

# The pro-active shift in age management

## Evidence from Dutch companies 2009-2017

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### INTRODUCTION

- As labour markets get older and the supply of the labour force diminishes, companies must adjust their policies to the new reality.
- In this study, we are 'mapping' the entire national economy in terms of age management.
- We analyse changes in the approach to older workers in Dutch companies using representative employer surveys conducted in 2009 and 2017.

### MAIN FINDINGS

Four clusters of firms that focus on:

- Accommodation and improving work-ability [**Active**]
- Stimulate early exit [**Exit**]
- Use both approaches [**All**]
- Or have no age management at all [**None**]

Table 1. Cluster profiles (Latent Class Analysis)

Cluster indicators	Clusters			
	None	Exit	All	Active
Ergonomic measures	0.02	0.30	<b>0.82</b>	<b>0.68</b>
Training for older	0.01	0.04	<b>0.61</b>	<b>0.48</b>
Flexible hours	0.24	0.26	<b>0.65</b>	<b>0.64</b>
Part-time retirement	0.03	<b>0.60</b>	<b>0.74</b>	0.05
Gradual retirement	0.02	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.76</b>	0.12
Early retirement	0.00	<b>0.80</b>	<b>0.85</b>	0.05

### DATA AND METHODS

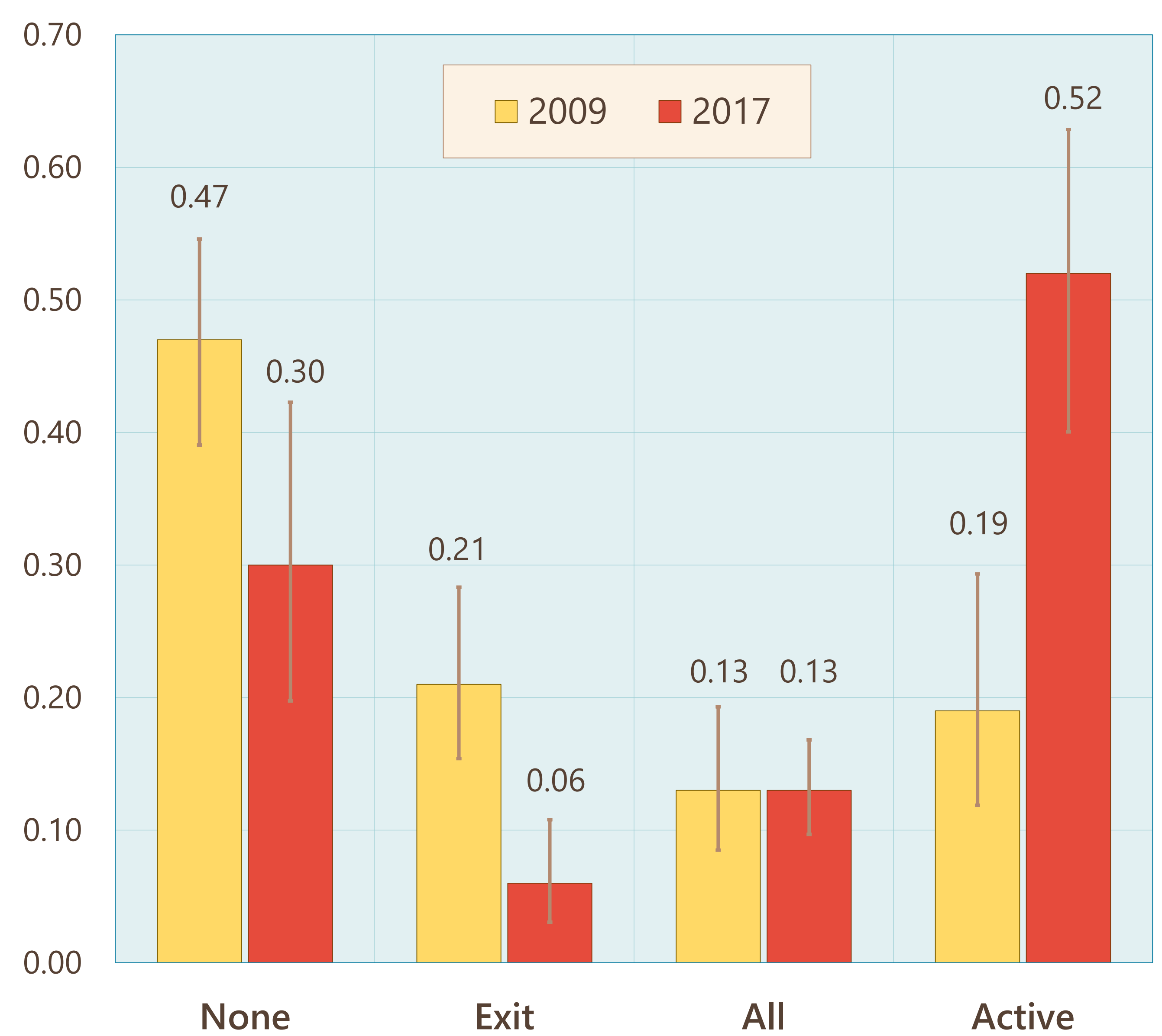
**Data:** Comparative surveys of employers: 2009 (n=1,077) and 2017 (n=1,358) representative for the Netherlands.

**Method:** Three-step group-comparison latent class analysis (LCA) combined with multinomial logistic model (MNL). Grouping in LCA by year with constrained measurement. MNL separate for each wave. Multiple imputation of miss. values. Final N=2,331.

**Class indicators:** Which of these policies are applied in your organization (1=currently applied; 0=not)? Ergonomic measures, Training for older workers, Flexible working hours, Part-time retirement, Gradual retirement, Early retirement.

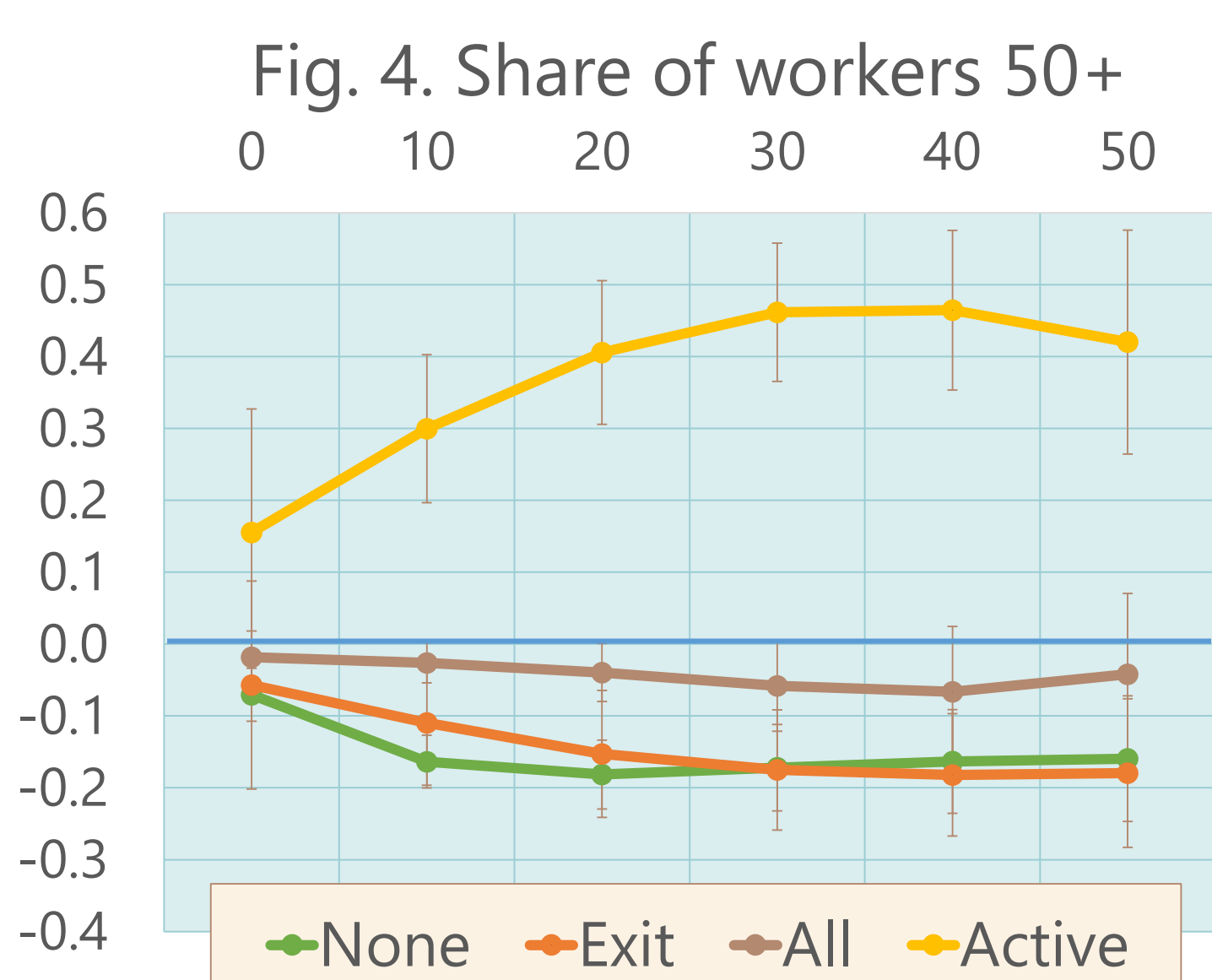
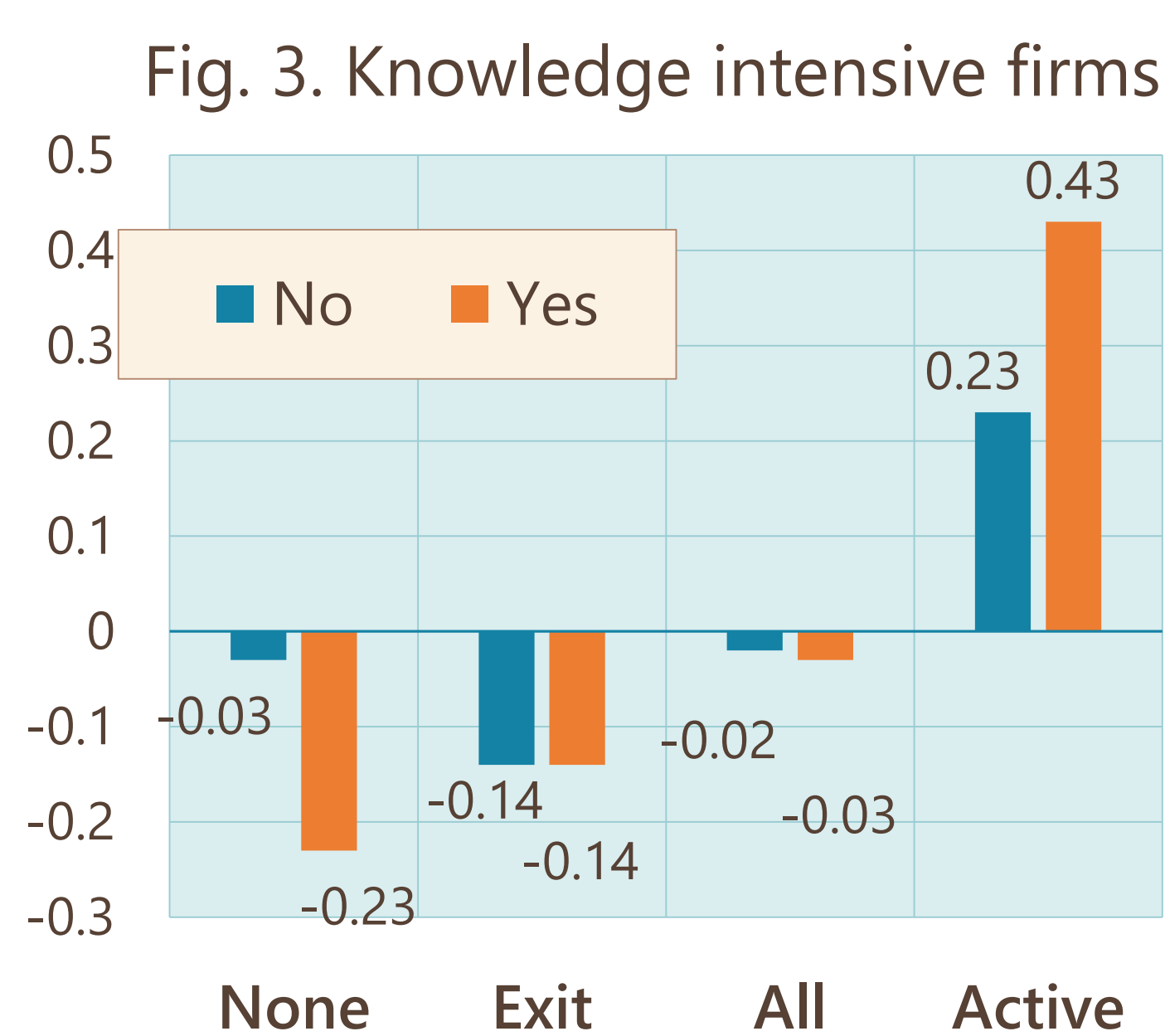
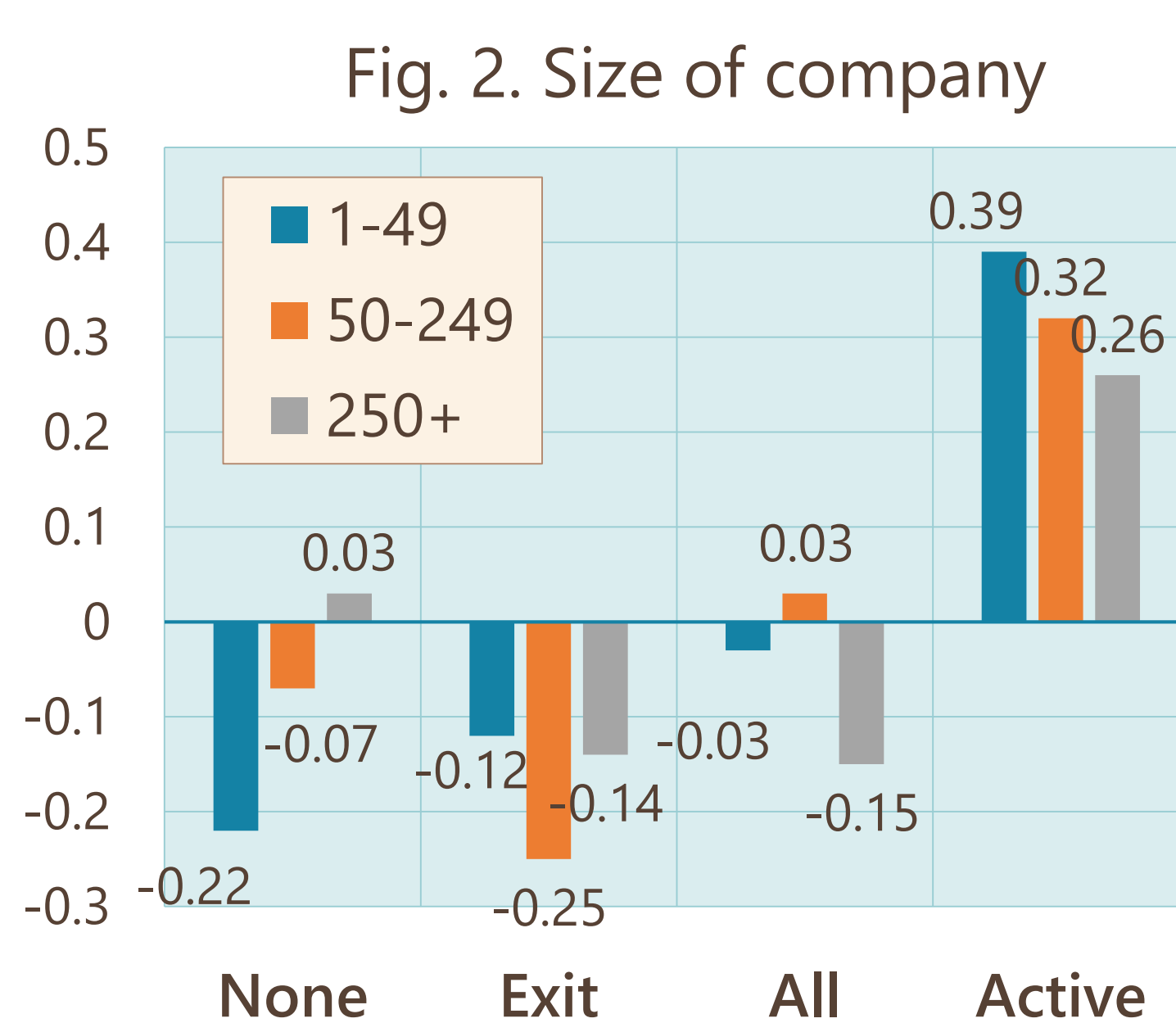
**Covariates in MNL:** Sector, Size, Strong role of labour unions, Knowledge intensity, Requires regular training, Experienced shortages, Share of workers 50+, Share of women.

Figure 1. Share of companies using specific age management approach (%)



Notes: Based on latent class analysis

Figures 2, 3 & 4. Change in predicted probability of class membership (2017-2009, in percentage points, at the pooled-mean values of predictors)



Notes: Based on multinomial logit model.

### CONCLUSIONS

- In this study, we found four approaches to age management in Dutch companies (**Active, Exit, All, None**) [Table 1]
- Between 2009 and 2017 the popularity of **active** policy largely increased, while **exit-oriented** policies and **passive** strategies reduced [Figure 1]
- The largest pro-active shift occurred in **small organisations**, firms with a high share of **older employees**, and **knowledge-intensive** companies [Figures 2, 3 & 4]
- The 2009-2017 change can be seen as an effect of (1) **policy reforms** in the Netherlands; (2) employees **working longer**; (3) employers' increased **awareness** of the effects of age management.

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