

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS AT WORK: EVIDENCE FROM ROUND 10 OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL SURVEY FOR 13 FORMER TRANSITION COUNTRIES

Venelin Boshnakov^{1*}

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¹ University of National and World Economy, Sofia, Bulgaria

***Corresponding Author:**
Venelin Boshnakov

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venelinb@unwe.bg

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ABSTRACT

The growing use of digital communication technologies, including instant messaging, videoconferencing, and real-time collaboration platforms, has transformed organisational communication and reshaped working conditions across Europe. The effects of these technologies on employees' work experiences are multifaceted. On the one hand, digital communication can increase autonomy, flexibility, coordination, and efficiency. However, it may create expectations of constant connectivity and continuous digital availability. The widespread adoption of digital tools can therefore improve collaboration while simultaneously increasing the risks of information overload, weakened interpersonal relationships, and technostress. This paper presents selected findings on employees' attitudes towards digital communication in the workplace, drawing on recent cross-national data from Round 10 of the European Social Survey and covering 13 former transition economies. The survey includes a set of questionnaire items that enable the construction of variables for examining respondents' perceptions of work-related digital communication practices.

The analysis focuses on respondents' assessments of the extent to which digital communication facilitates work coordination and improves job effectiveness. Particular attention is given to communication with colleagues and line managers in written form, including text messages, emails, and messaging applications, and through screen-based communication such as videoconferencing. The study also considers differences associated with respondents' sociodemographic characteristics, including gender, age, and educational attainment. The findings contribute to a better understanding of how employees experience digitally mediated communication in the workplace. They also reveal considerable potential for further research into the relationships between digital communication, work-life interference, job satisfaction, labour-market inequalities, technostress, and other relevant dimensions of contemporary employment.

Keywords: *digital communications, job effectiveness, European Social Survey*

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital communication technologies, including email, instant messaging, collaborative platforms, and videoconferencing, has substantially transformed organ-

isational communication and working conditions across Europe. These technologies have complex implications for employees. They can enhance autonomy, flexibility, coordination, and efficiency, while simultaneously increasing expectations of continuous connectivity and availability. Recent research indicates that the widespread use of digital tools may also generate adverse effects, including information overload, reduced interpersonal interaction, and heightened technostress. These challenges became particularly visible during the COVID-19 pandemic, when remote working expanded rapidly and employees became increasingly dependent on digitally mediated communication.

Studies based on Round 10 of the European Social Survey indicate that attitudes towards information and communication technologies, including optimism, scepticism, and perceived digital competence, vary across sociodemographic groups, particularly by age, gender, and educational attainment. These differences suggest that employees do not experience workplace digitalisation uniformly and that the effects of digital communication on job satisfaction and well-being may differ across population groups. By including indicators of digital skills, attitudes towards digital technologies, and exposure to risks related to misinformation and privacy, ESS Round 10 provides a valuable empirical basis for examining workplace communication, digital inequalities, job satisfaction, and related outcomes (Tsouparopoulou et al., 2025).

Digital communication has become a widespread, although unevenly distributed, feature of working life across Europe. Its effects are evident in areas such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, managerial support, and the gendered division of labour. Existing findings point to several potential advantages, particularly for employees engaged in flexible working arrangements and for some lower-status occupational groups. At the same time, digital communication may blur the boundaries between work and private life, increase workloads, and produce an unequal distribution of expectations for digital availability (Abendroth et al., 2023).

The ESS Round 10 rotating module, entitled “Digital Social Contacts in Work and Family Life,” contains approximately 30 questions concerning access to digital technologies, the frequency of digital and face-to-face interaction with colleagues and supervisors, teleworking practices, work-life conflict, job satisfaction, and related attitudes. Within this framework, digital social contact in the workplace refers to communication mediated by electronic and computer-based technologies, including telephone conversations, screen-based interaction, text messages, email, and messaging applications, rather than direct face-to-face contact. Initial evidence suggests that daily digital communication at work is widespread but not universal and that its prevalence differs considerably across countries. The module covers more than 30 countries and supports comparisons according to age, gender, migration background, occupational status, and teleworking arrangements (ESS, 2020).

The present study provides selected evidence on respondents’ attitudes towards digital communication at work using data from Round 10 of the European Social Survey. The ESS is a cross-national survey based on representative national samples and includes a set of items that enable the empirical analysis of perceptions and experiences related to job-related digital contact.

The analysis combines national subsamples from 13 former transition economies: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia. It examines the hypothesis that digital communication facilitates work coordination and improves job effectiveness, based on respondents’ reported experiences of communication with colleagues and line managers.

Three principal forms of digitally mediated workplace communication are considered: telephone communication, written communication through text messages, email, or messaging applications, and screen-based communication. In addition, an ordinal logistic regression

model is estimated using responses to the question: “To what extent would you say that online and mobile communication makes it easy to coordinate and manage activities?” The model controls for respondents’ sociodemographic characteristics in order to identify systematic differences in attitudes towards the coordinating role of digital communication.

2. SHORT LITERATURE REVIEW

Following the rapid expansion of digital communication in the workplace, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, a growing body of research has examined the complex relationships among digitally mediated communication, work-family conflict, organisational effectiveness, employee well-being, and job satisfaction.

Bordi et al. (2018) provide an overview of the digital interaction environment experienced by employees and identify the aspects of digital communication that influence workplace well-being. They define communication as information-related interaction occurring either between individuals or among multiple participants, noting that digital technologies allow a single employee to communicate simultaneously with several colleagues. Such interaction is enabled through tools and platforms including email, instant messaging, and social media. Digital communication modes differ according to spatiality and synchronicity: communication may occur locally or across distance and may take place either in real time or asynchronously. The diversity of tools and communication modes can affect employees differently, producing both positive and negative consequences for well-being (**Bordi et al., 2018**).

Several studies indicate that more intensive digital communication at work is, on average, associated with higher job satisfaction. Employees in lower occupational positions may benefit particularly from digital communication because it can improve access to information, facilitate participation in organisational processes, and strengthen social integration, thereby supporting subjective occupational well-being. **Meyer et al. (2026)** examine how job autonomy, supervisor appreciation, and perceived stress shape the relationship between digital monitoring and job satisfaction. Their analysis also considers the possibility that these job characteristics may themselves be influenced by monitoring practices.

Using ESS Round 10 data, **Tsouparopoulou et al. (2025)** investigate cross-national differences in the digital engagement of young Europeans and their attitudes towards information and communication technologies. Their findings reveal substantial variation in digital competence, technology-related attitudes, and familiarity with online tools, while also emphasising the importance of opportunities for digital skill acquisition.

Drawing on interview and survey data, **Jamieson et al. (2025)** examine the experiences of remote and hybrid workers in the United States with different forms of cyber incivility, including hostility, gossip, and exclusion. They also consider the availability of subsequent organisational support. Such negative experiences were found to be more common among employees spending greater amounts of time in the workplace and among women compared with men.

Umoren and Ukpe (2025) review the role of digital communication in organisations and assess its potential to improve internal collaboration and operational efficiency. At the same time, they identify several important challenges, including cybersecurity risks, information overload, and the reduction of direct interpersonal contact. The adoption of different communication technologies may therefore alleviate some organisational problems while intensifying others.

Jamieson et al. (2025) further show that support-seeking in response to cyber incivility can be effective, although access to such support may be more difficult for employees working remotely. **Umoren and Ukpe (2025)** consequently recommend improving digital infrastructure and cybersecurity, strengthening digital literacy through regular training, balancing digital

and face-to-face interaction, and establishing clear organisational communication policies to reduce information overload and improve productivity.

Using data from ESS Round 10 for 25 countries, together with a longitudinal Finnish panel, [Oksanen et al. \(2024\)](#) show that employees in high-level office positions and supervisory roles experience lower work engagement when organisational social media use and excessive personal social media use intensify. Their findings suggest the existence of a threshold beyond which digital communication changes from a useful resource into an additional work demand. Digital technologies may therefore support well-being when they enhance autonomy, participation, and inclusion, but may become a source of strain when they increase demands without providing employees with sufficient control.

The ESS Round 10 topline report indicates that more frequent written digital communication with line managers is associated, on average, with only a very small increase in work-life conflict. The estimated change is approximately 0.02 points on a five-point scale. Nevertheless, country-specific analyses reveal modest but noticeable increases in work-life conflict when digital contact with managers becomes more frequent, particularly in countries such as Latvia, France, and Greece. These findings support the interpretation of digital workplace communication as both an opportunity and a potential risk for the work-family interface. Digital contact may facilitate coordination and flexibility, but it can also increase employee accessibility and create greater potential for work to intrude into personal and family time ([Abendroth et al., 2023](#); [Abendroth et al., 2024](#)).

A more focused analysis of the relationship between digital communication and supervisory behaviour uses ESS Round 10 data to assess how different communication media are associated with employees' perceptions of supervisor support for work-life balance. Face-to-face interaction displays the strongest positive association with perceived work-life-supportive supervisory behaviour, whereas exclusively digital communication generally shows a weaker relationship. However, digital contact becomes more important when it supplements infrequent face-to-face meetings. Its role also varies across institutional settings, particularly between countries characterised by strong expectations of work devotion and those with more supportive work-life policies. This indicates that the effects of digital communication depend heavily on broader organisational, social, and institutional conditions ([Abendroth & Schwarz, 2023](#)).

Palmisano and Suárez Álvarez (2025) provide evidence of inequalities in opportunities to acquire digital skills by constructing a Digital Opportunity Divide index for 22 European countries. Their results reveal cross-country variation in the degree to which digital skill acquisition is shaped by circumstances beyond individual control. The study further suggests that perceived unfairness in digital opportunities may influence environmental preferences. Whereas most previous research has focused on the effect of Internet use on environmental attitudes, this analysis indicates that inequality in digital skill development may weaken pro-environmental attitudes and behaviour.

Using ESS Round 10 data from 29 countries, [Hu and Qian \(2024\)](#) identify latent profiles of digital communication across work and family domains. These profiles include dual-medium communication, dual-low communication, high work-only communication, dual-high communication, and high family-only communication. The dual-medium profile is the most common, whereas high family-only digital communication is relatively rare. The analysis reveals clear gender differences in the prevalence of these patterns and shows that such differences vary according to digital literacy, working-from-home arrangements, the severity of COVID-19 restrictions, and the intensity of Internet use at the national level. The authors conclude that the use of ICT for communication is gendered and embedded in broader strategies for combining paid employment and family responsibilities.

Abendroth et al. (2024) synthesise research based on ESS Round 10 and emphasise that digital communication is highly context dependent. Their analysis documents substantial differences across countries and social groups in both access to and use of digital communication at work. It also demonstrates that the contribution of digital communication to work-family conflict is significant but not unavoidable. Its effects depend on digital skills, emotional and physical proximity, organisational practices, and national institutional arrangements.

Drawing on ESS Round 10 data, **Pan and Nekhoda (2024)** examine how digitalisation and globalisation have transformed the organisation of work, particularly through the expansion of co-creation activities on digital labour platforms. Their findings show that frequent Internet use among self-employed workers significantly increases the likelihood of participation in co-creation, especially among individuals with higher levels of education. Participation in such activities is associated with greater autonomy, human capital accumulation, and productivity. At the same time, the study identifies deficiencies in human resource management practices within platform-based employment and calls for new forms of support for workers engaged in digitally mediated collaboration.

The conceptual design of the ESS Round 10 module on digital social contacts treats teleworking as a central determinant of both face-to-face and digital interaction with supervisors and co-workers. The module also assumes that the frequency and form of digital contact are related to work expectations, work-life conflict, job satisfaction, and cohesion within work teams (**ESS, 2020**). Descriptive findings confirm that teleworking arrangements vary considerably across countries and are closely connected with differences in the frequency and intensity of workplace digital communication (**Abendroth et al., 2023**).

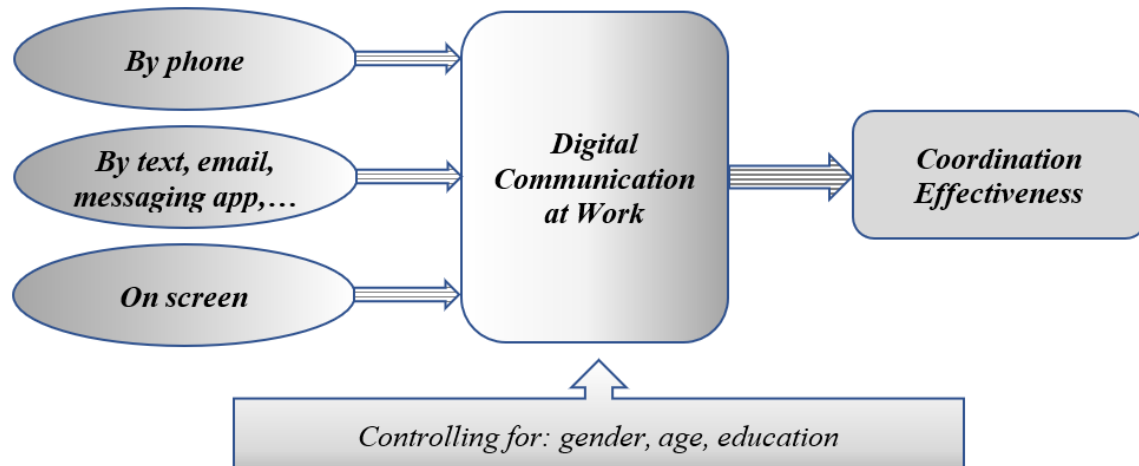
3. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Digital communications at work are considered as a central antecedent that directly and indirectly influences the management effectiveness as perceived by employees. These perceptions should reflect whether digital communication helps them understand their roles, coordinate with colleagues, and manage interdependent tasks. (**Lane et al., 2024**). The conceptual model developed for the purposes of the current study assumes that a more intensive digital communication at work should be associated with greater job coordination effectiveness, which can be explained by various mechanisms.

Digital communication technologies improve connectivity and collaboration, allowing employees to share information and coordinate tasks more quickly across departments and locations (**Hajduk & Benčič, 2025**). Moreover, when tools are matched to coordination needs (e.g. shared documents for joint work, synchronous chat or video for urgent issues), media synchronicity theory predicts smoother coordination and reduced delays (**Putro, 2023**). And in general, organizational studies show that effective digital communication reduces duplication, clarifies responsibilities, and makes work processes more transparent. (**Poltoratska et al., 2024**). At the same time, poorly managed digital communication can create coordination problems through information overload, fragmented channels, or unclear expectations. The conceptual framework therefore treats operational digital communication as a determinant of coordination effectiveness (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Conceptual model for the study of interrelation between digital communications at work and job coordination effectiveness



Source: Autor's layout

Taking into account the empirical measures concerning the digital communications at work provided by ESS Round 10 survey, the following hypotheses could be tested:

H_1 : A more intensive digital communication with the line manager is associated to higher coordination effectiveness as perceived by employees.

H_2 : A more intensive digital communication with other colleagues is associated to higher coordination effectiveness as perceived by employees.

3. 2. EMPIRICAL STRATEGY

The empirical analysis is based on microdata from Round 10 of the European Social Survey (ESS), a cross-national survey covering approximately 30 European countries. The ESS applies harmonised probability-sampling procedures, rigorous translation protocols, and standardised fieldwork practices to ensure the comparability and representativeness of national samples.

Pandemic-related restrictions during the 2020-2022 data-collection period prompted several participating countries to adopt web-based or paper-based self-completion methods, while others retained the traditional face-to-face interview format. As a result, ESS Round 10 was implemented through different modes of data collection across countries. The survey also included two rotating modules comprising thematic sets of questions that are periodically incorporated into the ESS questionnaire.

Design weights, calculated as the inverse of respondents' inclusion probabilities, are commonly used in cross-national survey analysis to correct for unequal probabilities of selection and improve the representativeness of the estimates. In the present study, post-stratification weights are applied to align national samples more closely with known population distributions according to key sociodemographic characteristics, including age, gender, and region. These weights are derived from the design weights and adjusted using external population information (Kaminska, 2020).

Two methodological issues specific to ESS Round 10 should be considered when interpreting the results. First, the COVID-19 pandemic led many countries to introduce mixed-mode data collection, which may have increased the risk of measurement differences across countries. This concern is particularly relevant for survey items related to technology use and digital behaviour, as responses may vary depending on whether the questionnaire was completed independently or administered through a face-to-face interview.

Second, the data collected between 2020 and 2022 reflect an exceptional period characterised by the rapid expansion of remote work and digitally mediated communication. Consequently, the empirical findings may capture both short-term behavioural changes associated with the pandemic and longer-term structural trends in workplace digitalisation. This way, empirical results obtained by this data may reflect both short term pandemic effects as well as long term structural trends.

In order to analyze possible covariation between a target dependent variable (Y) measured by an ordinal scale and a group of possible covariates, the method of ordinal logistic regression (OLR) has been implemented to model the relationship between a set of predictor variables and an ordinal outcome variable with a natural ranking of categories. Unlike classical regression that operates a continuous dependent variable, and multinomial logistic regression which does not utilize any ordering among Y categories, OLR explicitly accounts for the ordered nature of the response variable ($Y_1 < Y_2 < \dots < Y_C$) while not requiring equal spacing between these categories. The model estimates the cumulative probability of the response being at or below a given category – specifically, for each category $m=1, \dots, C-1$ the cumulative logit model with “k” predictors is defined as:

$$\text{Log} \left(\frac{\text{Prob}(Y \leq Y_m)}{\text{Prob}(Y > Y_m)} \right) = \gamma_m - \beta_1 X_1 - \dots - \beta_k X_k \quad (1)$$

where γ_c represents category-specific intercepts (also considered as “thresholds”) and β_j are regression parameters estimated as common across all cumulative logits. The most widely used specification is the proportional odds model, which assumes that the effect of each predictor is constant across all thresholds. Both thresholds and model parameters (γ and β) are typically estimated together applying maximum likelihood estimation method and model adequacy can be assessed through likelihoodbased measures and overall goodness-of-fit statistics.

In this model, the regression coefficients are commonly interpreted through odds ratios. A positive coefficient indicates that higher values of a predictor are associated with greater odds of observing the dependent variable in a higher response category rather than in the combined lower categories, holding all other variables constant. Conversely, a negative coefficient indicates lower odds of being classified in a higher category.

Ordinal logistic regression is particularly suitable for dependent variables measured using Likert-type scales or other ordered response categories commonly employed in social surveys such as the European Social Survey. By explicitly accounting for the ordinal structure of the outcome variable, this method generally provides more appropriate and coherent estimates than approaches that either dichotomise the response scale and thereby discard information or treat ordinal categories as if they were continuous and equally spaced.

4. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

4.1. EXPLORATORY OVERVIEW

The present study draws on data from the core questionnaire of ESS Round 10, including respondents’ gender, age, and educational attainment, as well as from the rotating module entitled “Digital Social Contacts in Work and Family Life.” The data were obtained from the harmonised cross-national dataset and interpreted with reference to the accompanying documentation and questionnaire materials (ESS, 2020).

The variables selected from the rotating module capture several dimensions of digital communication in the workplace, including the frequency of digital contact with colleagues and supervisors, the use of different communication modes such as telephone calls, email, messaging applications, and video calls, and respondents’ perceptions of the extent to which digital

communication facilitates the coordination and management of organisational activities. The selected questionnaire items are conceptually grounded in the module framework, which identifies coordination, privacy, and work-life interference as important dimensions of digitally mediated communication.

Table 1. Distribution of responses to the question: “To what extent would you say that online and mobile communication makes it easy to coordinate and manage activities?” by country

Response scale: 0 = Not at all; 10 = Completely.

% of country sample	Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Completely
Montenegro	1.4	1.2	4.8	5.7	8.2	16.5	14.0	11.7	13.3	5.8	17.4
Hungary	0.7	0.5	0.8	1.7	3.8	12.0	10.8	19.4	21.2	14.1	15.1
Slovakia	3.1	0.7	1.0	2.5	4.8	7.5	9.2	15.6	18.5	8.1	29.1
Czechia	1.0	0.6	0.9	2.2	3.0	9.6	11.0	15.7	17.9	16.4	21.6
N.Macedonia	0.3		0.4	1.4	4.8	10.7	9.4	14.2	17.2	10.3	31.3
Croatia	1.9	0.3	1.6	1.9	1.8	11.1	5.7	13.7	21.1	14.4	26.6
Bulgaria	1.8	0.4	1.2	1.9	3.2	11.4	5.5	11.0	17.8	13.0	32.8
Latvia	2.1	0.5	1.0	1.3	0.9	11.3	4.8	14.2	21.3	16.5	26.2
Serbia	2.3	0.4	0.7	1.2	1.1	12.8	4.2	13.0	17.7	12.5	34.1
Poland	2.4	0.5	0.9	1.6	1.8	9.9	5.0	12.4	21.4	12.7	31.4
Slovenia	1.1	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.7	7.9	6.2	14.1	28.6	15.7	24.1
Lithuania	1.6	0.4	0.8	1.7	1.6	5.0	4.9	12.6	18.6	13.4	39.6
Estonia	1.3	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.7	5.6	5.1	10.6	22.3	18.9	34.0
Total sample	1.6	0.4	1.1	1.9	2.8	10.0	7.4	13.7	19.6	13.4	28.1

Source: Author’s calculation

Table 1 presents the country-level distribution of responses to the principal question examined in this study: “To what extent would you say that online and mobile communication makes it easy to coordinate and manage activities?” Responses were recorded on an 11-point scale ranging from 0, indicating “Not at all,” to 10, indicating “Completely.”

Across the pooled sample, responses are strongly concentrated at the upper end of the scale. Categories 7-10 account for approximately two-thirds of all respondents, with 13.7% selecting 7, 19.6% selecting 8, 13.4% selecting 9, and 28.1% selecting 10. These results indicate that online and mobile communication is generally perceived as facilitating the coordination and management of activities.

Strongly negative responses are uncommon. In most countries, each of the three lowest categories—0, 1, and 2—accounts for less than 3% of respondents. This suggests that explicit rejection of digital communication as a useful coordination tool is relatively rare.

Several Baltic and Eastern European countries record particularly high proportions of respondents selecting the maximum score of 10. These include Lithuania, at approximately 40%, Serbia and Estonia, at around 34%, Bulgaria, at 33%, and North Macedonia and Poland, at approximately 31%. Respondents in Czechia, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, and Slovakia also generally evaluate digital communication positively, although their responses are more widely distributed across categories 7, 8, and 9, with smaller proportions selecting the maximum category. For example, the share choosing 10 is approximately 17% in Montenegro, 22% in Czechia, and 29% in Slovakia.

In most countries, the modal response falls between 7 and 10, indicating a broadly shared per-

ception that online and mobile communication facilitates rather than obstructs the organisation and management of activities. Overall, the results suggest that digital tools are firmly embedded in workplace coordination practices across the countries examined. Nevertheless, the degree of enthusiasm differs, with some countries displaying particularly high concentrations in the maximum category and others showing more moderate but still favourable evaluations.

4. 1. 1. DIGITAL COMMUNICATION WITH LINE MANAGERS

The frequency distributions for communication with line managers reveal substantial differences according to the communication channel used. In the case of telephone communication, intermediate-frequency categories, particularly “several times a week” and “several times a month,” predominate in most countries. Together, these categories generally account for approximately one-third to one-half of the relevant national samples (Annex Tables A1.1-A1.3). This pattern suggests that telephone contact is a regular, although not continuous, component of communication between employees and supervisors.

The proportion of respondents reporting that they never communicate with their line manager by telephone is nevertheless substantial in some countries. Depending on the national context, the share ranges from below 10% to considerably higher levels, indicating pronounced variation in organisational communication practices and in the extent to which telephone calls are used for supervisory contact.

Compared with telephone communication, written digital channels, including text messages, email, and messaging applications, exhibit a wider distribution between very frequent use and complete non-use. The proportion selecting “Never” is particularly high in Bulgaria, at approximately 47%, Latvia, at 40%, North Macedonia, at 39%, and Hungary, at 38%. In these countries, a substantial share of employees appear not to use written digital channels when communicating with line managers.

Screen-based or video communication with supervisors is even less common. The “Never” category predominates in almost all countries, ranging from approximately 45% in Montenegro to around 72% in Slovenia and Serbia. These findings indicate that face-to-face communication, telephone calls, or other audio-based channels remain more common than video interaction in supervisory relationships.

4. 1. 2. DIGITAL COMMUNICATION WITH COLLEAGUES

The distributions relating to communication among colleagues similarly indicate that digitally mediated interaction is widespread but differs considerably across communication modes and countries (Annex Tables A2.1-A2.3).

Telephone communication forms a routine component of workplace interaction for many respondents. In most countries, the combined proportions reporting telephone contact “several times a day,” “once a day,” or “several times a week” exceed half of the sample. Lithuania, Serbia, Slovenia, Estonia, Montenegro, and Croatia display relatively high levels of frequent telephone communication. For example, approximately 33% of respondents in Serbia, 27% in Lithuania, and 25% in Slovenia report communicating with colleagues by telephone several times a day.

At the same time, some countries contain substantial groups of employees who use telephone communication with colleagues rarely or not at all. Hungary, Slovakia, Czechia, and Croatia record comparatively high proportions in the “Never” or “Less often” categories. These patterns suggest that telephone communication remains important across the region, although its role differs according to national and organisational contexts and may coexist with, or be partly replaced by, other communication technologies.

Written digital communication through text messages, email, and messaging applications displays an even greater degree of cross-country variation. Serbia, Lithuania, and Slovenia record relatively high proportions of respondents using these channels several times a day, at approximately 29%, 27%, and 22%, respectively. By contrast, the corresponding shares are much lower in Bulgaria and Hungary, at approximately 7% and 4%.

Complete non-use of written digital communication with colleagues is particularly common in Bulgaria, where approximately 45% select “Never,” Hungary, at 41%, North Macedonia, at 37%, and Croatia, at 34%. Conversely, Lithuania, Montenegro, and Poland have lower proportions of non-users, at approximately 16%, 14%, and 19%, respectively. When combined with relatively high levels of frequent use, these figures point to more deeply embedded cultures of text- and application-based workplace communication.

Countries such as Czechia, Poland, and Latvia display a more dispersed pattern, with substantial proportions of respondents reporting use several times a week or several times a month, alongside non-negligible groups reporting no use. This distribution suggests considerable internal variation in digital communication practices within individual countries.

Video communication with colleagues remains comparatively uncommon throughout the sample. “Never” is the modal response in every country, ranging from just below 40% in Montenegro to more than 70% in Slovenia and Croatia. In several other countries, including Bulgaria, Czechia, Poland, and Hungary, approximately 60% of respondents report never using video communication with colleagues.

Even in countries with comparatively greater video use, such as Montenegro, Lithuania, Estonia, Hungary, and Latvia, daily users remain a minority. Most reported video communication takes place several times a week or several times a month. Montenegro and Lithuania are notable for their relatively low proportions of non-users and comparatively high intermediate-frequency use, suggesting that video-based interaction has become more established in these settings, although it is not yet the dominant mode of peer communication. By contrast, video communication appears only weakly integrated into everyday workplace interaction in Croatia and Slovenia.

4. 1. 3. OVERALL PATTERNS

Taken together, the descriptive results show that online and mobile communication is widely perceived as facilitating the coordination and management of workplace activities. Positive evaluations are particularly pronounced in Lithuania, Serbia, Estonia, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, and Poland.

However, the frequency and form of actual digital contact differ substantially across countries and communication channels. Telephone communication remains important in many workplace settings, while the use of text messages, email, and messaging applications is more uneven. Video communication is comparatively rare in almost all countries.

The coexistence of highly positive evaluations of digital communication and high proportions of non-use for particular channels suggests that workplace digitalisation is multidimensional. Employees may regard digital technologies as useful for organisational coordination even when they do not regularly use every available mode of communication with supervisors or colleagues.

The findings also indicate the existence of distinct national communication profiles. Some countries, including Lithuania, Serbia, and Slovenia, combine relatively high levels of both telephone and written digital communication. Others, such as Bulgaria and Hungary, appear to rely more strongly on telephone communication while making less frequent use of text-, email-, or application-based channels. A smaller group of countries displays a more balanced distribution across several communication modes.

Overall, the high proportions of respondents who never use text-based communication and, particularly, video communication demonstrate that the digitalisation of workplace interaction remains uneven. Some employees operate in highly connected, multichannel environments, whereas others continue to rely predominantly on conventional communication methods or engage in relatively limited digital contact.

4. 2. LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODEL RESULTS

Table 2 reports the results of the ordinal logistic regression model. The dependent variable is derived from responses to the question: “To what extent would you say that online and mobile communication makes it easy to coordinate and manage activities?” The original responses were measured on an 11-point semantic differential scale ranging from 0, “Not at all,” to 10, “Completely.” To obtain a smaller number of ordered categories with sufficient observations in each group, the original response scale was recoded into four categories: (Y=1) for responses from 0 to 5, (Y=2) for responses from 6 to 7, (Y=3) for responses from 8 to 9, and (Y=4) for a response of 10. This recoding preserves the ordinal structure of the dependent variable while producing more balanced category frequencies.

Table 2.a. Ordinal Logistic Regression Estimates

	B	SE[B]	Wald	df	Sig.
[threshold = 1]	-2.042	0.228	80.493	1	0.000
[threshold = 2]	-0.751	0.227	10.995	1	0.001
[threshold = 3]	0.841	0.227	13.769	1	0.000
Female (dummy)	0.070	0.040	3.092	1	0.079
Age	-0.036	0.010	12.869	1	0.000
Age squared	0.000	0.000	6.433	1	0.011
Years in education	0.048	0.006	63.146	1	0.000
Speak with line manager about work using a phone, how often?					
Several times a day	0.281	0.091	9.480	1	0.002
Once a day	-0.104	0.089	1.354	1	0.245
Several times a week	0.140	0.072	3.857	1	0.050
Several times a month	0.121	0.074	2.633	1	0.105
Once a month	0.014	0.098	0.021	1	0.884
Less often	0.032	0.074	0.182	1	0.669
Never	<i>reference</i>				
Communicate with LM about work via text, email or messaging apps, how often					
Several times a day	0.033	0.103	0.101	1	0.751
Once a day	-0.011	0.100	0.012	1	0.914
Several times a week	-0.097	0.074	1.688	1	0.194
Several times a month	-0.025	0.075	0.111	1	0.739
Once a month	-0.087	0.100	0.760	1	0.383
Less often	0.098	0.066	2.209	1	0.137
Never	<i>reference</i>				
Speak with LM about work and see each other on a screen, how often					
Several times a day	0.035	0.141	0.063	1	0.801
Once a day	-0.360	0.119	9.133	1	0.003
Several times a week	-0.205	0.088	5.416	1	0.020
Several times a month	-0.044	0.090	0.233	1	0.629
Once a month	-0.075	0.114	0.439	1	0.508
Less often	0.172	0.073	5.494	1	0.019
Never	<i>reference</i>				

Source: Author’s calculation

In social science research examining attitudes, perceptions, preferences, and self-reported behaviour, a substantial proportion of variation in an ordinal outcome is often attributable to unobserved individual characteristics and idiosyncratic factors. Consequently, pseudo- (R^2) values are generally lower than the conventional (R^2) values obtained from linear regression models and should not be interpreted in the same manner (Abreu et al., 2008). Moreover, collapsing an 11-point response scale into four broader categories results in some loss of information, which may also contribute to the relatively modest pseudo- (R^2) obtained in the present model.

Table 2.b. Ordinal Logistic Regression Estimates (continues)

Speak with colleagues about work using a phone, how often?					
Several times a day	0.331	0.091	13.316	1	0.000
Once a day	0.075	0.096	0.608	1	0.435
Several times a week	0.065	0.077	0.701	1	0.402
Several times a month	0.132	0.082	2.599	1	0.107
Once a month	-0.101	0.113	0.794	1	0.373
Less often	-0.087	0.080	1.197	1	0.274
Never	reference				
Communicate with colleagues a.w. via text, email or messaging apps, how often					
Several times a day	0.417	0.100	17.536	1	0.000
Once a day	0.437	0.101	18.613	1	0.000
Several times a week	0.135	0.077	3.056	1	0.080
Several times a month	-0.071	0.080	0.782	1	0.377
Once a month	-0.318	0.107	8.918	1	0.003
Less often	0.002	0.070	0.001	1	0.978
Never	reference				
Speak with colleagues about work and see each other on a screen, how often					
Several times a day	-0.148	0.119	1.557	1	0.212
Once a day	-0.370	0.125	8.692	1	0.003
Several times a week	-0.283	0.092	9.381	1	0.002
Several times a month	-0.263	0.092	8.169	1	0.004
Once a month	-0.196	0.120	2.664	1	0.103
Less often	-0.085	0.069	1.507	1	0.220
Never	reference				
DepVar (Y): To what extend would you say that: Online and mobile communication makes it easy to coordinate and manage activities Answers – Y[1]: 0 (Not at all) to 5; Y[2]: 6-7; Y[3]: 8-9; Y[4]: 10 (Completely)					
Cox & Snell Pseudo R-square	-2*Log L	Chi-Sq.	df	Sig.	
0.046	22248.6	410.7	40	.000	
Total valid cases	N(Y[1])	N(Y[2])	N(Y[3])	N(Y[4])	
8630	1182	1900	3140	2408	

Source: Author's calculation

The estimation results indicate that respondents' sociodemographic characteristics and workplace communication practices are systematically associated with their perceptions of the extent to which online and mobile communication facilitates coordination.

Educational attainment is positively and significantly associated with perceived ease of coordination. The estimated coefficient of education is ($b=0.048$), indicating that each additional year of education is associated with higher odds of reporting a more favourable response category, holding the other variables constant. This finding suggests that more highly educated

employees may possess stronger digital skills, greater familiarity with communication technologies, or greater confidence in using digital tools for workplace coordination.

Age exhibits a nonlinear relationship with the dependent variable. The negative coefficient for age ($b = -0.036$), combined with a small but statistically significant positive coefficient for age squared, indicates that perceived ease of digital coordination initially declines with age, although the rate of decline becomes progressively weaker among older respondents. This pattern suggests that age differences in attitudes towards digital communication are not constant across the life course.

Gender is only weakly associated with perceived ease of coordination. The coefficient for the female dummy variable is positive but statistically significant only at the 10% level. This provides limited evidence of a gender difference, with women displaying slightly higher odds of reporting more favourable perceptions than men, conditional on the other variables included in the model.

4. 2. 1. COMMUNICATION WITH LINE MANAGERS

The results for telephone communication with line managers indicate that frequent contact is generally associated with more positive perceptions of digital coordination. Compared with respondents who never communicate with their line manager by telephone, those reporting telephone contact several times a day or several times a week have significantly higher odds of selecting a higher category of the dependent variable.

By contrast, the coefficients for intermediate frequencies, including once a day, several times a month, and once a month, are not statistically significant. This suggests that the positive association is concentrated among employees who maintain particularly regular telephone contact with their supervisors rather than among those whose contact is only occasional or moderately frequent.

For written communication with line managers through text messages, email, or messaging applications, none of the frequency categories differs significantly from the reference category of “Never.” The estimated coefficients are relatively small and vary in sign. Conditional on the other explanatory variables, the frequency of written digital communication with line managers therefore does not appear to be systematically associated with respondents’ evaluations of the ease of digital coordination.

The results for screen-based or video communication with line managers are more complex. Respondents who communicate with their supervisor by video once a day or several times a week report significantly lower perceived ease of coordination than those who never use video communication. In contrast, respondents who use video communication less often display a small positive association with the dependent variable.

These findings suggest that occasional video communication may complement other forms of interaction and support coordination, whereas frequent video contact may be associated with more demanding tasks, meeting overload, communication fatigue, or organisational environments in which coordination is intrinsically more complex. However, these interpretations remain tentative because the estimated associations do not establish a causal effect.

Overall, the results provide partial support for H1, particularly with regard to frequent telephone contact with line managers. The findings do not provide comparable support for written communication, while frequent video communication is negatively associated with perceived ease of coordination.

4. 2. 2. COMMUNICATION WITH COLLEAGUES

Frequent telephone communication with colleagues is also positively associated with perceived ease of coordination. Respondents who communicate with colleagues by telephone several times a day have significantly higher odds of reporting more favourable evaluations than those who never use telephone communication with colleagues. The remaining tele-

phone-frequency categories are not statistically distinguishable from the reference group.

Written digital communication with colleagues produces the clearest positive associations. Both communication several times a day and once a day through text messages, email, or messaging applications are positive and statistically significant. Employees engaged in frequent and routine written exchanges with colleagues are therefore more likely to perceive online and mobile communication as facilitating the coordination and management of activities.

At lower frequencies, the estimated associations are weaker and, in some cases, negative. For example, communication once a month is negatively associated with the outcome. Sporadic use of written digital channels may indicate fragmented communication practices, limited integration of digital tools into everyday workflows, or reliance on such channels only when coordination problems arise.

These findings provide support for H2 with respect to frequent telephone and written communication among colleagues. They suggest that the benefits of digital communication are most evident when these channels are regularly incorporated into routine workplace interaction.

In contrast, video communication with colleagues is generally negatively associated with perceived ease of coordination at higher frequencies. Respondents who use video communication once a day, several times a week, or several times a month have significantly lower odds of reporting more favourable evaluations than those who never communicate with colleagues by video.

This pattern indicates that intensive reliance on screen-based meetings may be associated with less favourable perceptions of workplace coordination. Frequent video interaction may reflect meeting overload, communication fatigue, technological difficulties, or complex work arrangements requiring extensive coordination. It may also be more common in occupations and organisations where tasks are dispersed across locations and are inherently more difficult to coordinate.

These findings should therefore be interpreted as evidence of association rather than causality. Further research could examine whether the relationship between video communication and perceived coordination is moderated by factors such as teleworking intensity, occupation, organisational support, digital competence, meeting duration, workload, or work-life conflict.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings presented above, several conclusions can be drawn regarding respondents' attitudes in the 13 former transition economies included in the study. Across all participating countries, online and mobile communication is generally perceived as facilitating the coordination and management of organisational activities. Responses are clearly concentrated in the upper categories of the scale, particularly 8, 9, and 10, while very low ratings are uncommon. This indicates that explicit rejection of digital communication as a coordination tool is relatively rare in the ESS Round 10 data.

At the same time, substantial cross-national variation is evident. Lithuania, Serbia, Estonia, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, and Poland record particularly high proportions of respondents selecting the maximum category, suggesting especially favourable evaluations of digital communication in these countries. These differences indicate that the perceived value of digital coordination is shaped not only by individual characteristics but also by national, organisational, and technological contexts.

The findings concerning communication with line managers reveal a more differentiated pattern. Telephone contact forms a regular part of workplace routines in many countries and is often concentrated in the categories "several times a week" and "several times a month." However, in some national contexts, a substantial proportion of respondents report never communicating with their supervisors by telephone.

Written communication through text messages, email, and messaging applications displays even sharper contrasts. In some countries, these channels are used daily or several times a week by a considerable proportion of employees, whereas in others non-use remains widespread. Screen-based communication with line managers is the least common form of contact. The “Never” category predominates in almost all countries, while frequent video interaction is limited to relatively small groups of workers.

These findings suggest that digital tools are widely accepted as instruments of workplace coordination, but that specific modes of digital interaction with supervisors are unevenly embedded across countries. Workplace digitalisation should therefore not be understood as a uniform process. Employees may perceive digital technologies as highly useful for coordination without necessarily communicating frequently with line managers through every available digital channel. The results also point to the existence of distinct national communication cultures surrounding supervisory interaction.

Communication among colleagues is similarly widespread but highly uneven across modes and countries. Telephone communication appears to be a routine feature of work in most settings. In many countries, a majority of respondents report speaking with colleagues by telephone at least several times a week, while particularly high proportions of daily use are observed in Lithuania, Serbia, Slovenia, Estonia, Montenegro, and Croatia. By contrast, Hungary, Slovakia, Czechia, and Croatia contain relatively large groups of workers who rarely or never communicate with colleagues by telephone. This suggests that voice-based interaction is strongly embedded in some organisational environments but less central in others.

Written communication with colleagues through text messages, email, and messaging applications is even more polarised. Serbia, Lithuania, and Slovenia record sizeable proportions of employees who use these channels daily or several times a day. In Bulgaria, Hungary, North Macedonia, and Croatia, however, a substantial share of respondents report never using them. Countries such as Czechia, Poland, and Latvia display more dispersed distributions across intermediate categories, indicating considerable within-country diversity in digital communication practices.

Video communication with colleagues remains the least established mode. In every country, “Never” is the dominant response and often accounts for more than 60% of respondents. Only a small minority report daily or weekly video contact. Montenegro and Lithuania display somewhat lower levels of non-use and greater intermediate-frequency use, but even in these countries video communication has not become a mainstream form of workplace interaction.

Overall, these descriptive findings indicate that many European employees are integrated into digitally mediated communication networks, although the intensity and form of such communication differ substantially across national and organisational contexts. Telephone and written digital channels are considerably more institutionalised than video-based communication.

The ordinal logistic regression results further show that perceived ease of digital coordination is positively associated with educational attainment and, to some extent, with younger age. More favourable evaluations are also observed among workers who are deeply engaged in frequent and routine digital exchanges, particularly through telephone communication with line managers and through telephone and written communication with colleagues.

By contrast, frequent screen-based interaction with both supervisors and colleagues is associated with less favourable perceptions of coordination. This pattern may indicate that video-intensive communication environments are experienced as more demanding, fragmented, or burdensome. However, these findings should be interpreted cautiously, as the analysis identifies statistical associations rather than causal relationships.

The study also highlights several directions for future research. More detailed analyses could

examine the relationship between workplace digital communication and work-family conflict, particularly the extent to which digital availability interferes with personal and family life. Further attention should also be given to job satisfaction, employee well-being, technostress, organisational support, and the quality of supervisor-employee relationships.

Finally, future research should investigate inequalities in access to and use of digital communication across European labour markets. Such analyses could consider differences by gender, age, education, occupation, employment status, migration background, and teleworking arrangements, while also accounting for the historical, institutional, national, and regional diversity of European countries.

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ANNEX

Distributions of the answers of respondents to the question: *How often do you:*

Table A1.1. *Speak with line manager about work using a phone?*

(% of country sample)	BG	CZ	EE	HR	HU	LV	LT	ME	MK	PL	RS	SI	SK
Several times a day	13.6	4.9	11.0	15.6	5.2	7.7	17.9	15.9	15.9	8.2	21.4	2.1	6.8
Once a day	10.3	4.2	10.2	10.6	9.0	11.3	7.2	16.3	11.5	12.0	10.5	1.1	8.4
Several times a week	23.0	24.9	25.2	20.7	30.2	23.4	23.9	25.4	20.1	20.3	21.4	5.7	25.3
Several times a month	16.8	22.7	18.8	15.6	20.0	15.8	17.4	20.0	11.2	24.1	14.7	6.2	18.4
Once a month	4.9	8.1	9.6	6.2	3.8	10.5	5.6	6.1	4.5	6.1	7.0	3.0	4.3
Less often	16.3	18.5	12.1	10.1	14.8	13.1	18.6	6.8	23.7	18.0	9.7	10.3	17.4
Never	15.0	16.7	13.1	21.3	17.0	18.2	9.4	9.5	13.0	11.3	15.2	71.7	19.5

Source: Author's calculation

Table A1.2. *Communicate with line manager about work via text, email or messaging apps?*

(% of country sample)	BG	CZ	EE	HR	HU	LV	LT	ME	MK	PL	RS	SI	SK
Several times a day	7.9	3.1	10.5	9.7	2.8	5.7	15.9	11.5	5.6	6.7	16.4	14.6	4.9
Once a day	3.2	2.8	6.4	6.3	5.5	7.0	7.0	11.2	6.6	11.1	4.6	5.9	5.6
Several times a week	10.8	13.8	23.3	18.0	17.9	15.5	20.3	19.3	9.1	17.3	23.9	17.3	19.0
Several times a month	8.5	22.1	14.1	12.7	11.6	12.1	16.7	20.4	5.1	19.0	16.6	14.0	16.0
Once a month	2.8	7.9	7.0	4.1	4.7	6.4	6.5	4.6	2.5	5.0	7.0	4.1	4.0
Less often	20.2	23.3	9.4	14.3	19.7	13.4	18.8	8.0	32.1	17.3	9.9	18.7	21.4
Never	46.6	27.0	29.3	34.9	37.7	39.8	14.7	25.1	38.9	23.7	21.5	25.4	29.0

Source: Author's calculation

Table A1.3. *Speak with line manager about work and see each other on a screen?*

(% of country sample)	BG	CZ	EE	HR	HU	LV	LT	ME	MK	PL	RS	SI	SK
Several times a day	2.9	0.8	2.1	2.3	2.3	1.3	3.2	3.8	3.3	1.9	4.4	2.1	4.4
Once a day	4.1	2.4	1.5	2.4	4.2	4.2	2.7	6.3	5.5	5.5	3.8	1.1	3.5
Several times a week	5.2	6.6	9.6	3.9	10.8	9.8	8.5	20.3	4.2	7.2	7.7	5.7	10.4
Several times a month	4.4	8.4	8.0	4.2	8.4	8.4	13.2	11.9	4.3	9.1	2.6	6.2	8.2
Once a month	2.0	5.0	5.7	1.9	4.0	8.4	5.1	6.3	2.0	3.3	1.5	3.0	3.3
Less often	15.7	10.0	10.0	8.1	9.9	10.8	15.4	6.6	17.1	11.4	7.4	10.3	13.3
Never	65.8	66.8	63.1	77.2	60.4	57.1	52.0	44.8	63.6	61.6	72.5	71.7	57.0

Source: Author's calculation

Table A2.1. *Speak with colleagues about work using a phone?*

(% of country sample	BG	CZ	EE	HR	HU	LV	LT	ME	MK	PL	RS	SI	SK
Several times a day	16.3	10.8	19.2	19.0	5.1	10.9	27.4	18.9	15.4	13.7	32.9	25.3	8.4
Once a day	7.5	6.0	12.4	9.1	6.3	9.7	7.6	12.9	10.9	18.3	8.0	6.2	6.7
Several times a week	24.5	22.6	24.6	20.6	26.4	25.3	22.0	36.9	24.1	22.8	25.1	18.1	25.9
Several times a month	15.3	21.2	12.7	14.6	19.2	16.3	13.1	18.0	10.4	20.3	16.5	12.7	14.8
Once a month	2.6	5.7	5.3	4.5	3.5	7.6	3.8	1.6	3.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	4.3
Less often	18.3	18.6	9.8	7.1	16.1	12.5	14.6	3.7	22.4	9.7	6.9	13.9	17.8
Never	15.6	15.1	16.1	25.2	23.4	17.6	11.5	8.0	13.1	11.8	7.5	20.1	22.1

Source: Author's calculation

Table A2.2. *Communicate with colleagues about work via text, email or messaging apps?*

(% of country sample	BG	CZ	EE	HR	HU	LV	LT	ME	MK	PL	RS	SI	SK
Several times a day	6.9	5.5	17.4	13.5	3.8	10.5	27.1	11.0	5.4	11.2	28.9	22.3	7.9
Once a day	3.2	4.1	7.5	7.0	5.1	8.0	5.5	12.7	5.4	15.3	8.8	6.2	4.0
Several times a week	9.2	16.8	20.4	16.7	15.5	21.8	18.3	31.8	11.9	21.2	23.9	16.0	19.7
Several times a month	10.7	21.5	10.7	14.2	13.1	10.8	11.9	17.1	6.6	19.5	15.1	9.8	18.3
Once a month	2.6	8.8	4.7	4.0	4.1	7.2	5.5	7.5	3.7	3.3	3.2	2.7	2.9
Less often	22.3	23.4	9.3	11.0	17.9	13.6	16.2	6.5	29.8	10.0	5.3	15.5	19.3
Never	45.2	19.9	30.0	33.5	40.6	28.1	15.7	13.5	37.1	19.4	14.8	27.6	27.9

Source: Author's calculation

Table A2.3. *Speak with colleagues about work and see each other on a screen?*

(% of country sample	BG	CZ	EE	HR	HU	LV	LT	ME	MK	PL	RS	SI	SK
Several times a day	2.6	2.3	5.2	1.5	2.6	1.6	6.3	3.5	5.6	2.8	12.8	3.3	4.8
Once a day	1.7	1.5	1.8	3.2	5.0	4.3	3.6	5.0	2.8	7.2	2.9	1.8	3.9
Several times a week	4.4	5.3	9.5	4.2	8.4	10.6	10.1	20.6	4.5	7.8	7.5	5.0	9.0
Several times a month	6.0	8.5	7.7	4.2	7.9	7.7	9.2	15.5	3.4	7.8	6.0	4.1	6.9
Once a month	2.7	4.3	4.0	2.6	2.6	7.9	5.8	7.8	1.1	2.5	2.2	1.7	2.5
Less often	18.3	10.8	12.3	8.3	13.1	11.6	15.9	7.9	27.6	11.2	11.6	11.8	15.0
Never	64.3	67.4	59.4	75.9	60.3	56.3	49.2	39.7	55.0	60.7	57.0	72.4	58.0

Source: Author's calculation