

WORK PRECARIETY OF THE CREATIVE CLASS – THE CASE STUDIES OF BIRMINGHAM, LEIPZIG AND POZNAŃ

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Abstract: Economic growth and competitiveness increase employment flexibility. Employees who respond to the challenges of a flexible labour market and are often faced with employment instability are representatives of the creative class (Florida 2002). Regional differences in the work precarity of the creative class members is today an important research problem due to their role in the socio-economic development of the regions. The article addresses the problem of work precarity of creative class in different agglomerations of Europe (Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań), that are characterized by their different socio-economic development and labour market models. The author of the paper uses the results of a survey conducted among representatives of the creative class in the selected urban agglomerations. The survey provided the information related to the instability of employment of creative class representatives in different European urban agglomerations. The results of the research presented in the paper help also to indicate the ways of solving problems of the creative class in the field of employment instability and the directions of future research related to the working conditions of this class.

Keywords: creative class, precarious work, freelancing, Birmingham, Leipzig, Poznań

1 INTRODUCTION

Globalization processes cause increased competitiveness of enterprises and changes in the working conditions, in particular non-wage conditions. One of the changing non-wage conditions is the form of employment. Work becomes more flexible by increasing number of precarious forms of employment. From the employee's point of view, the lack of employment contracts for an indefinite period of time limits the stability of employment and deteriorates working conditions. The threat related to the loss of stable employment concerns all groups of employees, including those working in creative activities and are called by Florida (2002) the creative class. According to research conducted by Gill and Pratta (2008), the representatives of this class are more likely to face employment instability than other

groups of workers. Characteristics such as creativity, individualism, meritocracy help them find interesting jobs, but often their performance is associated with atypical and unstable conditions of employment. On the one hand, there is a small number of people in the creative class who have achieved professional success and have good working conditions (including high salaries, indefinite contracts, a sense of autonomy in their work), and on the other hand, there is a large number of workers who have not been successful and have no chance of professional advancement (Markusen, 2006; Clifton and Cooke, 2009; Brown, Nadler and Męczyński, 2010; Ibert and Schmidt, 2014). In contrast to the first group of creative class, the second group, according to Gill and Pratt (2008), often face job insecurity due to the temporary nature of the work. They work on atypical forms of employment (e.g. as self-employed workers in a project) with irregular working hours, often contributing to an imbalance between work and private life. On the other hand, a lack of adequate pay contributes to multi-tasking and working in many places to ensure adequate livelihoods. As a consequence of overwork, creative class members are often fatigued and they feel lack of job satisfaction.

Creative professionals find the best opportunities to find inspiring and creative work in urban agglomerations. In the European Union's cities there is a varying level of stability in working conditions, which depends on socio-economic conditions. Examples of agglomerations with different levels of development and market economy models in which they operate are Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań. The free market economy models functioning in these agglomerations have led to the development of different working conditions of the creative class. Birmingham is an example of an agglomeration developing in an economy with a long tradition of free market and relatively small state interference in its functioning. In turn, Leipzig and Poznań are agglomerations in which the current situation is affected by the heritage of the past related to the functioning of centrally planned economy until the beginning of the 1990s. However, there are significant differences between the two agglomerations, mainly in terms of social and economic transformations following the collapse of the communist system. The choice of three European agglomerations with different development paths is due to the diversity of employment instability of creative workers.

The author of this paper attempts to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What are the differences between Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań in terms of employment instability of the creative class?
- 2) What is the internal variation in employment instability between those working in creative and knowledge-intensive activities in the surveyed agglomerations?

The paper is composed of the six sections. The first one is the introduction. In this section were defined research problems and questions. In the second section of the paper author described data sources and research method. The third part of the paper consists of the literature review related to the precarious employment in the light of the creative class situation. In the fourth part of the paper author presented the current state of the creative class development in the examined agglomerations.

The next part of the paper is focused on the precarious and stability of the creative employees work. The final section includes summary and concluding remarks.

2 DATA SOURCES AND RESEARCH METHODS

The source of data on the instability of employment of creative workers were the results of a survey conducted with the use of a survey method as part of the ACRE project (Accommodating Creative Knowledge – Competitiveness of European Metropolitan Regions within the Enlarged Union), which was led by Professor Sako Musterda from the University of Amsterdam. It was attended by representatives of thirteen research centres representing various types of metropolitan areas in Europe (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Birmingham, Budapest, Dublin, Helsinki, Leipzig, Milan, Munich, Poznań, Riga, Sofia, Toulouse). These areas were characterised by different paths of development and a different tradition of the creative sector. The main research objective of the project was an attempt to identify factors stimulating the formation and development of creative regions in the enlarged European Union. The project also addressed the issue of the working conditions of the creative class, but the research was not sufficiently deepened. A detailed analysis of this problem was undertaken by the author of this publication during internships in Birmingham and Leipzig and based on a review of existing documents and publications on the working conditions of creative workers in these agglomerations.

The survey involved a total of 445 creative sector employees selected proportionally to their share in the employment structure by type of activity and position (i.e. 0.2% of the total number of employees in creative sector companies in the analysed agglomerations): 128 respondents from Birmingham, 167 from Leipzig and 150 from Poznań. In each case study respondents were classified as creative employees or knowledge intensive employees. A detailed description of the activities in which both types of the employees were employed can be found in Strykiewicz et al. (2007). Conducting research on such a defined sample resulted from a large number of employees employed in the above mentioned types of activity in each of the surveyed European urban agglomerations.

3 PROBLEM OF THE PRECARIOUS TYP OF EMPLOYMENT OF THE CREATIVE CLASS IN THE SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

The problem of work instability was addressed by Standing (2011) in his concept of the precariat class, which includes mainly young, educated people, uncertain of their future. Precarians are mostly employed on temporary contracts, with no financial or life stability, no basic social security or pension. Previously, however, Doeringer and Piore (1970) had noted that the instability of employment is associated with a persistent, relatively permanent division in the labour market – into permanent and full-time workers, who enjoy greater stability of employment, with

a period of notice, and others – working under atypical forms of employment (temporarily under civil law contracts, as self-employed or in the so-called black market).

According to OECD studies (2018b), in the years 2010-2017 the percentage of people employed on temporary contracts, i.e. working under unstable forms of employment, increased from 37.5% to 44.1% in the EU countries (Figure 1). In addition, these studies show that even in one of the most developed economies, the risk of precarious and temporary work is increasing. The analysis of literature in this area suggests that temporary work is most often associated with an increase in employment flexibility, which is part of a broader concept of labour market flexibility (cf. Standing, 2011). Market flexibility in turn means its ability to adapt quickly to changes in market conditions and technology (Adnett, 1996).

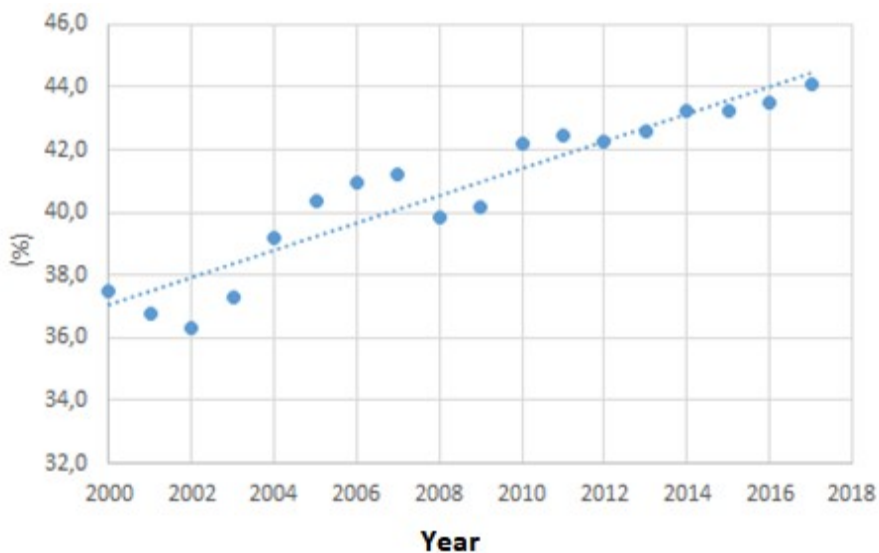


Figure 1 Share of fixed-term employees in the total number of employees in the EU countries (28) in the years 2000-2017. Source: OECD, 2018b

The increase in employment flexibility is related to the ability to adapt the number of workers and structure of employment in the enterprise to changing conditions: socio-economic situation, profitability, real wages, work efficiency, caused by technical and technological progress or created by the structural policy of the state (Kryńska and Kwiatkowski, 2013). It is in the general understanding of the enterprise's ability to adjust the employment structure to the demand and changes in the production volume or intensity of services, determined by market conditions (Kaliniowska et al., 2015). From the point of view of research on the employment stability, a more important role is played by the increase in the number of employees un-

der the so-called atypical forms of employment, which include: temporary employment (for a fixed period), part-time employment, temporary employment (borrowing of employees), self-employment and teleworking. Atypical forms of non-working employment also include civil-law contracts on the basis of which work may take place (contracts for work, orders, managerial and agency contracts; Kryńska and Kwiatkowski, 2013). Atypical forms of employment serve to increase work flexibility, including the growing importance of temporary work based on the implementation of projects and as a self-employed person, the so-called freelancer (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006).

As Kwiatkowski and Włodarczyk (2017) states, the use of atypical forms of employment, including civil law fixed-term employment contracts, brings economic and social benefits that appear on the side of employers and employees. They allow employers to increase their adaptability to changes taking place on the market and to reduce employment costs. However, in the case of employees, these practices lead to improvement of working conditions through greater freedom in the selection and number of realized orders, organization of the work process and allow to take up employment in a situation when finding employment in the traditional form is impossible.

The use of atypical forms of employment can also lead to the emergence of risks, which will consequently lead to the possibility of falling into the “trap of atypical forms of employment” (e.g. worse access to opportunities for professional development, lower wages and lower standards of living and social security; Jeleniewska, Chrościelewski and Opieka, 2008, pp. 153-166).

For most employees, increasing employment flexibility means reducing job stability. However, for many representatives of the creative class, who show high mobility related to changes of place of residence and work and a willingness to look for new challenges, the problem of unstable form of employment will not always be a threat. There is often a chance for further development.

The precarious employment of the creative class was the subject of a study in which, due to the exceptional relationship between employer and employee and the type of work done, it was referred to as an alternative arrangement, temporary agency work organised by an employment agency according to the needs of the employer (market-mediated arrangements; Abraham, 1990), non-traditional employment relations (Ferber and Waldfogel, 1998), flexible staffing arrangements (Houseman, 1997), flexible working practices (Brewster et al., 1997), vagrant or peripheral employment (Summers, 1997), vulnerable work (Tregaskis et al., 1998), precarious employment, new form of employment (Bronstein, 1991), contingent work (Belous, 1989) and finally atypical employment (De Grip et al., 1997).

A chance for creative class representatives who are not employed full-time for an indefinite period of time to remain on the labour market is to work under atypical forms of employment such as: temporary employment, contract work, part-time work. All these forms of employment provide the opportunity to establish an employment relationship between the employee and the employer, which is associated with the regularity and predictability of activities performed for the employer.

According to Kryńska and Kwiatkowski (2013), self-employment is a separate form of atypical employment which is not usually associated with regularity and predictability. In this form, the self-employed person becomes an entrepreneur and runs a sole proprietor's business on his own account, responsibility and at his own risk. Self-employment also offers the possibility to perform tasks for many clients, through flexibility of time and place of work, to reduce the tax burden. As Gill and Pratt (2008) point out, this type of employment requires creativity and entrepreneurship, a characteristic feature of the creative class. Representatives of the creative class, running their own business, are becoming contemporary “model entrepreneurs”, ideal employees of the future. They are motivated to make a sincere commitment and high productivity through independence and the ability to control their own work and a strong sense of personal success. A similar image of creative people as micro-business managers is presented by Beck (2000), who identifies micro-businesses with their creators, which is reflected in the term “me and company”. Previously, Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) had described self-employed creative people as the “independents”. These authors noted that the factor that contributes to the development of an entrepreneurial mindset is the feeling of employment instability.

Working in a one-man company as a freelancer allows creative class members to choose their own style of work, thus contributing to the development of individual creativity (unalienated creativity; Gill and Pratt, 2008; Ross, 2008). According to research (e.g. Musterd et al., 2007), working as a freelancer is most often accepted by those working in creative activities. However, this work requires a high degree of discipline, the ability to organise working time and maintain a balance between private and professional life. Most often it is temporary and requires the ability of the employee to adapt to changing requirements due to frequent changes of the employers. Due to the high interest of employers in hiring self-employed people, they have to take into account frequent changes in the requirements of new employers. In the case of temporary work, the self-employed are engaged in projects. This form of employment has many disadvantages, which include its short duration and advantages, such as the ability to work in the best teams of specialists (Christopherson and Storper, 1986). At the same time, the organization of enterprise work based on projects allows to reduce additional costs (e.g. mark-ups of employing institutions), as they are incurred by the self-employed. As noted by Menger (1999), most of the self-employed workers who work in many projects simultaneously have good organizational skills related to combining the constantly appearing random and unpredictable opportunities to find a job with actual creative work. This is due to the specific nature of project implementation, which is based on i.a. the creation of new content, artistic works or innovations (cf. Stinchcombe, 1968). Employers who base their organisation on the system of project work are looking for creative activity employees from a large number of people to build effective, well-chosen and harmonious teams. Well organised teams of specialists give a chance of profit. Such activity of employers was described on the basis of research conducted among companies connected with phonographic and publishing activity by Hirsch (1972), as well as by Coser and others (1982).

In the light of the literature presented above, an important problem is to determine the diversity of temporary employment among the representatives of the creative class in large urban agglomerations, where the creative class is concentrated. Such agglomerations are Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań, which are characterised by slightly different labour market models. While in Birmingham this market is based on free market rules and the pursuit of flexibility through the use of various forms of temporary employment (Williams, 2012). In Leipzig there is a labour market model that assumes the reduction of job insecurity, including the introduction of solutions consistent with the concept of flexicurity (Zawadzki, 2006). On the one hand, it is important to determine the diversity of work instability in different urban agglomerations, and on the other hand, a question arises how the diversity of work instability is formed within the creative class, divided into those working in creative and knowledge intensive activities.

4 DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE CLASS IN THE URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS OF BIRMINGHAM, LEIPZIG AND POZNAŃ

The development of creative activity and the labour market of creative class in the agglomerations of Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań depended on the different levels of social and economic development and different models of market economy adopted in the countries where they are located. These different models of free market economy have led to the emergence of different working conditions of the creative class, providing different levels of employment stability. Birmingham is an example of an agglomeration operating in an economy with a long tradition of free market and relatively little state interference in its functioning. On the other hand, Leipzig and Poznań are agglomerations in which the current situation is affected by the heritage of the past related to the functioning of centrally planned economies until the beginning of the 1990s. After the collapse of the communist system, these agglomerations entered the paths of very rapid social, economic and political transformations. However, there are significant differences between the two cities. The socio-economic changes that affected Leipzig were to a large extent dependent on the process of reunification of the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR, and were subject to the strong influence of the German central government, the inflow of foreign capital and support from the European Union. On the other hand, social and economic changes in Poznań were of a rather violent nature, devoid of strong state interference and programmes allowing to avoid high social costs. They were related, among others, to the lack of clear financial support from outside and the simultaneous gradual reduction of the protective system for employees, including those working in creative activities. The choice of three European urban agglomerations with different paths of development allows to learn about different processes shaping the creative class and the conditions of contemporary working conditions of this class.

Birmingham is a post-industrial city in Western Europe. It is the second largest city in the UK after London in terms of population (1,111,307 people – 1 January 2017; Country Digest, 2017). The socio-economic development of the city and the creation of foundations for the development of creative class dates back to the beginning of the 19th century. With 570.087 inhabitants (Stadt Leipzig, 2018), Leipzig was the second largest city in Saxony, behind the state capital Dresden. The third of the surveyed cities, Poznań, is one of the oldest Polish cities, with 538.6 thousand inhabitants in 2016, making it the fifth largest city in Poland in terms of population (Poznań City Hall, 2018).

The surveyed agglomerations play the role of important centres of economic and social life not only on a local but also on an international scale. This is due to the presence of important administrative, cultural and sports institutions in their area, which have numerous foreign contacts. The maintenance of these contacts is supported by a developed transport infrastructure, including the presence of international airports guaranteeing connections with large metropolitan centres in Europe and the world (Lange et al., 2007).

Among the compared agglomerations, the highest employment in the creative sector was in Birmingham and Leipzig (134 thousand people – 25.9% of the employed in Birmingham, and 95,076 people – 35% of the employed in Leipzig; Figure 2). In Birmingham's case, the level of employment in the creative sector is positively influenced by the activities related to the jewellery industry. A contemporary symbol of this is the Jewellery Quarter in the historic city centre. On the other hand, the closure of the MG Rover factory in Longbridge near Birmingham in 2005 had a negative impact on the labour market, including the creative class. Over 6,000 employees lost their jobs at the time (cf. Bailey et al., 2014). This difficult situation, however, contributed to liberating the entrepreneurial spirit among the former employees of the MG Rover factory and opening their own businesses, including those belonging to the creative sector.

A slightly different historical background for the contemporary development of the creative class in the Leipzig agglomeration was provided by the centrally planned economy and the socio-economic processes initiated in 1990. One of the manifestations of systemic changes in the 1990s was the outflow of the city's inhabitants to the Länder of West Germany. Soon, however, the policy of central and local authorities and financial support from EU and German federal government funds resulted in a halt to mass migration. The undertaken actions have also contributed to giving new functions to the city, related to creative activities. Leipzig became a trade fair centre, including one of the main organisers of the Leipzig Book Fair and the headquarters of the media cluster (Lange et al., 2007).

The worse socio-economic situation and delays in catching up with the economies of Western European cities resulted in a low level of employment in the creative sector in the Poznań agglomeration. The development of creative class in this city took place in a different way than in most cities of Western Europe. This resulted from the city's development path disrupted by the introduction of the communist system and the economic and social isolation of Poland, which lasted from 1945 to

1989. Due to the relatively short period of time that has passed since the collapse of the centrally planned economy, creative class in Poznań have been developing very vigorously and now reflect the dynamic processes related to catching up with the economies of Western European cities. The share of those working in creative activities, creating creative class in Poznań in 2017 amounted to 38.7%. Among the creative class members, the dominating group are those working in activities with a high use of knowledge, which was associated with the academic character of the region, where numerous universities are located, providing jobs for scientific staff (Strykiewicz and Męczyński, 2010).

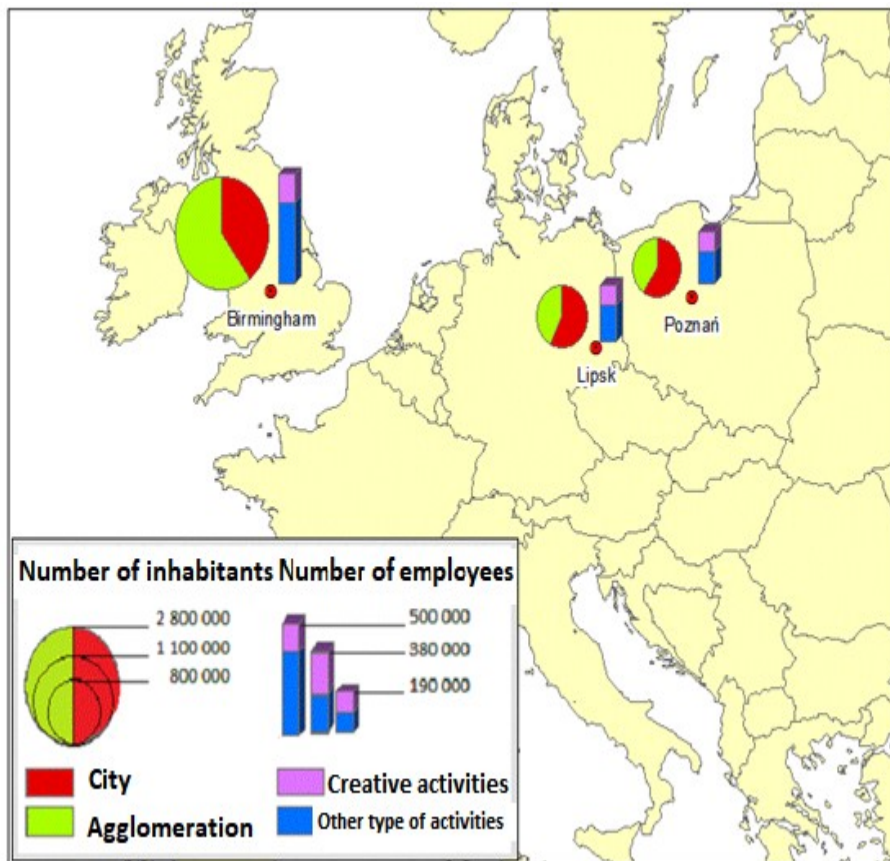


Figure 2 Population and share of people working in creative activities in the agglomerations of Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań. Source: Own elaboration based on data from the ACRE project and the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2018), Destatis Statistisches Bundesamt (DSB, 2018) and the Poznań City Hall (UMP, 2018).

5 EMPLOYMENT STABILITY

Surveys conducted among the representatives of the creative class in the agglomerations of Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań indicate that the majority (52.5%) of the creative class representatives worked as part of a typical form of employment, on a permanent basis, for an indefinite period of time. The remaining share was constituted by representatives of the creative class employed under atypical forms of employment, most often for a period of over 12 months (10.1%). These results indicate that creative workers are in line with the trend observed in OECD countries of a growing share of people employed under temporary employment contracts. It should be noted that the average share of people employed under atypical employment, i.e. temporary employment, in the European Union countries ranged from 37.5% to 44.1% (OECD, 2018a).

Simultaneously, it is possible to see the diversity of this percentage in the examined agglomerations. Only in the Leipzig agglomeration most of the representatives of the creative class were employed under typical conditions – they worked on a full-time basis and had a contract for an indefinite period of time (60.6%; Figure 3). In Birmingham agglomeration, however, more than 47% of survey participants had a full-time and employment contract for an indefinite period of time (permanent employment). In the case of the Poznań agglomeration, half of the respondents worked under permanent forms of employment, while the other half worked under atypical forms of employment, such as employment under contract. The obtained results indicate the existence of different models of the labour market in the examined agglomerations. In the case of the Leipzig agglomeration, the impact of legal regulations on the functioning of the labour market and the dominance of traditional, more stable forms of employment of creative class representatives are clearly visible. In the Birmingham agglomeration, however, the liberalised labour market is more flexible and makes it possible to employ workers for a fixed period to a greater extent. In turn, in the case of the Poznań agglomeration an indirect situation can be seen, which indicates that the creative class labour market is equally flexible in its operation through the introduction of atypical forms of employment, as well as those that protect its participants, guaranteeing a more stable job by maintaining a more traditional form of employment, which is an employment for an indefinite period of time.

A confirmation of the more liberal labour market in the Birmingham agglomeration and the use of flexible forms of employment is the high share of workers working under atypical forms of employment, most of whom worked under an employment contract for less than 12 months (15.1%). Taking into account the level of salaries, which in Birmingham was the highest among the surveyed agglomerations, it can be concluded that the flexibility of work allows to obtain higher salaries. In the remaining agglomerations, the largest share of those employed under atypical forms of employment was constituted by persons employed under an employment contract for a period longer than 12 months (Leipzig 9.9%; Poznań 9.2%).

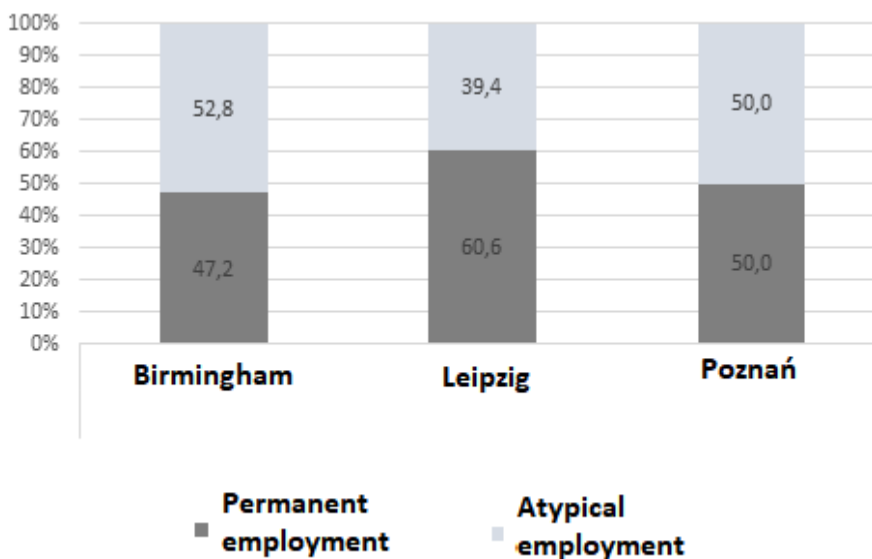


Figure 3 Forms of employment of creative class in the agglomerations of Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań. Source: Own elaboration based on ACRE project data.

On the other hand, taking into account the diversity of forms of employment due to the division into those employed in creative activities knowledge intensive activities, it can be noted that employment in the latter was more stable. Among those working in creative activities under atypical forms of employment, the dominating group were those employed for a definite period of time for more than 12 months (56%), while over half (54.8%) of knowledge intensive employees performed their work under a typical form of employment, on a permanent basis.

On the other hand, the results of research concerning the differences in the stability of employment divided into those working in creative activity and knowledge intensive in the analysed agglomerations allow us to notice that those working in creative activity have a more stable situation in the agglomerations of Leipzig (56.3% of the employed on a permanent basis, Figure 4) and Poznań (52.7%). However, in the Birmingham agglomeration, those working in these activities perform their work mostly under atypical forms of employment. In the more favourable situation in terms of employment stability, in each of the examined agglomerations there were knowledge intensive employees, most of them worked on a permanent basis (Birmingham – 55.5%; Leipzig – 60.6; Poznań – 51%). The research allowed to confirm the results of the previous research conducted by, among others, Gill and Pratt (2008) and Hesmondhalgh (2010) on the precarity of employment among creative workers. However, this view mainly concerns the agglomerations of Western Europe, including Birmingham and Leipzig.

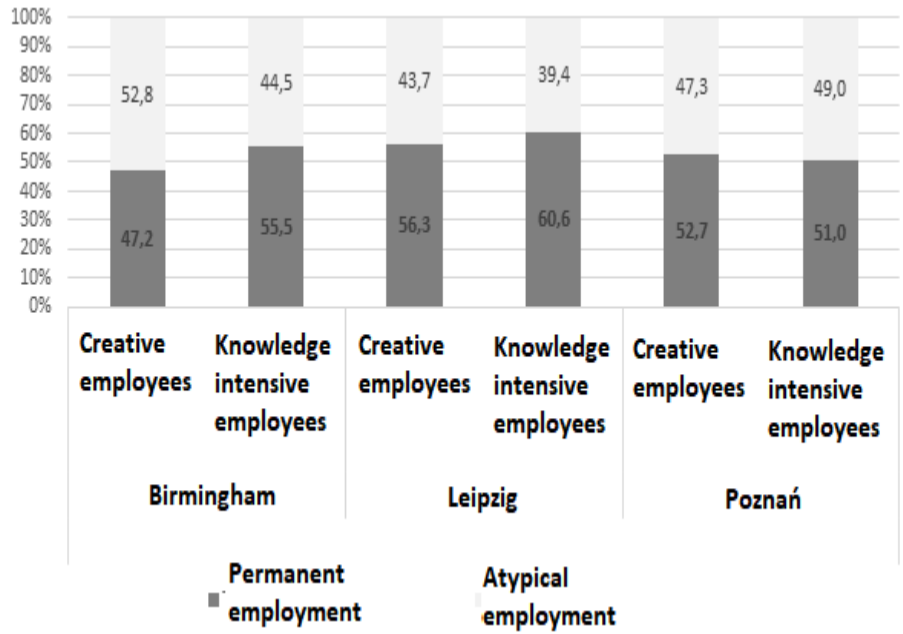


Figure 4 Forms of employment of creative class in the agglomerations of Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań, broken down into creative and knowledge intensive employees. Source: Own elaboration based on ACRE project data.

In addition to temporary work, self-employment is also an precarious form of employment, which involves irregular and unpredictable work and the risk of running one's own business. However, for many representatives of the creative class, this is the only form of employment that provides the opportunity to develop and remain in the labour market.

In the surveyed agglomerations of Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań, the highest percentage of the self-employed among all the surveyed was in the least economically developed agglomeration of Poznań (28%; Figure 5). At the same time, there was an unusual situation in this agglomeration, as representatives of the creative class, apart from working full-time, also worked as self-employed (4.7%). This situation results, on the one hand, from the high level of entrepreneurship of creative class members and, on the other hand, from the occurrence of the so-called low remuneration trap, which is characteristic for economies catching up with highly developed economies of Western Europe. Salaries received by people employed under only one form of employment are not sufficient to support themselves and their families, therefore, employees often take the risk of running their own business, which is associated with self-employment, which gives the possibility of obtaining additional remuneration (Bujalski and Miazek, 2015). The problem of two forms of employment is also connected with multi-timers, i.e. taking up employment with many

employers. The effect of this phenomenon is often lower quality of work and over-time work. This problem in the Poznań agglomeration affects, among others, people working in higher education. In the remaining economically developed agglomerations of Birmingham and Leipzig, representatives of the creative class participating in the research worked only on a full-time basis or only as self-employed people. However, in most cases it was a full-time job (Birmingham – 81,3% of respondents, Leipzig – 89%).

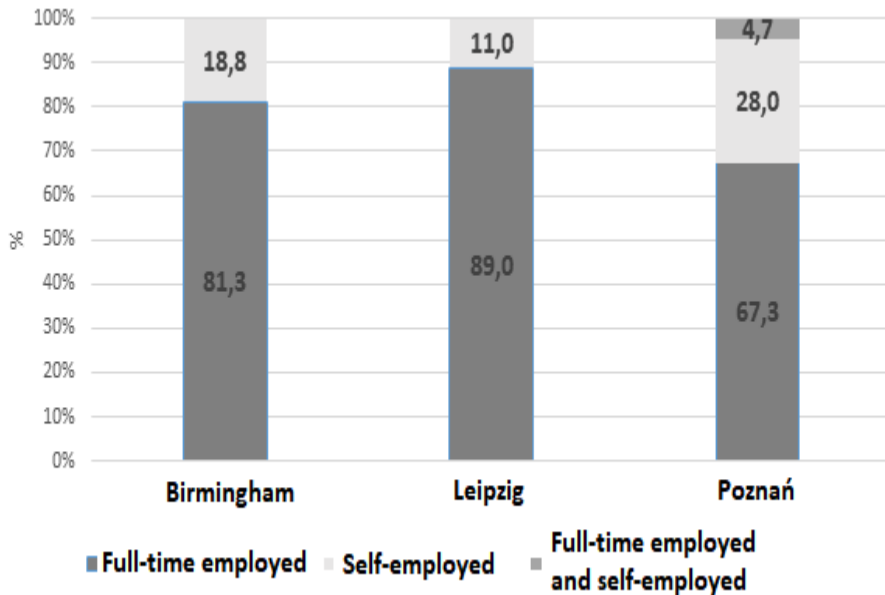


Figure 5 Full-time employment and self-employment of creative class in Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznan agglomerations. Source: Own elaboration based on ACRE project data.

The research has shown that more flexible forms of employment in the Birmingham agglomeration (52.8% of those working under atypical employment conditions) are associated with a relatively high share of the self-employed (18.8%). This confirms earlier conclusions about the high level of entrepreneurship and the willingness of Birmingham's creative class to become self-employed.

The research carried out allowed also to analyse self-employment jobs among creative and knowledge-intensive employees. The results of the survey conducted among representatives of creative activity from the agglomerations of Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań indicate compliance with the conclusions presented by Menger (2001) concerning the tendency of creative workers to work on their own. The aver-

age share of the self-employed among the respondents in all analysed agglomerations was quite high and amounted to 26.4%. The largest share of the self-employed in the analysed agglomerations was in Birmingham and Poznań, where they constituted 28,3% and 31,6% of respondents respectively (Figure 6). The value of this indicator was slightly higher in the Poznań agglomeration, which confirms the earlier conclusions concerning the high level of entrepreneurship of the region's inhabitants, in this case – creative employees. At the same time, the low level of remuneration among employees of creative activity in the Poznań agglomeration to a large extent explains the high share of those working in creative activity, who combined various forms of employment (6.6%). The low share of the self-employed in creative activities in the Leipzig agglomeration (19.4%) and at the same time full basis employment (80.6%) confirms the functioning of such mechanisms in the labour market in this city, which guarantee greater stability of employment in comparison with other agglomerations.

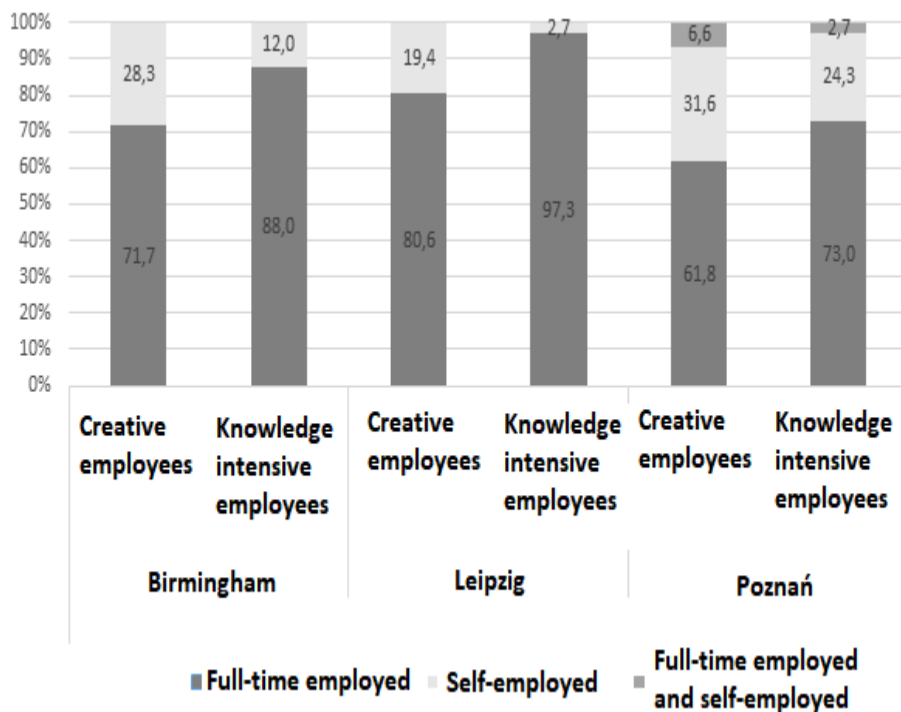


Figure 6 Full-time employment and self-employment of creative class in Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznan agglomerations broken down into creative and knowledge intensive employees. Source: Own elaboration based on ACRE project data.

In the agglomerations of Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań, the surveyed employees of knowledge-intensive activities mostly worked under stable forms of employment, on a full-time basis (Figure 6). It should also be noted that among this group of respondents the average share of the self-employed in all agglomerations was 13%. This means that the ability to take risks associated with running their own business by knowledge-intensive employees is much lower than in the case of creative employees (25% less knowledge intensive employees was self-employed).

In all surveyed agglomerations, the majority of respondents working in knowledge-intensive activities were employed on a full-time basis (86.3%). Such a high share of people working on a full-time basis is largely due to the nature of their work, e.g. scientists, engineers, representing professions belonging to the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) industries. Their work (e.g. in research laboratories) is most often performed in large entities, which due to the organization of work (e.g. didactic process at the university, organization of research in the laboratory) require personnel employed for a longer period of time (Hiltrop et al., 1995).

The lowest level of self-employment was among knowledge-intensive employees in the Leipzig agglomeration (2.7%), and the highest in the Poznań agglomeration (24.3%). These different values reflect the processes associated with the Poznań agglomeration catching up with the cities of Western Europe through the development of an economy based on individual entrepreneurship. At the same time, contrary to statements in the literature (e.g. Zawadzki, 2006) concerning the introduction to the German labour market of the employment model based on combining employment stability with flexibility (flexicurity), the results of the research indicate that the majority of the surveyed creative class employees from Leipzig were employed under typical forms of employment for an indefinite period of time.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study confirmed the thesis that the working conditions are different in the examined urban agglomerations of Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań. In the Birmingham agglomeration, which was the most economically developed of the surveyed agglomerations and had the longest tradition of functioning of the free market, the labour market was the most flexible. It made it easier for employers to conclude futures contracts with employees. This resulted in instability and rotation of employment.

In the Leipzig agglomeration, where the German system of legal regulations was functioning, the more traditional system of creating a protective umbrella over the employee, taking up employment in creative activities guaranteed stability of employment. Most of the respondents from this agglomeration signed employment contracts for an indefinite period of time and full-time. At the same time, only a small group of the self-employed (most of whom worked in creative activities), which exists among the surveyed representatives of the creative class in the Leipzig

agglomeration, testifies to their reluctance to take risks related to self-employment. It can therefore be concluded that the more traditional labour market in Germany, which guarantees stability of employment, reduces the willingness to take risks associated with running one's own business. This conclusion runs counter to Gill and Pratt's (2008) view of the creative class as entrepreneurial and self-determination seekers.

On the other hand, in the least developed agglomeration of Poznań, representatives of the creative class were in a worse situation in comparison with other agglomerations. Most of the respondents from Poznań worked under atypical (i.e. for a definite period of time) employment contracts, which contributed to the precarity of employment. The instability of employment of creative class representatives led to taking risks connected with running one's own company as part of self-employment.

The research allowed to determine the level of development of the creative class in Birmingham, Leipzig and Poznań, as well as the diversity of its employment stability in the examined urban agglomerations. It seems that in the case of Birmingham agglomerations, the problem of existing differences in employment stability may be regulated by free market mechanisms. However, in the case of the Leipzig and Poznań agglomerations, the problem of stability of employment of the creative class is more complex. This is due, among other things, to the distorted development path of these cities and the system of legal regulations protecting employees. Therefore, in both these agglomerations, especially in Poznań, equalisation of differences in employment stability may take place thanks to the introduction of solutions based on employment of employees within the flexicurity system (Zawadzki, 2006). This system is in line with the principles of flexible work organisation and is increasingly used in the Nordic countries. It includes measures that on the one hand aim to synchronously and deliberately increase the flexibility of the labour market, work organisation, relations between employees, and on the other hand allows to increase the stability of employment and guarantee the payment of social benefits, especially for workers temporarily employed in low-paid jobs (Burroni and Keune, 2011). It is more conducive to reconciling work and private life. Thanks to flexicurity, a large group of creative people who are self-employed will have financial stability and, at the same time, will be able to devote more time to the creation of new tangible and intangible forms with high added value, thereby improving the competitiveness of their company and, by extension, of the economy of the region and of the whole country.

The conducted research fills a cognitive gap in the analysis of the diversity of working conditions of the creative class in the international perspective. It also indicates new directions of research in the field of socio-economic geography concerning differentiation of working conditions of selected groups of employees. From the point of view of the continuation of research, an important issue seems to be the study of the differentiation of employment stability according to gender, age or education structure, as well as selected features of local labour markets.

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Pracowná neistota „kreatívnej triedy” – prípadové štúdie Birminghamu, Lipska a Poznane

Súhrn

Procesy globalizácie spôsobujú v posledných 25 – 30 rokoch zvýšené požiadavky na konkurencieschopnosť firiem a následne zmeny pracovných podmienok zamestnancov, najmä v súvislosti s nárokmi na stále zvyšovanie kvalifikácie, prácu v smenách, osobnú zodpovednosť a iné. Jednou z takýchto meniacich sa podmienok je aj samotná forma zamestnania. Práca sa stáva flexibilnejšou, zvyšuje sa počet neistých foriem zamestnania. Z pohľadu zamestnanca, pochopiteľne, nie je vítaný nedostatok pracovných zmlúv na dobu neurčitú, čo obmedzuje stabilitu zamestnania a v istom slova zmysle zhoršuje pracovné podmienky.

Kreatívni profesionáli nachádzajú najlepšie príležitosti na nájdenie inšpiratívnej a v určitom slova zmysle výrazne kreatívnej práce predovšetkým vo veľkých mestských aglomeráciách. V mestách Európskej únie existuje v jednotlivých štátoch rôzna úroveň stability pracovných podmienok, ktorá závisí od všeobecne chápaných sociálno-ekonomických a politických podmienok štátu. Príkladmi aglomerácií s rôznymi úrovňami rozvoja a modelov trhovej ekonomiky, v ktorých sa aglomerácie nachádzajú, sú Birmingham, Lipsko a Poznaň. Modely trhového hospodárstva fungujúce v týchto aglomeráciách a v štátoch, v ktorých ležia, viedli k vývoju rôznych pracovných podmienok tvorivej kreatívnej triedy pracovníkov.

Výskum, prezentovaný v predložennom príspevku, umožnil určiť úroveň rozvoja tvorivej kreatívnej triedy v Birminghame, Lipsku a Poznani, ako aj rozmanitosť jej stability v zamestnaní v uvedených mestských aglomeráciách. Zdá sa, že v prípade birminghamskej aglomerácie je problém existujúcich rozdielov v stabilite zamestnanosti jednotlivých pracovných pozícií regulovaný mechanizmami voľného trhu. V prípade aglomerácií Lipska a Poznane je však problém stability zamestnania tvorivej kreatívnej triedy zložitejší. Dôvodom je, okrem v minulosti deformovanej vývojovej cesty (path dependence) rozvoja týchto miest, takisto aj v súčasnosti existujúci systém právnych predpisov na ochranu zamestnancov. Preto v oboch týchto aglomeráciách, najmä však v Poznani, prichádza k vyrovnávaniu rozdielov v stabilite zamestnania medzi jednotlivými pracovnými pozíciami vďaka zavedeniu riešení založených na zamestnávaní zamestnancov v „systéme flexiistoty“.

Vykonaný výskum, výsledky ktorého predkladá tento príspevok, zaplnia kognitívnu medzeru v analýze a hodnotení rôznorodosti pracovných podmienok tvorivej kreatívnej triedy v medzinárodnej mierke. Upozorňuje tiež na nové smery výskumu v oblasti sociálno-ekonomickej geografie týkajúce sa diferenciacie pracovných podmienok vybraných skupín zamestnancov. Z hľadiska pokračovania výskumu sa dôležitou zdá byť predovšetkým otázka štúdia diferenciacie stability zamestnania podľa pohlavia, veku alebo štruktúry vzdelania, ako aj vybrané črty miestnych (národných i regionálnych) trhov práce.