	33.3 | 40.7	43.3 | 31.9	0.77 | 1.28

Republic and Slovakia. Czech women even achieved a modest advantage in relative mobility in the most recent survey year, the first time this happened in the observed data. Women's advantage in graduation rates from institutions of tertiary education—a gender gap that has been expanding in recent decades—may be impacting the gender gap in relative mobility, but more research is needed to confirm such causal linkages.

Gender differences in occupational persistence

As noted earlier, the social reproduction of occupational status is generally higher among men than among women across the region. However, there are significant gender differences in reproduction across different occupational groups. The indicators of occupational persistence are reported in Tables 9–15, which report the predicted probabilities of attaining different occupational categories (1–7), here depending on parents' occupation and gender. For instance, in Table 9, the predicted probabilities of occupational persistence are reported in the column for 'managers', that is, the probability that respondents with parents who are managers also attain managerial status. In Table 10, occupational persistence is reported in the 'professionals' column, that is, the probability of being a professional for children of parents who attained professional occupations. In each cell, I report the probabilities for men (left) and women (right).

Please note that the results from Tables 9–15 are based on a multinomial regression model (NOMREG command in SPSS) with respondent occupation (seven categories) on the left-hand side of the equation, as predicted by dummy variables for highest parental occupation (managerial occupations as the reference category), gender (men as the reference category), age and age-squared, survey year (2005 as the reference category) and two-way and three-way interactions between gender, survey year and parental occupation. The analysis was conducted separately for each country. Model fit statistics are very high (Nagelkerke r-square measures are all above 0.3), reflecting high degrees of occupational persistence.

Occupational persistence is particularly high in professional occupations, but it is even higher for women than for men in all countries and survey years. In the Czech Republic, women who have at least one parent with a professional occupation have a 40% probability of also attaining a professional job, compared with 32% for men. The gender gap in the occupational reproduction of professionals seems to be particularly large in Poland and Slovakia, favouring women. Although we do not examine here the attained income of men and women in these occupations (a topic for another paper), these are generally some of the highest earning jobs in the economy and require high educational qualifications.

There are even larger gender differences in occupational persistence in other occupations. Men hold a large advantage over women in the reproduction

Table 8. Gender gap in net occupational mobility in %, sons ∣ daughters

	Total mobility	Structural mobility	Net mobility	Gender gap (%)
		Austria		
2005	64.8 ∣ 72.1	18.1 ∣ 36.6	46.7 ∣ 35.5	11.2
2011	74.9 ∣ 76.0	30.9 ∣ 36.5	44.0 ∣ 39.5	4.5
2019	73.4 ∣ 73.7	28.4 ∣ 30.4	45.0 ∣ 43.3	1.7
		Czech Republic		
1993	73.1 ∣ 75.3	16.2 ∣ 26.9	56.9 ∣ 48.4	8.5
2005	69.9 ∣ 70.3	13.6 ∣ 26.0	56.3 ∣ 44.3	12.0
2011	72.3 ∣ 73.5	18.0 ∣ 21.8	54.3 ∣ 51.7	2.6
2019	74.3 ∣ 77.2	20.0 ∣ 20.1	54.3 ∣ 57.1	−2.8
		Hungary		
1993	67.5 ∣ 72.6	12.4 ∣ 29.3	55.1 ∣ 43.3	11.8
2005	69.8 ∣ 76.5	12.7 ∣ 32.2	57.1 ∣ 44.3	12.8
2011	70.5 ∣ 75.2	11.0 ∣ 27.7	59.5 ∣ 47.5	12.0
2019	69.5 ∣ 74.2	9.5 ∣ 28.0	60.5 ∣ 46.2	14.3
		Poland		
1993	66.6 ∣ 71.8	14.5 ∣ 35.9	52.1 ∣ 35.9	16.2
2005	60.0 ∣ 68.4	14.7 ∣ 35.3	45.3 ∣ 33.1	12.2
2011	62.3 ∣ 71.6	17.0 ∣ 35.1	45.3 ∣ 36.5	8.8
2019	64.8 ∣ 70.9	13.6 ∣ 29.9	51.2 ∣ 41.0	10.2
		Slovakia		
1993	71.4 ∣ 75.0			
2005	76.8 ∣ 77.4	16.7 ∣ 31.0	59.6 ∣ 46.6	13.0
2011	74.4 ∣ 77.2	18.8 ∣ 25.0	55.6 ∣ 52.2	3.4
2019	76.6 ∣ 72.6	13.2 ∣ 13.8	63.4 ∣ 58.8	4.6

Table 9. Predicted probabilities of attaining managerial occupations (ISCO 1) by parental occupation, sons | daughters

	Managers	Profes-sionals	Technici-ans	Clerical / Sales	Traders / Craftsmen	Machine operators	Basic occupations
			Austria				
2005	.330 | .094	.188 | .080	.118 | .076	.060 | .030	.059 | .017	.046 | .015	.046 | .031
2011	.212 | .073	.116 | .071	.114 | .071	.125 | .035	.065 | .022	.075 | .030	.048 | .009
2019	.210 | .085	.095 | .038	.114 | .036	.085 | .043	.061 | .033	.078 | .038	.044 | .007
			Czech Republic				
2005	.177 | .067	.175 | .050	.087 | .030	.040 | .028	.044 | .024	.039 | .015	.031 | .016
2011	.194 | .035	.110 | .042	.077 | .038	.048 | .027	.046 | .027	.036 | .014	.023 | .017
2019	.187 | .068	.094 | .032	.080 | .033	.063 | .028	.035 | .018	.014 | .012	.007 | .023
			Hungary				
2005	.225 | .141	.223 | .135	.142 | .106	.113 | .081	.075 | .054	.087 | .036	.047 | .036
2011	.119 | .080	.076 | .044	.055 | .055	.043 | .038	.023 | .019	.023 | .028	.015 | .013
2019	.116 | .083	.069 | .022	.048 | .017	.026 | .026	.016 | .010	.004 | .016	.017 | .000
			Poland				
2005	.180 | .119	.106 | .048	.094 | .048	.057 | .038	.041 | .025	.044 | .020	.057 | .025
2011	.216 | .111	.117 | .084	.101 | .062	.066 | .045	.043 | .027	.046 | .027	.044 | .032
2019	.152 | .150	.103 | .063	.107 | .057	.058 | .054	.028 | .029	.049 | .033	.031 | .019
			Slovakia				
2005	.178 | .081	.149 | .047	.094 | .066	.081 | .052	.054 | .040	.077 | .040	.088 | .040
2011	.184 | .045	.101 | .064	.069 | .042	.042 | .041	.043 | .031	.037 | .022	.020 | .018
2019	.141 | .070	.089 | .055	.037 | .039	.050 | .040	.023 | .021	.035 | .017	.028 | .021

Table 10. Predicted probabilities of attaining professional occupations (ISCO 2) by parental occupation, sons | daughters

	Managers	Profes-sionals	Technici-ans	Clerical / Sales	Traders / Craftsmen	Machine operators	Basic occupations
Austria							
2005	.119 | .205	.400 | .416	.132 | .100	.069 | .080	.028 | .036	.037 | .053	.043 | .017
2011	.336 | .380	.440 | .521	.228 | .340	.171 | .205	.077 | .094	.116 | .077	.037 | .051
2019	.309 | .408	.526 | .583	.255 | .356	.192 | .261	.093 | .160	.134 | .165	.029 | .055
Czech Republic							
2005	.128 | .193	.269 | .341	.122 | .161	.081 | .104	.035 | .040	.039 | .055	.030 | .040
2011	.226 | .212	.299 | .362	.143 | .180	.076 | .121	.042 | .066	.049 | .076	.058 | .050
2019	.248 | .336	.329 | .409	.193 | .283	.096 | .174	.052 | .111	.050 | .096	.059 | .070
Hungary							
2005	.158 | .302	.311 | .417	.121 | .207	.065 | .136	.038 | .053	.012 | .050	.007 | .033
2011	.300 | .358	.443 | .498	.194 | .217	.093 | .173	.044 | .088	.038 | .071	.020 | .051
2019	.217 | .405	.342 | .451	.201 | .272	.097 | .172	.039 | .074	.019 | .035	.029 | .039
Poland							
2005	.185 | .309	.352 | .550	.165 | .294	.084 | .202	.030 | .102	.044 | .118	.016 | .087
2011	.195 | .397	.345 | .498	.160 | .292	.099 | .208	.035 | .108	.047 | .134	.026 | .064
2019	.286 | .387	.326 | .498	.203 | .326	.124 | .191	.044 | .125	.064 | .132	.040 | .068
Slovakia							
2005	.142 | .342	.220 | .409	.117 | .241	.082 | .168	.050 | .128	.035 | .104	.050 | .088
2011	.172 | .302	.240 | .340	.121 | .210	.073 | .117	.048 | .089	.037 | .092	.030 | .074
2019	.245 | .294	.200 | .360	.177 | .221	.083 | .151	.074 | .099	.042 | .050	.045 | .022

Table 11. Predicted probabilities of attaining technical occupations (ISCO 3) by parental occupation, sons | daughters

	Managers	Profes-sionals	Technici-ans	Clerical / Sales	Traders / Craftsmen	Machine operators	Basic occupations
Austria							
2005	.092	.128	.188	.143	.359	.181	.167	.094	.160	.067	.222	.069	.135	.075
2011	.146	.160	.227	.142	.259	.198	.204	.212	.170	.148	.204	.191	.106	.115
2019	.199	.148	.097	.175	.246	.237	.224	.201	.191	.122	.211	.165	.146	.068
Czech Republic							
2005	.235	.311	.287	.341	.282	.417	.151	.240	.111	.188	.130	.176	.160	.135
2011	.194	.312	.212	.235	.282	.301	.172	.192	.105	.129	.085	.104	.115	.083
2019	.221	.172	.208	.165	.250	.205	.165	.155	.106	.116	.101	.099	.030	.100
Hungary							
2005	.108	.210	.099	.170	.106	.291	.085	.203	.044	.132	.057	.175	.020	.083
2011	.139	.196	.145	.178	.139	.258	.108	.184	.063	.063	.049	.049	.047	.047
2019	.188	.191	.156	.256	.134	.250	.108	.187	.046	.150	.042	.125	.035	.103
Poland							
2005	.174	.171	.137	.150	.174	.230	.109	.147	.053	.103	.080	.128	.467	.101
2011	.123	.140	.145	.152	.179	.213	.106	.128	.051	.103	.073	.107	.035	.061
2019	.154	.144	.147	.144	.161	.192	.108	.120	.060	.083	.079	.090	.049	.073
Slovakia							
2005	.217	.245	.237	.240	.201	.257	.164	.224	.105	.170	.063	.182	.071	.150
2011	.276	.345	.254	.299	.280	.333	.174	.282	.121	.228	.107	.217	.110	.207
2019	.183	.213	.209	.161	.199	.224	.153	.162	.094	.126	.091	.130	.065	.100

**Table 12. Predicted probabilities of attaining clerical / sales occupations (ISCO 4)
by parental occupation, sons | daughters**

	Managers	Professionals	Technicians	Clerical / Sales	Traders / Craftsmen	Machine operators	Basic occupations
				Austria			
2005	.193	.419	.100	.351	.179	.500	.398	.635	.181	.570	.139	.588	.155	.432
2011	.117	.300	.111	.213	.158	.295	.189	.425	.140	.425	.184	.482	.159	.419
2019	.151	.296	.154	.167	.149	.279	.193	.381	.130	.397	.145	.428	.226	.483
				Czech Republic			
2005	.108	.304	.117	.192	.137	.264	.149	.428	.092	.318	.104	.271	.053	.262
2011	.113	.306	.106	.296	.132	.368	.146	.444	.117	.384	.117	.380	.081	.314
2019	.113	.321	.139	.306	.127	.366	.135	.445	.114	.380	.079	.362	.111	.371
				Hungary			
2005	.163	.246	.110	.216	.149	.276	.152	.355	.106	.292	.117	283	.100	.238
2011	.143	.278	.111	.211	.179	.352	.185	.403	.115	.305	.092	.318	.095	.221
2019	.116	.179	.157	.180	.202	.306	.177	.394	.132	.290	.126	.316	.098	.151
				Poland			
2005	.123	.282	.131	.181	.138	.274	.141	.368	.073	.250	.116	.342	.091	.256
2011	.178	.278	.117	.200	.134	.299	.154	.368	.087	.268	.110	.389	.082	.294
2019	.105	.229	.128	.223	.128	.286	.162	.399	.081	.293	.114	.331	.121	.372
				Slovakia			
2005	.107	.252	.106	.207	.120	.311	.124	.381	.076	.313	.100	.339	.075	.280
2011	.138	.251	.156	.241	.125	.342	.176	.399	.119	.365	.135	.392	.084	.327
2019	.169	.292	.178	.339	.215	.380	.202	.438	.153	.372	.189	.426	.167	.338

Table 13. Predicted probabilities of attaining trade / craftsmen occupations (ISCO 5) by parental occupation, sons | daughters

	Managers	Profes-sionals	Technici-ans	Clerical / Sales	Traders / Craftsmen	Machine operators	Basic occupations
				Austria			
2005	.156	.077	.025	.000	.109	.029	.191	.055	.390	.119	.269	.069	.267	.082
2011	.131	.027	.071	.019	.127	.031	.188	.036	.347	.109	.250	.060	.360	.069
2019	.069	.029	.062	.015	.171	.046	.178	.031	.351	.102	.234	.039	.248	.075
				Czech Republic			
2005	.177	.082	.088	.028	.259	.057	.387	.089	.466	.209	.390	.136	.382	.119
2011	.145	.053	.150	.027	.251	.041	.321	.078	.440	.140	.360	.113	.391	.141
2019	.108	.030	.131	.034	.195	.035	.291	.050	.385	.091	.335	.070	.370	.069
				Hungary			
2005	.188	.032	.165	.035	.312	.076	.333	.109	.439	.185	.420	.172	.417	.247
2011	.185	.031	.137	.016	.243	.035	.302	.064	.425	.115	.376	.088	.365	.117
2019	.188	.036	.121	.027	.219	.039	.301	.046	.446	.114	.359	.098	.339	.115
				Poland			
2005	.166	.050	.154	.028	.253	.076	.368	.121	.559	.339	.377	.190	.453	191
2011	.144	.032	.138	.027	.221	.057	.325	.111	.529	.307	.360	.119	.443	.233
2019	.139	.053	.156	.036	.211	.053	.285	.105	.533	.288	.330	.166	.397	.164
				Slovakia			
2005	.224	.034	.177	.036	.250	.050	.284	.055	.368	.143	.358	.114	.344	.118
2011	.149	.022	.156	.022	.218	.023	.285	.065	.429	.089	.349	.081	.433	.118
2019	.126	.063	.119	.027	.182	.050	.246	.059	.351	.124	.279	.119	.292	.119

Table 14. Predicted probabilities of attaining machine operator occupations (ISCO 6) by parental occupation, sons | daughters

	Managers	Professionals	Technici-ans	Clerical / Sales	Traders / Craftsmen	Machine operators	Basic occupations
			Austria				
2005	.037	.017	.063	.000	.071	.010	.043	.011	.104	.013	.222	.038	.125	.020
2011	.029	.000	.015	.006	.053	.000	.076	.010	.117	.030	.122	.012	.153	.051
2019	.048	.007	.046	.000	.048	.005	.076	.014	.106	.032	.144	.030	.190	.041
			Czech Republic				
2005	.128	.015	.053	.028	.095	.025	.159	.056	.196	.081	.240	.156	.237	.080
2011	.113	.041	.112	.017	.097	.044	.199	.067	.194	.126	.283	.172	.184	.141
2019	.108	.025	.067	.025	.135	.037	.206	.069	.249	.138	.345	.172	.259	.092
			Hungary				
2005	.121	.012	.070	.008	.138	.007	.196	.038	.182	.061	.216	.072	.160	.075
2011	.105	.009	.050	.026	.134	.031	.197	.063	.206	.139	.267	.173	.184	.172
2019	.145	.036	.121	.027	.165	.048	.228	.074	.204	.167	.309	.168	.161	.154
			Poland				
2005	.139	.012	.094	.014	.144	.019	.182	.033	.170	.039	.238	.060	.194	.047
2011	.110	.013	.110	.013	.170	.020	.200	.042	.182	.047	.294	.067	.223	.048
2019	.144	.011	.118	.011	.153	.028	.206	.032	.186	.050	.285	.061	.194	.045
			Slovakia				
2005	.096	.019	.069	.022	.185	.033	.203	.051	.258	.089	.284	.108	.222	.092
2011	.075	.017	.075	.012	.160	.027	.196	.044	.195	.062	.248	.075	.198	.080
2019	.117	.032	.150	.027	.145	.034	.185	.082	.207	.135	.247	.149	.215	.156

Table 15. Predicted probabilities of attaining basic occupations (ISCO 7) by parental occupation, sons | daughters

	Managers	Professionals	Technici-ans	Clerical / Sales	Traders / Craftsmen	Machine operators	Basic occupations
			Austria				
2005	.073 | .060	.038 | .013	.033 | .105	.074 | .096	.078 | .178	.065 | .168	.228 | .344
2011	.029 | .060	.020 | .036	.061 | .066	.048 | .076	.083 | .174	.054 | .149	.138 | .286
2019	.014 | .028	.020 | .024	.018 | .041	.050 | .070	.068 | .154	.055 | .136	.117 | .272
			Czech Republic				
2005	.049 | .030	.012 | .022	.017 | .047	.034 | .056	.055 | .140	.058 | .191	.115 | .349
2011	.016 | .041	.013 | .022	.018 | .028	.039 | .068	.056 | .129	.069 | .141	.149 | .256
2019	.016 | .049	.032 | .030	.019 | .042	.044 | .079	.061 | .146	.076 | .189	.163 | .275
			Hungary				
2005	.038 | .057	.022 | .019	.032 | .036	.057 | .080	.116 | .224	.090 | .211	.250 | .291
2011	.011 | .049	.079 | .028	.058 | .053	.072 | .076	.124 | .196	.154 | .192	.274 | .326
2019	.029 | .071	.035 | .038	.030 | .069	.064 | .102	.116 | .194	.141 | .242	.322 | .439
			Poland				
2005	.033 | .057	.027 | .030	.032 | .059	.059 | .091	.074 | .142	.106 | .142	.160 | .292
2011	.034 | .029	.028 | .027	.036 | .057	.050 | .098	.072 | .140	.070 | .157	.147 | .268
2019	.020 | .027	.022 | .025	.037 | .059	.058 | .098	.068 | .133	.080 | .189	.169 | .259
			Slovakia				
2005	.036 | .028	.043 | .039	.034 | .042	.062 | .070	.090 | .119	.084 | .112	.151 | .232
2011	.006 | .017	.017 | .020	.028 | .023	.053 | .053	.046 | .136	.089 | .122	.124 | .177
2019	.017 | .039	.055 | .031	.045 | .052	.080 | .068	.098 | .123	.118 | .109	.189 | .230

of managerial positions, especially in Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Women are much more likely than men to have clerical/sales or basic occupations, if this was the highest attained occupation of their parents, while the opposite is true in blue-collar jobs (traders/craftsmen and machine operators), hence reflecting systemic occupational differences by gender. Over time, although gender differences in occupational persistence can be large in some occupational categories, there does not seem to be substantial change over time.

Relative mobility rates

The statistics on 'net mobility' or social fluidity in Table 8 are, in fact, summary statistics for relative mobility for each country and year, separate for men and women. The results of MNR break down those mean mobility rates into the probability of attaining each occupational destination by each occupational origin, by gender, country and year.

As Table 9 indicates, social reproduction of managerial occupations is low (typically less than 20% for men), and upward mobility of men of parents with professional occupations hovers around 10% in the Visegrad states and even lower for women. In fact, the probability of attaining a managerial position with family origins lower than technical occupations rarely exceeds 5% among men. These probabilities are higher in Austria compared with the Visegrad states, reflecting a stronger origin–destination link for the most prestigious jobs in that country, even though this association declined from 2005 to 2019.

The results for professional occupations (Table 10) deserve special attention because these occupations are numerous and often strongly linked to educational qualifications and good pay. Across all countries, women have higher probabilities of upward mobility into professional occupations than men (refuting Hypothesis 3), which is consistent over time and across all five lower occupational groups. It is also true that women have greater odds of downward mobility from managerial parents, although this impacts a much smaller share of people. Despite the high degree of social reproduction of professionals, this occupational group also exhibits a large degree of social fluidity in its inflow mobility. The evidence shows that women in particular have greater odds of obtaining professional occupations, even if coming from families with lower occupational status—likely because of investments in education and the expansion of tertiary education in Central Europe in the 1990s and 2000s, which deserves special attention in a separate paper. However, my results do not indicate large changes in these odds over the observed time period.

Moving to factory and warehouse occupations ('machine operators'), a substantial difference exists between the Visegrad states and Austria in the social fluidity of these occupations. In Austria, there seems to be rigidity between blue-collar and service occupations, with children of parents with service-based

occupations being substantially less likely to become machine operators. In contrast, the probability that men whose parents had clerical/sales positions become machine operators is comparable to the probabilities among craftsmen and basic occupational origins. This is also true of parents with technical or lower-professional occupations, such as IT specialists and nurses. In other words, it is probably a lasting legacy of the communist period that machine operator positions exhibit qualities of higher social fluidity in the Visegrad states. There does not seem to be any change in this over the observed time period.

Basic occupations that require little or no skill have higher occupational reproduction among women, who are also more likely than men to face downward mobility from skilled blue-collar occupations and lower service sector positions. In 2019, in Hungary, 43% of women whose parents held basic occupations are likely to hold those same or similar occupations and are much higher than the probability of upward mobility into the next ranking occupations (16%). Both men and women whose parents held occupations in the service economy rarely fall into these rudimentary jobs.

Conclusion

In the present article, I have presented evidence for very high rates of women's social mobility, especially in the upward direction, even though much of this mobility is structural in nature. After subtracting out the effects of changes in occupational structure, men continue to have more social fluidity, except for the Czech Republic, in the 2019 data. The Czech trend—that Czech women now exhibit higher relative mobility than Czech men—is in fact quite remarkable because the trend seems to be systemic in nature and other countries in the region seem to be following Czech social trends in this same direction. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time that it has ever been shown that Czech women exhibit more social fluidity than men, hence representing an inflection point in the labour market not so different than the reversal of educational gender gaps in recent decades.

Of course, this leads to a certain sociological curiosity as to whether there is an empirical link between these educational and labour market trends. We should note that, although the social mobility literature has shown that education can increase absolute mobility, it has not been shown to increase net or relative mobility. What we do know is that different educational pathways in the Czech Republic—which are themselves unevenly distributed by gender—impact social class destinations differently (Smith, 2019), especially regarding the highest social classes. At the same time, we can observe in the social mobility tables that women exhibit more upward mobility into professional occupations compared with men. These trends raise the possibility of an educational effect on Czech net mobility rates by gender, a topic that deserves special attention in future studies.

The above results also provide evidence of dynamic equilibrium over time. With a few exceptions, we can find very little temporal change in the overall social reproduction of occupations or in mobility between them. Patterns of mobility that are specific to occupations are present (e.g., recruitment into machine operator positions from a particularly wide range of family origins in the Visegrad states), but these patterns do not seem to markedly increase or decrease. Women experience much higher rates of upward mobility into desirable professional occupations—which we would hypothesise is because of the intervening role of educational expansion, but in this case, we would expect that these probabilities would increase over time, but they do not. The social mobility regimes of these five countries seem to be quite similar (confirming hypothesis 4), with a modest trend towards a reduced or nugatory gender gap in net mobility. A follow-up study with a larger set of European countries would be needed to determine whether this degree of similarity or convergence is distinctive to the region.

These results point to the importance of further research on social mobility in Central Europe. The mechanisms, if any, between the gender gap in educational attainments and gender differences in social mobility remain largely unknown. Similarly, research can also be conducted on the income distribution of occupations among workers who experience occupational persistence versus upward and downward mobility. Finally, regionally specific differences in social mobility between occupational categories (e.g., a 'postcommunist' effect) would be more visible with cross-national comparisons across Europe than with only Austrian data points. With the advent of larger and higher-quality datasets in Central Europe, new frontiers in research on social mobility are still on the horizon.

Finally, the results in the present article are also subject to caveats. The current research is based on high-quality EU-SILC data, but the confirmation of empirical trends should also be apparent in other sources, such as pooled European Social Survey data. My results also only speak to occupational mobility, which may or may not reflect changes and continuity in social class mobility or income mobility. To encourage more students of social stratification to examine questions of social mobility in Central Europe, I include Tables 2–6, from which my results in structural and net mobility can be replicated.

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