



Sekcja Socjologii Pracy



Oddział Lubelski



# Program and book of abstracts

# Thursday 19th May 2022

## Overview

### Opening: 9:00 - 09:30 CET. Room: Aula

Conference opening and welcome speech:

- Dorota Kołodyńska, Vice Rector UMCS
- Leszek Kopciuch, Dean of Faculty of Philosophy and Sociology, UMCS
- Adam Mrozowski, University of Wrocław (Polish Sociological Association)
- Agnieszka Kolasa-Nowak, UMCS (Lublin branch of the Polish Sociological Association)
- Ryszard Naskręcki Director of the ECOTECH-COMPLEX UMCS

### Plenary session: 09:30-12:00 CET. Room: Aula

- Alex Wood, University of Bristol, UK
- Renata Włoch, University of Warsaw
- Marta Kahancova, Central European Labour Study Institute, Slovakia
- chair: Dominika Polkowska

### Lunch break: 12:00 - 13:00 CET

### Group session A: 13:00-15:00 CET

### Coffee break: 15:00-15:30 CET

### Plenary session II: 15:30-17:30 CET. Room: Aula

Digitalisation, pandemic and their cumulated impact on the labour market and strategies of employers and employees. Debate with social partners - trade unions and employers' organizations.

(debate in Polish with English translation)

- representative of employers' organization
- Agnieszka Mróz, Inicjatywa Pracownicza
- Barbara Surdykowska, NSZZ Solidarność
- chair: Jan Czarzasty, SGH





# Digitalisation, pandemic and their cumulated impact on the labour market and strategies of employers and employees



**Plenary Session: debate with social partners (trade unions and employers organizations)**

**debate in Polish with English translation**

**19th May, Thursday. 15:30-17:30 CET. Room: Aula**

In recent years labour market have undergone severe changes, both due to pandemic and to progressing digitalization of work. We will use the occasion to talk with social partners about the contemporary challenges and their responses - how do they see the future of labour market and work.

What was the impact of pandemic and development of digitalization of work on the labour market? What are the responses and strategies of workers and employees? What is the view on the new and more and more popular organizational phenomena such as remote work and remote workers, but also digital exclusion and deepening of prevarication of work in gig economy?

We will discuss views of trade unions and employers' organizations on the possibility of technological unemployment in near future? And what is their stance on public policies and public institutions, such as social partners, local governments, public administration - in the context of challenges of digital economy and digitalization of work.

By organizing the debate we would like to bring together the social partners and the community of sociologist of work and use the occasion to strengthen the dialogue on the future of work.

- **Agnieszka Mróz, OZZ Inicjatywa Pracownicza**

Member of National Committee of OZZ Inicjatywa Pracownicza, trade union leader in Amazon Workers International, social labour inspector at Amazon Fulfillment Poland.

- **Barbara Surdykowska, NSZZ Solidarność**

Expert at the Expert Office of NSZZ Solidarność, with specialization in legal support for the trade unions structures, especially during negotiations. Expert of Social Dialogue Council at ZUS. Author of publications on European social dialogue, negotiations in transnational corporations and role of trade unions in European semester. Columnist of Monitor Prawa Pracy on international labour law. Interested in europeisation of industrial relations.

- **representative of employers' organization**

- **Chair: Jan Czarzasty, SGH**

## Group session A: 13:00-15:00 19th May

### Working Lives during pandemic 1 room 1

Chair: Olga Czeranowska

- Dominique Andolfatto (University of Burgundy / Université de Bourgogne-Franche-Comté) The crisis of covid-19 and changes in work in France
- Adam Mrozowicki (University of Wrocław), Jacek Burski (University of Wrocław) Pandemic as the driver of social innovation: a worker perspective
- Justyna Kajta, Paula Pustułka (Youth Research Center, SWPS University in Warsaw, Poland) Are we all vulnerable? Work-related experiences of two generations during the Covid-19 crisis in Poland

### New Meanings of Work in the Digital Age room 2

Chair: Dominika Polkowska

- Ezgi Akçalı (Dokuz Eylül University) Neoliberal Globalization, Digitalization and Global Division of Labor: Analyzing the Future of Work and Alternative Models Incorporating with Social Inclusion
- Stefan Bieńkowski (University of Warsaw) Between safety and self-realization - meaning of work in narrations of young Polish data analysts.
- Alina Sillion (University of Bucharest) What work I do to be able to work - Digital housework in the pandemic context
- Katarzyna Rakowska (Uniwersytet Warszawski) Navigating digitalized world while organizing a strike

### Job Quality in the Digital Age room 3

Chair: Karolina Podgórska

- Monika Berdys (University of Warsaw) Between alienation and emancipation. Perception of work automation by cognitive workers
- Marta Gospodarczyk (Uniwersytet Warszawski) Changes to Agricultural Work and Digitalization of Farming Compensations
- Ezra Dessers (HIVA - KU Leuven), Lise Meylemans (iVOX), Lise Szekér (HIVA - KU Leuven) Empowering workers with the skills they need for tomorrow: a study on learning motivations of production factory employees
- Me-Linh Riemann, Markieta Domecka, Valeria Pulignano, Claudia Marà (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) “If we lower that time of reply, the algorithm likes us less.” A biographical perspective on (losing) control in the platform economy

### Social Inequalities in the Digital Age room 4

Chair: Bartosz Mika

- Michał Cebula (University of Wrocław) Inequality in Social Capital in Poland: Assessing the Importance of Structural and Cultural Factors for Social Advantage
- Maryla Koss-Goryszewska, Aleksandra Leyk, Maciej Ostaszewski (The Educational Research Institute) Digital exclusion in a relational perspective. Biographical experiences of participants in the basic skills raising project “A chance - new opportunities for adults
- Gabriela Ługowska (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities) Neurodiversity in a workplace: organizational and individual perspectives
- Myriam Baum (Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training) Continuing training inequalities – how firms technology level and cognitive tasks matter in times of digitalisation

## Group session B: 11:30-13:30 20th May

### Working Lives during pandemic 2 room 1

Chair: Dominika Polkowska

- Mateusz Karolak (University of Wrocław), Jan Czarzasty (SGH Warsaw School of Economics) Shields of hope? Media discourse around pandemic/post-pandemic anti-crisis regulations in Poland.
- Agata Krasowska (University of Wrocław) Pandemic coping strategies of workers with mental crisis
- Marta Luty-Michalak (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University) Work-Life Balance in European countries in the context COVID-19 pandemic
- Aleksandra Piekarska (Uniwersytet Łódzki) The supporting system of career development in the opinion of career coaches

### Gender Dimension of Work room 2

Chair: Olga Czeranowska

- Olga Kotowska-Wójcik (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University) GEAM - an online tool for monitoring gender inequalities
- Aleksandra Migalska (Jagiellonian University in Kraków), Paulina Sekuła (Jagiellonian University in Kraków), Ewa Stoecker (Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw) Ambivalences towards working conditions in academia under Covid-19 pandemic – a gender perspective
- Anuza Subramaniam (Indian Institute of Technology Madras) Gender and social relations in a globalised workplace: Indian Information Technology (IT) sector during the COVID 19 pandemic
- Carola Burkert, Britta Matthes (both Institute for Employment Research, Germany) Digitalisation, Basic Work and Gender – new social inequalities?
- Rumiana Stoilova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Martin Konstantinov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Kaloyan Haralampiev (Sofia University "Sv. Kliment Ohridski") Social Inclusion in the ICT Sector in Terms of Gender and Age in a Comparative Context

### Job Quality in the Digital Age 2 room 3

Chair: Karolina Podgórska

- Kamil Filipek (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin) Skills of the Future: The AI revolution and labour market dynamics in the Benelux countries
- Tomasz Geodecki (Cracow University of Economics), Maciej Grodzicki (Jagiellonian University), Zuzanna Kowalik (University of Warsaw), Piotr Lewandowski (Institute for Structural Research) Shared Services Centres in Poland: the race between skills and technology?
- Leszek Szklarczyk (Jagiellonian University) Work during sleep, eat and leisure - How cognitive capitalism removed boundaries between life and labour
- Azad Heydarov (University of Wrocław) Opportunistic search in negotiating social boundaries of work - digital nomads want to know.

### Varieties in Platform Work room 4

Chair: Bartosz Mika

- Claudia Marà (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), Valeria Pulignano (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), Paul Stewart (Grenoble Ecole de Management) Moving beyond the fences of industrial relations? Understanding workers' voice of discontent within food delivery platform work in Bologna (Italy)
- Marcus Repa (University of Sao Paulo) The next garage: Brazilian digital games and platforms
- Tibor T. Meszmann (Central European Labour Studies Institute) Precarity with prestige? Migrant workers' invisibility in platform-driven personal transport in Hungary
- Valeria Pulignano (KU Leuven), Karol Muszyński (KU Leuven), Maite Tapia (Michigan State University) It Needs Three to Tango: Bargaining Power in Freelancing Platform Work
- Klara Nagy (Central European University) Freedom within Frames. The perception of paradoxical freedom in the food delivery courier sector in Hungary during the COVID-19 pandemic

## Group session C: 14:30-16:30 20th May

### Working Lives during pandemic 3 room 1

Chair: Kamil Filipek

- Szymon Pilch (University of Wrocław) Work experiences of IT specialists in the business services industry under conditions of lean management in the context of Covid-19 pandemic. The case of Poland
- Piotr Prokopowicz (Jagiellonian University), Szymon Czarnik (Jagiellonian University) The Myth of Remote Work Revolution: Changes in the Quality of Work Among Polish Employees During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Piotr Binder (Instytut Filozofii i Socjologii PAN) Normalization of remote work in the light of longitudinal qualitative research. Towards new employment model and lifestyles modifications

### Creative Professions and Vocational Decisions room 2

Chair: Bartosz Mika

- Antoni Głowacki (National Center for Culture) I still have my face, I still have my voice. On forced digitalization of artistic work.
- Elaheh Eslami (Central European University) Iranian Women's Aspirational labor on Instagram: from self-presentation to monetization of self
- Paweł Zalewski (Uniwersytet Warszawski) I don't know, mum, I could always become a cashier. Family negotiations in educational and vocational decision-making of young adults"
- Krzysztof Lepczyński (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) Journalists: Pioneers, Victims or Luddites of the Digital Era?

### Migrants' Work and Careers room 3

Chair: Olga Czeranowska

- Dominika Winogrodzka (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities) Stability is a foggy concept". Work (in)stability in the perspective of young people on the move
- Hrvoje Butkovic (Institut for Development and International Relations, Croatia) Changes in the legal framework for the work of migrant workers in Croatia – Views from the social partners
- Olga Czeranowska (SWPS) Polish migrants' occupational lives during the covid-19 pandemic – the role of virtual mobilities
- Karolina Podgórska (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University) The work of migrants in Poland in the lens of social dialog partners

### Precarious Work and Employment room 4

Chair: Dominika Polkowska

- Alan Golec (Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny im. KEN w Krakowie) Technological unemployment - proposed social and political solutions in the context of different models of perceiving the phenomenon
- Theodoros Fouskas (University of West Attica, Greece) From exclusion to integration? Unveiling precarious employment and empowerment of female migrant domestic workers in Greece in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Anna Kiersztyn, Katarzyna Kopycka, Viktoriia Sovpenchuk (University of Warsaw) Do non-standard labour contracts entail employment precarity? A comparison of Poland, Germany, and the US.



6th International Conference

19-20.05.2022 — Lublin

## Social Inequalities and New Meanings of Work in the Digital Age

Keynote lectures

- **Alex J. Wood**  
University of Bristol, UK
- **Renata Włoch**  
University of Warsaw, Poland
- **Marta Kahancová**  
Central European Labour Studies Institute, Slovakia
- **Virginia Doellgast**  
Cornell University, USA
- **Vassil Kirov**  
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria
- **Dominika Polkowska**  
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland
- **Bartosz Mika**  
University of Gdansk, Poland



*Social Boundaries of Work 2022, Lublin*

# Plenary Sessions: Abstracts



**Plenary Session I. 19th May 2022.**  
**09:30-12:00**

**room: Aula**

**Chair: Dominika Polkowska**

**Alex Wood, University of Bristol, UK**

**The digital disruption of reputation: recognition struggles and insecurity in platform work**

It is often said that platform companies are 'disrupters', but what it is that they supposedly disrupt is less commented upon. In this talk, I argue that the traditional social regulation of exchange is one principal area of platform disruption. In making this argument I draw on 70 interviews with remote gig workers in addition to participant observations of freelancer community events. This data enables me to highlight the role that labour platforms play in recognition struggles. By privileging their own formal reputation systems, constructed by algorithmically rating and ranking workers, platforms displace the role of informal reputation in the regulation of exchange. In particular, I illustrate that this process takes place through transformations in three spheres: recognition, power, and transparency. By doing so labour platforms are found to heighten socio-economic insecurity and algorithmically amplify uncertainty. A consequence for many workers is the acceptance of unpaid labour. However, the findings also highlight how workers attempt to reduce this novel insecurity, both individually and collectively, by re-embedding reputation within interpersonal relations. Worker attempts at re-embedding their work centre upon the use of emotional labour to nullify the formal platform reputation systems and regulate interactions via the creation of social obligations and reciprocity. Workers are also found to re-embed exchange within community by drawing online groups to filter clients and provide the necessary moral support to resist unpaid labour.

**Renata Włoch, University of Warsaw**

**Freezing digital transformation: the attitudes of middle managers in companies undergoing accelerated digitalization**

David Graeber (2019) labelled middle managers as one of the quintessential "bullshit jobs": pointless occupations "that wouldn't matter if they vanished in a puff of smoke". Technologies of datafication, with artificial intelligence at the fore, introduce greater surveillance and control over increasingly quantifiable workers' performance, often in the form of algorithmic governance. Numerous organizational processes are being automated, business models embrace platformization, and organizational charts evolve from hierarchical to networked and dispersed, which lowers the need to employ middle managers. In fact, middle managers may represent the "vanishing middle" on the labour market where the middle positions requiring middle skills no longer bring relatively safe employment and satisfactory earnings. Using the theoretical framework proposed by Eric .O. Wright (1985) I will analyze the changing situation of the middle managers in the organizations in the throws of digital transformation. Specifically, I will focus on their role in the process of accelerated organizational change, taking into account the concept of the "frozen middle". According to this concept, middle managers are trying to impede the ambitious strategies of digitalization introduced by the top management in the effort to safeguard their status and work positions. Referring to DELab's research carried out within the Polish financial sector in 2017-2020, I will discuss the attitudes of middle managers towards automation shaped by the shifting makeup of their professional tasks. I will conclude with practical recommendations concerning the technological and organizational aspects of digital transformation.

## Plenary Session I.

19th May 2022. 09:30-12:00

Room: Aula

**Marta Kahancová**

**Central European Labour Studies Institute**

### **Redefining precarity and skill demands in times of digitalization, green transition and Covid-19**

Digitalization and the green transition, often referred to as ‘the twin transition’, yield important effects at the labour market and in working conditions. Embedded in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the recent energy crisis and the inflow of third-country migrants into European labour markets, it is a challenge to understand the specific effects of this twin transition on workers’ skills, working conditions and job stability. This question will be addressed from the point of view of, first, precarity in working conditions and second, from the point of view of re-skilling and up-skilling opportunities. While digitalization may foster greater demand for workers’ digital skills, at the same time the energy crisis may hinder some of the socio-ecological transformations, slow down the investment into innovative skills development and reinforce precarious working conditions in workplaces with outdated technologies. The contribution will assess these effects and draw implications for the labour market situation and future research. These effects may differ across countries with industries facing decarbonization and automation, countries with a high share of services, or countries at the Eastern border of the EU not only facing technological demands but recently coping with the integration of a massive inflow of low-skilled and high-skilled labour force from Ukraine. What lessons can be drawn for EU-level policies to provide a harmonizing framework for these various national experiences and facilitate all-European priorities for eco-social transition with decent working conditions?

**Plenary Session II.**  
**20th May 2022. 09:00-11:00**  
**Room: Aula**

**Chair: Adam Mrozowski**

**Virginia Doellgast, Cornell University, USA**

**Exit, Voice, and Solidarity in the Digital Economy**

National economies with different industrial relations and welfare state traditions are experiencing a similar ‘digital transformation’. Telecommunications and IT firms are on the forefront of these developments – responsible for building and servicing networks and data storage infrastructure; and developing new AI- and cloud-based tools for different business customers. This talk will look at how labor unions are influencing the strategies of telecom and IT firms in this growing industry, based on case studies in the US and Europe. Unions have shaped strategic choices through campaigns or actions in three areas: first, by influencing state policies in service market regulation, data protection, and infrastructure investments; second, by negotiating at firm and workplace level over adoption and use of new technologies; third, by establishing solidaristic bargaining structures that limit technologically-enabled opportunities to segment work. All three can be seen as complementary in establishing the conditions for the social regulation of new digitally-enabled markets – through limiting employer exit, supporting collective worker voice, and encouraging inclusive labor solidarity.

This talk draws on current research projects and a forthcoming book, Doellgast, V. (2022, in press) *Exit, Voice, and Solidarity: Contesting Precarity in the US and European Telecommunications Industry*. Oxford University Press.

**Vassil Kirov, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria**

**The digital transformation of European entrepreneurial ecosystems: implications for the future of work**

The digital transformation promised to be disruptive and even to endanger work because of automation and substitution (Frey & Osborne, 2017). However, new findings have attempted to nuance this pessimistic view on the future of work (Warhurst et al., 2019) and support the idea that job destruction could be accompanied with job creation, job change and job shifts (Degryse, 2016). Thus, there have been a variety of positive and negative developments throughout the European regions. In this context, an important question is why some regions’ entrepreneurial ecosystems and companies could be more resilient than others, allowing them to survive and develop. Another regards the implications for the future of work there. The notion of an entrepreneurial ecosystem, defined as a set of interdependent actors and factors coordinated in such a way that they enable productive entrepreneurship within a particular territory (Stam & Spigel, 2017), is used here to interpret and explain how the digital transformation has taken shape and what its effects have been at the regional level. The empirical research is part of a larger EU H2020 project, BEYOND4.0 (<http://beyond4-o.eu/>), focused among others on the economic impact of digital transformation – illustrated by six regions in Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK. The analysis was prepared on the basis of desk research and about a hundred semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders. The initial findings of this research suggest digitalisation’s increasingly complex impact on jobs and skills. Institutions and actors have shaped distinct paths of adjustment to digitalisation. The impact of technology on work is neither deterministic nor unidirectional.

**Plenary Session II.**  
**20th May 2022. 09:00-11:00**  
**Room: Aula**

**Chair: Adam Mrozowski**

**Dominika Polkowska, UMCS**  
**Bartosz Mika, University of Gdańsk**

**Strategies within platform work in the semi-peripheral labour market**

In Central and Eastern European (CEE) gig work performed via platforms is engaged in a complex system of mutual relations and interdependencies between transnational corporations, national regulators, intermediaries and platform workers.

Based on ongoing research this presentation will be focused on Uber's operations in Poland. Using the concept of *patchwork capitalism* (Rapacki and Czerniak, 2019) adopted Poland as an example of Central and Eastern European countries. This study will show Uber's adaptation strategies and their impact on platform workers. Peculiarly attention will be devoted to so-called *fleet partners* and their role in the mutual relations between different stakeholders. Partners will be treated as entities taking advantage of institutional hybridity, placing themselves between a global giant and a local regulator and thereby creating the *patchwork gig economy*.

Genesis and the existence of *fleet partners* will be further treated as a specific strategy for dealing with the circumstance of uncertainty and flexibility. The whole baulk of strategies in the Polish platform economy will be described by the term *kombinowanie*, a combination of small cheating, fiddling and exploiting loopholes in the patchwork institutional framework. Searching the advantages of flexible work via platforms, workers of the platform ride-hailing industry try to obtain as many benefits as possible while minimizing costs. They implement different strategies concerning platforms, intermediaries, employers and the state trying to gain a livelihood. The presentation will follow those strategies and place within them *fleet partners*, Uber and other stakeholders.

6th International Conference

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# social boundaries of work

Wpisz tekst

Social Inequalities and New Meanings of Work  
in the Digital Age



Sekcja Socjologii Pracy



Oddział Lubelski



Podpis

# Thematic Groups: Abstracts

**Working lives during pandemic 1 room 1**

**chair: Olga Czeranowska**

**Dominique Andolfatto (University of Burgundy / Université de Bourgogne-Franche-Comté)**

**The crisis of covid-19 and changes in work in France**

In France, the notion of 'social dialogue' has been at the heart of many labour law reforms since the early 2000s. The covid-19 epidemic occurred while the implementation of these reforms was ongoing and unfinished. This epidemic constitutes a crisis of unknown importance, with particularly serious economic and social consequences. It seems important to observe and analyse how companies have responded and succeeded (or not) in facing it.

The research is based on a series of interviews with human resources managers and trade union officials from a dozen industrial and service companies.

The research is structured around three main axes: 1°) Method of dialogue:

How was the "social dialogue" organised in an epidemic situation (and in several "confinement" situations)? The aim is to identify and question the new forms and modes of dialogue that have emerged and developed. These modes are based in particular on the use of new communication technologies. How did these companies deal with a crisis that was primarily organisational? Did the crisis lead to blockages or, on the contrary, generate new agreements, particularly in terms of the method of dialogue? 2°) The evolution and content of collective bargaining themes: The research then examines the changes in the content of collective bargaining, and in particular certain topics: material organisation of work, use of new technologies and telework (see point 3), duration and organisation of working time, wages, health at work, etc. 3°) Telework: As we know, in order to break the dynamics of the epidemic, and reduce social interactions, the government has made telework compulsory... whereas it was previously only optional and rare. How did French companies react and organise themselves? What negotiations have been developed on the subject? The question of telework, its modalities, its framework, its perception by employees, are here the subject of a specific study. More fundamentally, the research seeks to identify the arguments - health reasons, social protection, economic crisis, fear, etc. - which explain the acceleration of certain developments, the possible emergence of new themes, even disruptions, the use of new technologies. This communication project is based on two ongoing research projects: UBFC's BQR project: Social dialogue in times of covid: social rights and industrial relations between innovations and tensions (2021-22) Project of the National Network of Human Science Houses (Maisons

des Sciences de l'Homme): Political, social, hospital and digital citizenship in the face of the Covid-19 epidemic crisis (2022-23). In both cases, these projects are mainly based on interviews with human resources managers and trade union officials from a sample of companies.

**Adam Mrozowicki (University of Wroclaw), Jacek Burski (University of Wroclaw)**

**Pandemic as the driver of social innovation: a worker perspective**

The thesis on the innovative potential of economic crises can be found in the writings of the classics of economic sociology, including Marx (crisis-driven 'fixes' aimed at solving the problems of profitability) and Schumpeter (crises as the moments of creative destruction). In this paper, COVID-19 pandemic is approached as a source of prolonged socio-economic crisis which triggers social innovations in the sphere of work. Discussing the notion of social innovation, Mulgan et al. (2007: 5), refer to 'new combinations or hybrids of existing elements' that cut across 'organisational, sectoral or disciplinary boundaries' and 'leave behind compelling social relationships.' While there is a growing body research on pandemic as an accelerator of innovations in business and organisational fields, this paper will offer a bottom-up, worker perspective on social innovation. The empirical consists of 30 biographical narrative interviews with workers in three industries which – for various reasons (social reproduction, (health) care and provision of basic goods during lockdowns) - were seen as critical for society's functioning: (primary school) education, health care and social care, logistics and horeca . Based on the tentative analysis of the data collected, it is argued that the outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic has opened the opportunities for bottom-up workers' social innovation at work, questioned the existing hierarchies, formal rules and managerial prerogatives and increased the relevance of relational resources based on workers' cooperation and solidarity. Even though it was short-lived experience, it did leave some critical marks workers' consciousness and created biographical resources that can be used in coping with subsequent crises, including the next waves of pandemic itself. The innovative potential of pandemic goes well-beyond the new technologies of work as it concerns the relevance of social relations at work for coping with crisis situations, the shifting boundaries between work and non-working life, the changes of the social meaning of the work workers' performed ('essential work'), in some cases, the role and relevance of workers' collective organisation, all of which can be seen as the mechanisms of counter-balancing managerial control and discretion at work. The final part of the paper will discuss the potential consequences of the lived experiences of bottom-up, worker-driven social innovation for post-pandemic changes in work organisation in the Polish context.

**Justyna Kajta, Paula Pustulka (Youth Research Center, SWPS University in Warsaw, Poland)**

**Are we all vulnerable? Work-related experiences of two generations during the Covid-19 crisis in Poland**

The COVID-19 pandemic has sparked numerous social and economic consequences for individual lives, including changes on the labor market. The restrictive measures, implemented by many governments, have affected individual workers in various ways. Some branches of the economy were 'frozen', while others rushed through digitalization and switched to a remote work-mode or dealt with the intensification of work and/or exposure to health threats. Similarly, factors related to age have been pointed out as relevant for one's work position in the face of lockdowns and restructuring. In sum, although the pandemic-related changes on the labor market have been experienced by all employees and age groups, by now it is important to offer fine-grained approaches and analyze how seniority, type of employment or sector translate to individual work experiences. Against this backdrop, this paper aims at discussing the pandemic-work experiences of the representatives of two generations of workers in Poland: young adults (aged 18-35) and their parents (aged between 40s and 60s). The analysis centers on presenting the main intergenerational similarities and differences in navigating work-lives during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study, which comprised 70 in-depth interviews conducted between May and November 2021, constitutes one component of the large-scale ULTRAGEN project which investigates the role of social crises in transitions-to-adulthood. In the analysis, we focus on subjectively presenting individuals' stories, including their situation on the labor market before and over the course of the pandemic.

In line with the existing literature and data, the findings show that although the crisis was more palpable for those whose labor market positions were precarious prior to the pandemic, a general sense of uncertainty and vulnerability is seemingly more common, also among workers who considered their work situation stable before. Among the interviewees, both job losses and changes impacting work conditions were reported, with the latter spanning reduction of work hours, decrease in wages, increased unpredictability of daily tasks, disrupted self-employment and remote work. Beyond their evaluations of changes, we present pathways to manage the uncertainty. As the analysis shows, three main types of experiences could be distinguished. The first was deemed an on-site stability and found mostly among the older generation of full-time workers who could continue their on-site work. The second type of work experiences included (remote) stability and new challenges presented mostly by professionals (in both

age cohorts) working from home. Finally, the third type covered those experiencing disrupted work-lives, with young adults overrepresented here due to their precariousness, but also including self-employed and on-site workers facing worsening job conditions. Based on Dörre's concept of relational precarity and Castels' zone model, in this paper we argue that the pandemic has expanded a sense of vulnerability among different categories of workers (previously precarious and those with more stable job positions, younger and older), as well as widened the gap between employers and those self-employed. Thus, the boundaries between a zone of integrity and a zone of vulnerability became even more blurred and a sense of (work and life) security was rendered more fragile.

**New Meanings of Work in the Digital Age room 2**

**chair: Dominika Polkowska**

**Ezgi Akçalı (Dokuz Eylul University)**

**Neoliberal Globalization, Digitalization and Global Division of Labor: Analyzing the Future of Work and Alternative Models Incorporating with Social Inclusion**

This research seeks to analyze the global division of labor during the age of digitalization and aims to set out an analysis of alternative economic models incorporating with social inclusion in order to tackle with the systemic contradictions of capitalist development during this transformation. It employs historical materialist approach in comprising a critical debate about the future of work combining with social inclusion and alternatives to capitalism for a more democratic, equity-based world system by eliminating structural inequalities. The case studies imply social and solidarity economy experiences such as social incentives, social entrepreneurs, and platform cooperatives from developing countries like Argentina, Turkey and Ireland. Transition from industrial production to network society based on information-communication technologies concentrating on service sectors in developed countries have transformed global division of labor through transfer of technology to developing countries. The contemporary production processes, as a result of digitalization, begin to shift to computerization and automation that threatens the global workforce. Fastened with the Covid-19 pandemics, digital transformation has turned into the preeminent structural change in production process. It entails multifaceted dimensions ranging from digital technologies to devices and applications. The digital transformation and automation have generated variety of aspects in modern life ranging from transportation to business and to our consuming habits. Although the digital transformation seems quite promising regarding growth, inclusion and efficiency insights from developed regions, the digitalization also consolidates the centralization of wealth, the rise of precarity and increase in the risk of jobless masses due to the discrepancy between skilled and semi- or low-skilled workers. The deindustrialization in developing countries due to the transfer of technology from developed countries consolidates inequalities along with the lack of structural advances such as infrastructure and labor scarcity pave the way for discrepancies and led to advanced countries domination of digitalization within capitalist world economy. In this research, I argue that the global division of labor in the digital transformation tends to be deteriorated and to become more insecure due to the lack of capacity, and that alternatives to the perils of neoliberal capitalism by prioritizing social inclusion are able to set out a

democratic future of work including local, collective, solidarity-based transformation where the workers are non-alienated and active participant of the production and distribution process. The main puzzle entails the critical analysis of digitalization of the world economy from the perspective of global division of labor by implementing social inclusion towards alternative economic models. How does social inclusion respond the transformation of global working class during the digital transformation? What does the deindustrialization in neoliberal globalization debate indicate about changes in global division of labor? What kind of strategies do arise from developed and developing countries in overcoming difficulties and problems that emerge out of this transformation such as skilled vs. semi- or low-skilled workers? How can alternative debates on socially inclusive future of work based on equity and solidarity in the digital transformation be generated as transcendental to global capitalist world economy?



**Stefan Bieńkowski (University of Warsaw)**

**Between safety and self-realization - meaning of work in narrations of young Polish data analysts**

The aim of this paper is to discuss persistence of so-called post-fordist ideology of work among data analysts with non-standard employment in current Poland. Post-fordist ideology of work is understood as narration based on positive valorisation of flexibility and post-material values, that serves legitimization of exploitation in late capitalism. In narrations of data analysts the resistance against exploitation by flexibility and disagreement on unfavorable working conditions is an important part of approach toward work, what might suggest that a new version of ideology has emerged. Their claims might stem from the privileged market position - they can dictate conditions of employment because of high demand for their services. The most important context for this aspect of analysis is the growth of non-standard employment understood in the framework of labour market dualisation with outsiders and insiders. To elaborate, empirical findings show contradictions in data analysts' approaches towards work. On the one hand they expect safety and regulation of working conditions. They want to have strict control on the working hours, tasks and salary and they do stress the division between work and life. On the other hand, they treat work as the core activity that organizes social and individual life. They exhibit a need for self-realization and work in their opinions should be a pleasure not an obligation. Concerning the question about an approach towards non-standard employment, along with existing literature, they use such a working arrangement for cost optimization and do not perceive it as exploitation.

This preliminary data shows that ideology of work might be spreading between two dimensions: the "start-up ideology" as legitimization of work order and disillusionment about the narration of flexibility. First aspect operates on the level of identity and can be understood as an approach close to post-fordist ideology of work or the „new spirit of capitalism”, meaning cognitive and creative work as the core of identity. Second aspect stems from understanding of a deregulated labour market and strong disagreement for exploitation based on flexibility. This aspect operates on the level of opinions about institutional regulations and might be understood as a variation of fordist approach. In the research special attention is given to young workers entering the labour market during COVID-19 pandemic and to their socialization to work in the remote environment. This part focuses on their imagination of the ideal workplace and experiences of remote work.

Research is a part of a PhD project "Ideologies of work among young people with

non-standard employment in Poland" developed in Doctoral School of Social Sciences. Narrative interviews with young (up to 35 years old) data analysts working with non-standard forms of employment (different from standard contract of employment) are conducted from October 2021 onward.

**Alina Silion (University of Bucharest)**

**What work I do to be able to work - Digital housework in the pandemic context**

Work is a dynamic concept. In today pandemic context, new forms of work appear and need to be considered. One of them is digital housework, domestic digital work, digi-housekeeping (Kennedy, J., et al. 2015; Whiting, R. & Symon, G. 2020) – the tasks that people do to be able to use the digital technology they own or have access to. This new work is of interest, especially in the digital era that we live in. Nevertheless, digital housekeeping is a domain that need to be explored in Romania. Therefore, this paper aims to theorize and frame digital housework based on the sociological literature available and to observe it`s characteristics in the Romanian context. The methodology follows a functionalist perspective and is based on an empirical study. Using the journaling method, I describe the domestic digital work of (some) of the University of Bucharest students. This is an ongoing study. Therefor I cannot present the results (yet). However, I expect to find the principal aspects and patterns of digital housework of students in the pandemic context. Also, the results will consist of the completions and the differences brought by this empirical research regarding domestic digital work. Thus, through this study, I propose clarifying the problem of framing digital housework in the present digital world and observing it`s specific features in Romania. Implications may consist of awareness at organizational level regarding this, often invisible tasks. Future directions of study should refer to a larger population which practice this work and could focus on the division of domestic digital labor and on the impact of this type of work on various aspect of professional or personal life.

**Katarzyna Rakowska (Uniwersytet Warszawski)**

**Navigating digitalized world while organizing a strike**

In my presentation, I show how strike as a practice of resistance and as a human right, undergo institutional changes imposed by the digitisation of labour enforced by the change of accumulation regime.

Although strike as a form of resistance has developed since the beginning of the capitalist era, the right to strike was institutionalized within the Fordist accumulation regime - with its assembly line production, mass, life-long employment, and extensive social security system. The right to strike, especially in Poland, fits this mode of production, because it can only be exercised by employees, within a single workplace and only by a trade union assigned to that workplace. This institutionalization of the right to strike has forced certain negotiation and mobilization practices that do not fit the post-Fordist mode of production.

The post-Fordist, neoliberal accumulation regime involves changes in patterns of consumption and production, including diminishing trade unions, global-scale subcontracting, production chains, and just-in-time delivery system. Changing patterns of production and consumption are enabled by the mass digitisation of life, including the digitalisation of labour. The institutionalized form of the strike, defined by the Fordist tradition, cannot keep up with these changes, which results in a dramatically dropping rate of strikes not only in Poland but also in Europe.

However, in the last decade, Polish workers as technology users, started to make first attempts to use digital technologies to organize strikes. In my presentation, I will show:

- how the digitized production mode affects the possibility of exercising the right to strike,
- how technology is used in the formal strike procedure,
- how trade unions use technology to organize workers,
- how workers use technology during a strike.

The presentation is based on the results of my research on the right to and the practice of strike over the past 30 years in Poland. The research consists of the analysis of press, polish and international legal documents, and interviews with union representatives who have attempted to organize strikes in Poland.

**Job quality in the Digital Age 1 room 3**

**chair: Karolina Podgórska**

**Monika Berdys (Uniwersytet Warszawski)**

**Between alienation and emancipation. Perception of work automation by cognitive workers**

The presentation discusses the results of qualitative research concerning the perception of the automation of business processes by middle-level managers in low-hierarchical, global B2B (business to business) corporations. Robotic process automation is applied to routine, repetitive, and often extremely complex administrative tasks that the surveyed corporations perform both as part of the internal organization of work and as a service for their business clients. The implementation of new technologies that automate work redefines the scope and nature of job tasks, and this may give employees a sense of losing control over the work process, as well as anxiety regarding their professional future. Despite the huge interest in robotization, we still know little about the conditions of the functioning of employees working with autonomous software systems. The main focus of empirical research is industry, ICT, or services, however insufficient research engages into presenting the cognitive workers' perspective. In-depth interviews with managers of four different corporations revealed that with the flattening structure of the organization, the sense of employees' influence on internal decision-making processes, surprisingly grows, including processes related to the creation and implementation of algorithms that automate work. Employees create rationalizations that emphasize their subjectivity and agency in terms of facilitating and making sense of their own work. At the same time, complex globalization processes are increasingly shaping the corporate environment. The dominant culture of lean management affirms the intellectual competencies and creativity of employees, while offshoring processes taking place at the same time undermine their sense of job security and complicate their career paths. Against the background of these phenomena, advanced algorithms seem to be merely the tools that speed up work and reduce costs, although their implementation may become a pretext to strengthen or weaken the position of teams and individuals. In the experience of the respondents, the scope, pace and consequences of automation in their companies were constantly negotiated depending on the relationship of power, knowledge distribution and internal dynamics of the organization. The research is embedded in the paradigm of critical sociology of labor and focuses on the concepts of alienation and emancipation that have been present in social theory and reality since the beginning of the industrial age. The results of the study contribute to the

deconstruction of a myth created by the managerial discourse that the inevitable implementation of technologies supporting intellectual work raises concerns among employees. Automation of processes in the surveyed corporations is not linear but evolves according to the logic of cost optimization. It turns out that a more effective solution is often the transfer of tasks or entire job positions to countries with lower labor costs, which is THE real threat in the eyes of workers.

**Marta Gospodarczyk (Uniwersytet Warszawski)**

**Changes to Agricultural Work and Digitalization of Farming Compensations**

Since 2020, applications for government compensations for farmers whose crops suffered from drought can only be sent via an application, which requires the farmers to possess government-approved e-profile. Since 2010, the number of people over 60 years old working in farming is rising, while the 25-29 age cohort is dropping. Drought is a phenomenon that significantly affects Polish rural areas; in 2018 in the Western part of the country, drought was recorded in all counties (powiaty).

All this points to the fact, that a significant portion of the aging labour group - farmers - is forced to adopt new strategies of coping with drought, via mastering new skills needed to operate the application for applying for governmental help. The roles of officials and experts that were used to assess the damages and went over the applications were taken over by an algorithm, that uses information from the farmers and data from the system for the monitoring of drought (System Monitoringu Suszy Rolniczej). The intent behind these changes was to improve the quality of the application process, to make it faster and easier to assess the size of damages and potential compensations. However, farmers complain of a lack of transparency in the process, as well as issues in regards to operating the app. The process of digitalization of farming is a part of larger societal changes in agriculture, which, currently, require more and more administrative work, reminiscent of leading a business. It requires knowledge of the European Union and Polish governmental regulations.

This paper will focus on these changes in Polish agriculture post-1989 (professionalization, digitalization, administration), using the application for drought compensations as a case study. The paper will be based on an analysis of articles published in farmer's weekly Tygodnik Poradnik Rolniczy from 2021, to answer the questions of: how is agriculture changing? What are the farmers' attitudes towards these changes? Preliminary research conducted by the author will provide necessary context by highlighting the impact of drought on farming communities.

**Ezra Dessers (HIVA - KU Leuven), Lise Meylemans (iVOX), Lise Székér (HIVA - KU Leuven)**

**Empowering workers with the skills they need for tomorrow: a study on learning motivations of production factory employees**

Rapidly changing developments in new technology have considerably changed the nature of skills requirements. Many employees will require extensive reskilling, and a basic level of digital training will become required for most of the jobs in the EU. The covid-19 pandemic may even have accelerated this need for digital skills. Governments, unions and industry have all made a greater effort to understand the skills needs and how those in work could be reskilled and upskilled. However, there have only been limited attempts to understand how learning approaches can best be developed (Kapetaniou, 2021). To strengthen digital competences in the workforce, lifelong learning through adult education and employee training programs will be key (Hughes et al., 2019). FutureFit was a training and research project led by Nesta and supported by Google.org aimed at reskilling and upskilling workers and testing innovative learning methods in Sweden, Finland, The Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium (Kapetaniou, 2021).

The objective of the Belgian FutureFit project was to gain more insight in the learning motivations of employees to participate and to successfully complete training regarding digital skills. The training trajectory was set out in three Belgian companies. A first survey measured the employees' digital literacy and needs. A digi-fair was then organised in which employees were introduced to new technologies in an informal way. This digi-fair was evaluated via a second survey. Next, employees could participate in training sessions after which a third survey was carried out, measuring employees' motivation and desired training outcomes. Each phase was complemented by in-depth interviews.

The Self Determination Theory (SDT) of Ryan and Deci (2000) provided the framework for examining the factors which may influence learning among employees. SDT differentiates between autonomous and controlled motivation. Autonomous motivation is linked to better learning outcomes for the individual than controlled motivation. The company level provides the social context in which the learning trajectory takes place, which can be a controlling or an autonomy supportive context. At the employee level sociodemographic factors, job characteristics and personality traits can influence motivation.

**Me-Linh Riemann (KU Leuven), Markieta Domecka (KU Leuven), Valeria Pulignano (KU Leuven), Claudia Marà (KU Leuven)**

**“If we lower that time of reply, the algorithm likes us less.” A biographical perspective on (losing) control in the platform economy**

In recent years, a significant part of global workforce has turned to online platforms to offer and sell their labour. The 'gig economy' encompasses a wide range of work arrangements, including online freelancers whose everyday work

environment is extremely competitive, highly digitalized, and subject to various forms of algorithmic control.

In a space of unregulated competition, these factors often put pressure on workers to stay online 24/7. The dissolution of temporal boundaries between work and free time is tied to heavy personal costs, including the deterioration of social relationships, the risk of burnout, and having to give up other important meaning resources outside work. These new work arrangements raise questions of how to approach the phenomenon from a methodological point of view. Whilst there have been numerous – both quantitative and qualitative – studies on labour platforms (Schor et al., 2020; Wood et al., 2018), the potential of biographical research methods has so far been overlooked:

By adopting a biographical perspective, researchers shift their attention to long-term processes in the experience of platform labour. This includes, e.g., the multi-layered repercussions of algorithmic control on people's lives, such as a gradual loss of free time and a slow – yet painful – estrangement from one's social circles. So far, these types of long-term dynamics have not been sufficiently explored in the sociological literature on the gig economy: an important gap in research this paper would like to address.

In this paper, we would like to demonstrate the advantages of using a specific form of biographical analysis (Schütze, 2008) by presenting an empirical case study of a French IT specialist, who was interviewed online as part of the ERC-funded research project ResPectMe: Fanny, age 29, had made the decision to become an online freelancer, after experiencing sexism and harassment at her former workplace. Although she quickly found economic success on the platform, her daily rhythm was now dictated by algorithmic control mechanisms and the rating system, which pushed her to work extremely long hours at the expense of having a personal life. Whilst attending a family reunion, Fanny was scammed by a client: a painful experience that appeared in form of a 'background construction' (Schütze, 2008) in her narrative. In the interview, she shared self-reflexive thoughts about how this pivotal moment pushed her to leave full-time platform work behind and take up a standard employment relationship again – even though it meant a significant decrease in income.

The purpose of this article is to invite readers to (a) follow Fanny's journey throughout different stages of her platform career from experiencing initial excitement to ultimately a loss of control; (b) gain an in-depth insight into the sequential analysis of biographical data; and (c) consider the potential impact of biographical narratives in amplifying 'voices from below' as a critical corrective against powerful corporate strategies.

**Social Inequalities in the Digital Age room 4**

**chair: Bartosz Mika**

**Michał Cebula (University of Wrocław)**

**Inequality in Social Capital in Poland: Assessing the Importance of Structural and Cultural Factors for Social Advantage**

The issue of access to social capital is an important scientific problem because personal ties play a key role in shaping one's opportunities in life. The aim of the presentation is to analyze the distribution of social capital in Poland and how it is intertwined with other forms of capital and the social structure. The main focus is on the cultural and structural correlates of social capital. When it comes to the former, it is hypothesized that people who consume more diverse cultural items (omnivores) have better social capital as they develop a wider range of social contacts. Regarding the latter, the expectation is that social capital is dependent on social status and the nature of social ties. These arguments were tested with a survey data collected in Poland in 2017, on a local representative sample of adults aged 18-75 years. Individual social capital was measured by employing a position generator tool, where people are asked about their contacts (family, friend or acquaintance) within a set of occupation from different levels of social structure. The empirical analyses support the hypotheses. In particular, people endowed with higher levels of education and economic capital and those with more omnivorous tastes enjoy improved access to social resources, particularly resources usable in instrumental actions. Additionally, maintaining relationships with household members usually lowers the overall amount of social capital, while membership in organizations increases it. Contrary to the cultural reproduction argument, there are indications that cultural tastes are more positively related to social capital among lower than higher status groups which ties in with cultural mobility hypothesis.

**Maryla Koss-Goryszewska (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych), Aleksandra Leyk (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych), Maciej Ostaszewski (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych)**

**Digital exclusion in a relational perspective. Biographical experiences of participants in the basic skills raising project "A chance - new opportunities for adults"**

Digital exclusion has become an inherent aspect of analysis of social inequalities as well as the public policies aimed at their reduction. Along with significant improvements in access to various devices and the Internet, which minimised the physical barrier of use, the attention moved to the issue of ICT skills. International and national studies (e.g. Labour Force Survey and its Polish edition 'BAEL', Survey on Adult Skills - PIAAC, or Human Capital Study in Poland - 'BKL') indicate that lower performance of ICT skills correlates with worse labour market status, position in the employment structure or lower salary level. Nevertheless, inequalities in ICT skills are most often examined in the context of specific ranges of digital competences, which should be acquired by the largest possible proportion of society. Even though this approach, often referred to as the "normative" one (since it assumes the existence of a universal set of digital competences, which individuals need in order to function well in different context of social life), plays an important role in the e-integration process, it is increasingly more often seen as insufficient. Numerous researchers and practitioners of e-activities postulate to complement it by a relational perspective, which emphasises the issue of different ways and contexts of ICT uses in everyday life, as well as the diversification of resources and potential benefits regarding the inclusion of ICT in various areas of social and professional functioning. The aim of the paper is to analyse digital exclusion in the relational perspective on the basis of narrative interviews with the participants of the project "A Chance - New Opportunities for Adults". The project aims to raise adult basic skills (literacy, numeracy, digital and social competences) in groups at risk of competence deficits (including those working in the SME sector, unemployed, people living in disadvantaged areas, immigrants).

We will reconstruct: the contexts, aims and ways of using ICT by project beneficiaries; their perception of their own limitations - its determinants and consequences, as well as ways of coping with challenges in this area. J. van Dijk's four-level model of access to ICT is used as the analytical framework. It assumes that material (physical) access is preceded by motivational one (a need or desire to connect). Then, the access is determined by the disposal of operational, information and strategic skills, and finally by the actual usage. Only taking into account all these analytical steps allows us to ask questions about the ICT potential to improve the life of an individual in different areas of its existence: labour market, workplace, community, family etc.

Conclusions from the analysis will be presented in relation to the debate on the potentialities and limitations of both research regarding access to ICT, as well as public policies aimed at reducing digital inequalities.

**Gabriela Ługowska (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities)**

**Neurodiversity in a workplace: organizational and individual perspectives**

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) management plays a vital role in many international organizations, enabling them not only to extend the talent pool but also to build and maintain the competitive advantage. Though the concept of diversity is a prominent and inseparable aspect of our world and society, companies started to pay attention to this area only in the 1980s (Gross-Gołącka, 2018). Since then, many organizations emphasized the role of previously excluded groups (i.a. women, Afro-Americans, LGBTQ+, persons with disabilities) in the business world. In effect, many changes were implemented to create a more inclusive work environment aligned with the needs and requirements of all employees. However, there are still groups that were omitted by the positive influence of the DEI trend, both in the academic discourse and in business practices. The paper will focus on one of these groups, namely neurosensitive individuals. As employees, this group represents major potential which remains untapped.

The aim of this paper is to introduce the concept of neurodiversity, looking at its meaning for modern workforce from both the sociological (perspectives of neurosensitive individuals) and management-oriented angle (organizational outlook). The paper includes a brief history, development and approaches to neurodiversity in a workplace, identifying the gaps in recognizing and addressing the needs and requirements that neurosensitive individuals may pose for employers. Alongside the theoretical foundation, the paper presents preliminary findings from the qualitative, small-scale research project. Based on empirical data from interviews with neurosensitive individuals, the paper offers a set of recommendations for the representatives from a business sector, with advice on how to include neurosensitive individuals in their organizations and build better-adjusted work-environments.

**Myriam Baum (Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training)**

**Continuing training inequalities – how firms technology level and cognitive tasks matter in times of digitalisation**

In the course of digitalisation, new technologies alter skill demands and tasks, supposedly increasing continuing training participation. However, less extensively researched are the relation between technology level and continuing training participation leading to differences between skill-level groups. Divergent tasks compositions of different skill-level groups might mediate or moderate the relation between technology level and training leading to unequal training participation of low-, medium- and high-skilled employees.

The research question is, whether cognitive tasks moderate and mediate the relation between a firm's technological level and the participation in continuing training courses of employees with low-, medium- and high-skilled tasks. To answer the question I use data from the 2019 wave of the BIBB Establishment Panel on Training and Competence Development a representative survey of around 4,000 German-based firms. I estimate four multiple fractional-logit regression model groups, to determine the influence of cognitive task shares on the relation between a firm's technology level and employees training participation rates for all employees as well as for low-, medium- and high-skilled employees separately. For the moderation analysis, I use interaction terms and for the mediation analysis, I follow the classical four-step approach by Baron and Kenny.

Preliminary results show that firms with a greater technological level have higher training participation rates independent of skill-level. A greater share of cognitive tasks significantly increases the training participation of only low- and medium-skilled employees. Cognitive tasks do not moderate the technology influence for low- and high-skilled but for medium-skilled employees. The impact of technology is not mediated by cognitive tasks. In sum, the results show that the cognitive task content seems to be especially important for the training participation for low- and medium-skilled employees in times of digitalisation. This gives important starting points for further research with the aim to explain continuing training inequalities between skill-level groups.

**Working lives during pandemic 2 room 1**

**chair: Dominika Polkowska**

**Mateusz Karolak (University of Wrocław), Jan Czarzasty (SGH Warsaw School of Economics)**

**Shields of hope? Media discourse around pandemic/post-pandemic anti-crisis regulations in Poland**

The widespread lockdowns associated with the COVID-19 pandemic have substantially affected economic and employment conditions worldwide. In contrast to the crisis of 2008, the governments of many countries have decided to actively intervene in the economy. However, the directions and specific means of intervention have varied considerably, ranging from supply-led to demand-led instruments, which translates into direct support of either employers or employees, with all its consequences. The decisions about the particular measures taken were not just technocratic ones, but on the contrary – often explicitly political. They were driven, among other factors, by the different interests of the various actors, industrial relations patterns, as well as culture and economic traditions of specific countries. Given all that, in our paper we are going to analyse the pandemic and post-pandemic anti-crisis regulations in Poland (so called Anti-crisis Shields, their consecutive editions) and their treatment in the media discourse over 2020 -2021 period, including the discourse around social dialogue and the crisis thereof. We will examine articles from three Polish press titles with various political leanings and targeting different audience, albeit all with considerable power in public opinion shaping: *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Gazeta Polska Codziennie*. In our analysis we reach both to quantitative and qualitative methods. Sketching first the context of anti-crisis public policy measures and social dialogue around them, we then move on to specify the varying presence and visibility of the discursive theme of the anti-crisis measures using tools from CLARIN (Common Language Resources & Technology Infrastructure). We also apply computational text analysis to find association and sentiments linked to particular anti-crisis shields. Subsequently, the selected, typical articles are analysed by applying Discourse-Historical Approach (cf. Wodak 2001) in order to name and juxtapose the main arguments and narrations used in the debate as well as to identify crucial (social) actors and their media images and representations. Finally, we interpret the results asking to what extent the post-pandemic anti-crisis measures taken in Poland and the discussions accompanying it break with previous patterns of action, and to what extent they reproduce the existing path of dependence.

The paper has been prepared as a part of the research project COV-WORK („Socio-economic consciousness, work experiences and coping strategies of Poles in the context of the post-pandemic crisis”), financed by the National Science Centre Poland (grant no.: UMO-2020/37/B/HS6/00479).

**Agata Krasowska (University of Wrocław)**

**Pandemic coping strategies of workers with mental crisis**

The aim of the paper is to discuss the biographical conditions, properties and consequences of coping practices developed by workers in Poland during Covid pandemic. Interviewees tend to be systemically disadvantaged in terms of greater risk of poverty, being in mental crisis, temporary employment and unemployment. This paper will be based on a analysis of biographical narrative interviews with essential workers. The central problem posed by the paper can be formulated in the form of the following questions: under which conditions work during pandemic starts to be framed as biographical problem? Under which it is not a problem? How do young people experience and manage employment precarity at the biographical level? Under which conditions is precariousness experienced as a biographical problem and, conversely, under which conditions is it not recognised as problematic by those affected? What biographical, social and economic factors impact the experience of mental crisis? Can we analyze therapy and work as immunisation against mental crisis? The narratives make possible to search for ways of perceiving specific situations, events, breakthroughs in the course of life in various spheres of activity. Crises experienced by the informants may constitute reference points for causing serious problems such as: the feeling of losing control over life, surrendering to external circumstances, alienation from oneself and the world in connection with turning events with personal consequences. The consequences of such situations may be the experience of blocking planning processes, even at the level of simple everyday tasks, which are also involved in wider processes of social change (Waniek 2019). The paper will be based on the research carried out in the project that I co-implement within the framework of NCN OPUS grant: "COV-WORK: Socio-economic consciousness, work experiences and coping strategies of Poles in the context of the post-pandemic crisis" (contract number UMO-2020/37 / B / HS6 / 00479).

**Marta Luty-Michalak (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University)**

**Work-Life Balance in European countries in the context COVID-19 pandemic**

Maintaining a balance between work and family life has today become one of the most important dilemmas for working parents. Stanisława Borkowska points out that Work-Life Balance occurs when work does not disturb private and family life and vice versa when family life does not disorder the work time <sup>1</sup>. The Covid-19 pandemic has forced many employees to work remotely. This situation has some unexpected consequences, both positive as well as negative. As it is emphasized remote work may have positive impact, while is associated with greater autonomy and flexibility and also with greater productivity and efficiency of employees. It can also improve work and also life balance. On the other hand, this form of work is very often related with constant connectedness, intensification of work, longer working hours, and shorter rest periods. Recent studies point out that remote workers have the feeling of being at work most of the day,

blurring the line between work and family life. In my speech I will present the results of research on the relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic and Work-Life Balance. In this context gender seems to be an important differentiating factor. The analysis will be based on the results of the Eurofound's e-survey, Living, working and COVID-19. Until now there have been conducted three rounds of this survey. The first round was launched in April and May 2020 when most Member States were in their first lockdown. The second round was conducted in June and July 2020 when economies and societies were gradually reopening. In February and March 2021 many European countries were still dealing with various levels of lockdown, so it was appropriate time for the third round. Taking it into account, it is possible to make comparability observations between different periods of COVID-19 pandemic and to show its impact on working conditions and on Work-Life Balance. It is also possible to assess the differences in the level of the perceived conflict of professional and family life between women and men and between selected European countries.

**Aleksandra Piekarska (Uniwersytet Łódzki)**

**The supporting system of career development in the opinion of career coaches**

The modern world, as Anthony Giddens writes, "presents the individual with a whole range of different possibilities, and at the same time (. . .) does not provide guidance on which one should choose." The liability for the choices made is placed on the individual, who may feel incompetent, lost, and helpless in the face of the demands. This is why the need for all kinds of support in decision-making processes has increased so much. People are looking for help in choosing their own path, from choosing their diet, their leisure activities, and their jobs. Support and counseling in the sphere of work, which is the most significant spheres in a person's life, has a wide range. Counseling interferes career paths, influencing their direction. Various types of counseling, mentoring or career coaching services have

emerged. The reason why the various forms of career support emerged are the changes related to the course of careers, but also to the methods of their planning that career support professionals perceive. Nowadays experts do not talk about career planning, but about its construction and constant reconstruction, in which the professional sphere is only a part of life biography. According to Mark Savickas, author of career construction theory, careers can be constructed through biographical reflexivity. It is a subjective construction in which individuals give meaning to events in the past, present, and those possible in the future. Thus, the role of contemporary career counseling is also changing, with the goal becoming primarily to support people in transitions between experiences. Contemporary career counseling is highly institutionalized and embedded in social, economic, political, and cultural contexts. As a result, employee career development support is taking the form of mentoring and even, now very prevalent, career coaching. In the last two years, during the COVID 19 pandemic, as in other areas of society, so in counseling, we have observed a shift in support service delivery and client relationships. Career coaching has moved into the virtual realm and today, coaching sessions are mostly held online. Has the change in the method of communication are conducted made career coaching more accessible or has it perpetuated existing divisions in access to such services? In this presentation, I will present the results of a study on employee career support conducted with career coaches using a interview technique. I will answer the question of which categories of people benefit from similar support and which are subject to exclusion from participation in the process.



**Gender dimension of work room 2**

**chair: Olga Czeranowska**

**Olga Kotowska-Wójcik (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University)**

**GEAM - an online tool for monitoring gender inequalities**

Pandemic had accelerated gender inequalities in Academia . We “celebrate” 20th anniversary since European Commission was alarmed in 1999 at the glass-ceiling and the leaky pipeline (metaphor describing how women drop out of scientific fields at all stages of their careers). A lot of projects and initiatives has been carried out to overcome this unfortunate situation. Nevertheless still almost all countries face gender inequality in the sphere of work in Higher Education Institutions (HEI’s). Originally, focus was on the individual level, whereas now we are speaking rather about institutional strategies supporting narrowing the gaps between men and women. Institutions trying to identify causes of the gender-based horizontal and vertical segregation are working on Gender Equalities Plans (GEP) for promoting gender balance and inclusion, as a demand while applying for financial resources. One of these solutions I would like to present during the conference: Social Boundaries of Work.

Within the Horizon 2020 project: Communities of PrACTice for Accelerating Gender Equality and Institutional Change in Research and Innovation across Europe (1 May 2018 – 30 April 2021) we conducted the Gender Equality Auditing and Monitoring (GEAM) survey. Under the framework of the H2020 ACT project we gathered practitioners – academics and gender equality officials – operating mainly in countries from Central and Eastern European regions who have been and still are committed to the promotion of institutional change to advance gender equality in their organisations.

Based on the results from employees of the 12 GEinCEE CoP member organisations (universities and research institutes we recommend using the tool within organisations to discuss gender issues regarding: career advancement, work-life balance, decision-making process, mobbing, and sexual harassment also recommend a set of specific solutions in the areas of: equality, inclusion, awareness, diversity, and supporting activities with a list of related actions that can be directly implemented in GEP’s. It is an online tool dedicated to emerge the knowledge and scale of the gender inequality in HEI’s. I would like to present main parts of the tool and discuss several results in the perspective of pandemic effect on HEI’s and the issue of gender equality.

**Aleksandra Migalska (Jagiellonian University), Paulina Sekuła (Jagiellonian University), Ewa Stoecker (Maria Grzegorzewska University)**

**Ambivalences towards working conditions in academia under Covid-19 pandemic – a gender perspective**

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the working conditions of academic teachers. For many of them the introduction of covid lockdown meant the necessity of quick adaptation to online teaching and remote conduct of research. This change brought ambivalent (ambiguous?) effects. On one hand remote work proved not only possible, but also, at least for some academics, time saving and therefore efficient. There are voices that at least some aspects of remote work should become a standard of academic work. On the other hand, working from home became a challenge especially for those with caring duties. With the shutdown of childcare facilities, the introduction of distance education and difficulties in institutional medical care, it was mainly women who had taken on the responsibility of caring for children and sick family members (Alon et al. 2020; Blaskó et al. 2020; Viglione 2020), which made it difficult for them to fulfil their work duties. These inequalities became quickly reflected in the bibliometric data: during the first months of the pandemic, the proportion of articles submitted for publication (preprints) authored by women either decreased compared with previous periods or increased at a rate markedly lower than that of men, and these observations apply to different scientific fields (Andersen et al. 2020; Viglione 2020; Cui et al. 2020; Kibbe 2020; Squazzoni et al. 2020). Based on qualitative content analysis of 21 semi-standardized interviews with academic teachers from one of the biggest Polish universities conducted in 2021 at one of the biggest Polish universities (under the framework of the H2020 project MINDtheGEPs) we analyse their opinions about working conditions during the lockdown. We demonstrate their ambivalent attitudes towards advantages and disadvantages of remote working. While ambivalence has been mainly studied from the psychological perspective as individual experience of antithetical and simultaneous perceptions, feelings and behaviors towards the same object or set of objects (Hillcoat-Nallétamby, Philips 2011; Reuter 2018), we argue that it cannot be reduced to an individual experience as it stems from contradictory expectations and values the social actors are challenged with. These contradictions are inscribed in contemporary societies, including the academia, where the ideal academic worker totally devoted to his/her work and more and more productive competes with the ideal of caregiver and the concept of work-life balance. The covid-19 pandemic has not only highlighted these contradictions, but also has strengthened them. Given attention to systemic obstacles contained in these conflicting expectations faced by man and women, we also analyze the

**Anuza Subramaniam (Indian Institute of Technology Madras)  
Gender and social relations in a globalised workplace: Indian  
Information Technology (IT) sector during the COVID 19 pandemic**

My research study is on gender and social relations in the Indian Information Technology (IT) sector, a globalised workplace; the changes in work due to the implementation of work from home (WFH) during the pandemic and the expected post-pandemic changes in the Indian IT world of work. The reason to focus on the Indian IT sector is that it is a major player in the global digital economy and as an employer in the formal/ organised sector of the Indian labour market. India has been exporting software services and products since the 1980s, mainly to clients in the USA and other advanced economies, contributing to its position as the developing world's software leader. The success of the Indian IT sector is predominantly dependent on services delivery model innovated and perfected by multinational companies, where work is split across several locations and goes on 24/7 due to time zone differences. The COVID 19 pandemic affected several sectors due to disruptions in demand and supply, but business for many technology companies remained stable or even improved. In a sector where the technology to make remote work possible was already available but not widely implemented due to the nature of work, I explore how the world of Indian IT work has been restructured due to WFH during the pandemic. What are the new regimes of work in terms of productivity, supervision, team work etc and how are employees experiencing this new work model and the accompanying changes?

The Indian IT sector has been portrayed as an equal opportunity provider of high quality and well-paid employment for young graduates in India, which offers tremendous scope for economic growth and where the success of the IT professional is dependent on individualistic traits of intelligence, hard work and skills. However, an individual's position in the global digital economy, as in traditional economies, depends on the access to resources and the privileges afforded by class and other social axes of differentiation such as race/ethnicity/ caste/religion. In its homogeneity, the IT workforce in India highlights the historical privileges of certain social groups. The limited available literature in India shows that it is dominated by engineering graduates from certain specialisations, who are fluent in English, who hail from high caste, Hindu, urban and semi urban, middle and upper-middle class families. The valorization of individual characteristics and competencies post-liberalisation overlooks the structural inequalities posed by various social axes of differentiation such as caste, class, gender, geographical region etc. It therefore warrants that researchers

attend to how these intersecting social relations are shaping the IT workplace in myriad ways, especially in the pandemic WFH model. In my research, using the lens of feminist geography, I seek to understand the lived experiences of IT professionals, focusing on social axes of differentiation including but not limited to gender, to understand the meanings of work in globalized workplaces in a pandemic.

**Carola Burkert, Britta Matthes (both Institute for Employment  
Research, Germany)  
Digitalisation, Basic Work and Gender – new social inequalities?**

In Germany, women are more often employed in basic work professions - defined as work that typically does not require training to do or jobs with less complex tasks - than men. When discussing the possible consequences of advancing digitalisation, it is usually assumed that the simpler a job is, the easier it can be replaced by machines. One could therefore assume that basic work could potentially be automated more. However, this forgets that simple tasks in particular are often difficult to automate. In addition, even if activities could potentially be automated, they are not necessarily automated immediately. In particular, if a machine is more expensive than human labour to produce products or services of the same quality and quantity, it is not worthwhile for companies to substitute.

Between 2013 and 2019, the number of employees in occupations with high substitutability potential has increased in all job levels, also in basic work occupations; which indicates in particular that the technological possibilities are changing faster than the job profiles of the occupations. The considerable differences between women and men are particularly noteworthy: women are significantly less likely to perform substitutable tasks in basic work.

In any case, the finding that women more often work in jobs in which tasks can be replaced less frequently by the use of digital technologies by no means implies that women automatically benefit from digitalization. It is unclear to what extent these results can be attributed to digitalisation.

**Rumiana Stoilova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Martin Konstantinov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Kaloyan Haralampiev (Sofia University "Sv. Kliment Ohridski")**

**Social Inclusion in the ICT Sector in Terms of Gender and Age in a Comparative Context**

This Abstract is oriented towards the following topics: Social and symbolic boundaries of work in relation to social inequalities and divisions in the world of work; Gender division of labour (especially digital). The size and specifics of inequalities depend largely on the nature of the professions themselves, as well as on the employment sector. From the perspective of the theory of skill-biased technical change (Fernandez, 2001, Violante, 2008) new technologies are not distributed equally in all professional groups. The founder of this theory argues that digitalisation and globalisation favour the abstract work of "symbolic analysts" more than traditional forms of work (Reich, 1991). Digitalisation leads to changes in the socio-professional structure of societies, so its consequences are of research interest for both sociology of labour and sociology of social inequalities and stratification (Daniel Oesch 2013, 2021). Savage et al. 2013 define workers in the ICT sector as a new class of technical experts. This paper addresses the topic of social inequalities in a comparative perspective, taken together with analysis of the divisions among gender, age and class. We aim to investigate the interplay between inclusion and exclusion in terms of age and gender related to the ICT sector in CEE countries, and to look for answers to questions such as: How to make the ICT sector more inclusive?; Which social mechanisms are causing the age- and gender-based underrepresentation?; Are there significant differences in ICT workforce composition between CEE countries?

Overall, men and young people dominate the development of new technologies across the EU. The expansion of work organised through online platforms is reproducing traditional gender inequalities, such as the gender pay gap and gender segregation. For example, men are more likely to work in software development or food delivery, whereas women work more in online translation or domestic services (EIGE). On the other hand, the ICT sector offers more chances for achieving gender equality.

There are also economic reasons for the inclusion of people of different age in the ICT sector. This will widen the pool of human capital involved in innovations and work with higher added value. However, what is required to achieve this inclusion is not only additional training and lifelong learning funded by state and employers but also the investigation of the motivation of older employees to improve their

qualification.

The empirical basis of the report is based on the latest wave of International Social Survey Program (ISSP), the wave conducted in 2021. Respondents' attitudes reflect precariousness and employment risks following the Covid pandemic. We analyse the indicators for part time employment; the outcome of age and gender for the work in ICT sector, measured by received income and work autonomy; the motivation for additional training among employees of different age and sectors. We also compare work force composition in the ICT sector with other sectors. Comparisons between CEE countries are also provided.

**Job quality in the Digital Age 2 room 3**

**chair: Karolina Podgórska**

**Kamil Filipek (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin)**

**Skills of the Future: The AI revolution and labour market dynamics in the Benelux countries**

The complex relationship between new technologies, employment and inequality received widespread attention in recent years. Numerous studies deliver solid arguments emphasizing the negative effects of technology on the labor market (Aronowitz and DiFazio 1994, Brynjolfsson and McAfee 2014, Ford 2015). In particular, the fast pace of technological change – algorithmization, automation, robotization, digitization – affects workers with low and mid-level skills employed in sectors such as manufacturing, transportation or agriculture. However, Ford (2015) warns that redundancy will also touch highly skilled professionals performing any routine and repetitive tasks (e.g. teachers, lawyers, software engineers). As a consequence, we are witnessing an unprecedented shift in required workforce skills. New technologies widely adopted in both public and private organizations become the central force driving changes on the contemporary labor market. In short, demand for basic manual and physical skills continues to drop while competition for the most highly skilled workers or those with unique technological skills rapidly rises (McKinsey&Company 2018). Although skill shifts – more or less broad – have occurred since the Industrial Revolutions, the ongoing wave of changes requires a robust actions aimed to tackle growing income inequalities, labor market exclusions and barriers stopping individuals from retraining and supplementary education.

Based on the job market data (Burning Glass) the paper shows (i) how demand for technological skills spread through non-IT jobs (ii) which skills seem to be critical for the jobs of the future (iii) which skills are at risk of AI development.

**Tomasz Geodecki (Cracow University of Economics), Maciej Grodzicki (Jagiellonian University), Zuzanna Kowalik (University of Warsaw), Piotr Lewandowski (Institute for Structural Research)**

**Shared Services Centres in Poland: the race between skills and technology?**

The business services sector has been rapidly growing in developing countries (Gereffi et al, 2011), as well as across Central and Eastern Europe, including Poland (Górecki et al, 2010). The growth has been facilitated by the ongoing internationalization of companies, the rising popularity of outsourcing, and the growing demand for specialized knowledge related to new technologies. These developments are exemplified by a relatively new organisational form: the shared services centre (SSC), where business support functions are aggregated, so that efficiency of services can be improved and costs reduced. It can be achieved mostly thanks to task simplification (Lambert 2016). The emergence of SSCs in Poland and other CEE countries contributes to their specialization in routine tasks. At the same time, in the most developed countries, the application of digital technologies shifts human labour away from routine and towards non-routine tasks (Acemoglu, 1998; Autor et al., 2003; Acemoglu and Autor, 2011; Goos and Salomons, 2014) which suggests that the recent nature of SSC jobs in Poland and CEE is likely temporary.

In our paper, we combine these two strands of literature. So far, the existence of shared services centres in Poland has been mainly analysed in the context of embeddedness (Białynicki-Birula and Pacut, 2021; Micek et al, 2011). Nowadays, the sector is undergoing a technological change. In the nearest future, the trend towards introducing solutions based on Intelligent/Robotic Process Automation and Artificial Intelligence will start to impact the job tasks characterised by process repeatability, algorithmized procedures and the presence of patterns (Geodecki, 2021). However, the effect of automation of routine-intensive tasks on the employment structure and the functional specialization of the business services sector in Poland is yet to be examined. How do companies adjust their HR strategies to technological change? What working conditions and job quality are associated with routine-intensive tasks and how does automation affect that?

To answer our research questions, we conduct 30 qualitative in-depth interviews with representatives of three groups: (i) the business services association in Poland, (ii) management, and (iii) regular employees. We focus on shared services centres based in three cities that represent most of SSC employment in Poland: Kraków, Warszawa, and Wrocław. Additionally, we are going to use an online

questionnaire sent to a large number of employees. We will assess whether the management's response to automation includes upskilling and re-skilling of workers, or rather lay-offs and disinvestment. The former could improve upwards occupational mobility. The latter is bound to cause loss of jobs that are commonly perceived as of relatively high quality, especially in smaller cities. Both processes may create new inequalities in the labour market, or reinforce the old ones. Moreover, we will evaluate if the feeling of upward mobility is an important part of the career trajectories of workers performing routine-intensive tasks, despite the threat of automation.

**Leszek Szklarczyk (Jagiellonian University)**

**Work during sleep, eat and leisure - How cognitive capitalism removed boundaries between life and labour**

The emergence of a digital platform in the 1990s was a turning point in the development of capitalism. Today, 30 years later, digital services mediate every aspect of human life, and the platform economy is seen by many as the dominant mode of production. This development would not have been possible if platforms had remained mere matchmakers as they were 30 years ago. The need for new revenue streams forced the evolution of the online marketplace into a value capture apparatus. Modern platforms gather data about our behaviour, accumulate results of users' voluntary work and endlessly encourage them to online activity - all that to produce valuable commodities such as data and information which allows for uptaking economic rent.

Mobile technologies enabled capturing value anytime, anywhere. We produce data when scrolling our social media feeds and listening to our favourite music, our phone records when was the last time we used it before sleep and the first time we touched it after waking up. The geolocation in our devices feeds the machine learning algorithms wherever we are. We live in a pervasive data factory, and thus we always work, although the work we do for the platforms is usually unintended and unpaid. The traditional dichotomy of life and work is no longer relevant. Cognitive capitalism replaces it with the reality of intentional and unintentional labour.

The present paper aims to analyse the consequences of the outlined above mode of production on work, and therefore, on the life of the working. Moreover, it will attempt to assess the current status of the cognitive workforce - are we doomed to a fate of a digital cattle, or are there any effective strategies of resistance left?

**Azad Heydarov (University of Wroclaw)**

**Opportunistic search in negotiating social boundaries of work - digital nomads want to know.**

On the one hand, advances in digital technologies made it possible to transition into remote working suddenly. On the other hand, even this possibility of change was foreseen before did not prove itself sustainable and further affected already dismantling work relations due to neoliberal policies. Blurred boundaries between work and life force individuals to seek new solutions for maintaining their mental wellbeing, family life, and new challenges in labor relations. Coworking spaces with distinctively constructed organizational cultures are becoming new workspaces for remote workers. Digital nomad groups once inhabiting these spaces are now introducing co-workation practice as a recent phenomenon and still neglecting to critically approach taxation and insurance issues. In the current situation, as privileged groups, digital nomads have not yet organized any effective strategy for adaptation or resistance, and it is present in their opportunistic exchanges on online forums. Based on the 100 screenshots taken from online forums where digital nomadism is the main topic, I explore changing culture in work and mobility, which signals the legitimization of post-modern corporate ideologies.

**Varieties in platform work room 4**

**chair: Bartosz Mika**

**Claudia Marà (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), Valeria Pulignano (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), Paul Stewart (Grenoble Ecole de Management)**

**Moving beyond the fences of industrial relations? Understanding workers' voice of discontent within food delivery platform work in Bologna (Italy)**

Against the expectations that the advent of digital platform work has challenged the possibility of forms of collectivism (Rosenblat 2018), research has illustrated that platform workers can 'voice' their claims against managerial authority even in the absence of the continuous sociality in the labour process as typical of Fordist times (Cant, 2019; Piasna et al., 2019; Stewart et al. 2020). This research has pointed to forms of workers self-organization based on networks of solidarity that emerge next to or beyond formal trade unions within the platform economy (Marrone and Peterlongo 2020; Tassinari and Maccarrone 2020). Parallel to these studies, some more radical stances have recently invited to abandon "the eurocentrism of industrial relations" (Nowak 2021) going beyond the "fetishizing of the trade union form" (Atzeni 2021) when considering the emergence of these self-organized forms of collective workers' voice of discontent. This paper will reflect on the implications that self-organized and collective action within the context of the platform food-delivery sector poses to industrial relations research by investigating the specific case of food-delivery couriers in Bologna (Italy). By drawing on digital ethnography and 28 interviews with food delivery couriers in Bologna, workers' representatives and formal trade unionists, this paper contributes to existing literature by advancing knowledge on the nature and dynamics of contemporary industrial relations in emerging sectors of the platform economy. In particular, it is our contention that understanding collective action requires to position workers' voice within a continuum – rather than an absolute – of dimensions which cluster socio-political and discursive factors and resources as well as institutions including formal trade unions within the city of Bologna. Thus, we use the concept of 'contested dynamics' (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001) to identify the relations among various players, e.g. workers collectives and trade unions, along this continuum of phases of contentious politics that have culminated in an unprecedented labour response that we understand as quintessential of this era of global turbulence (Benanav 2020; Brenner 2006). Whether there is no doubt that, especially within the context of the platform economy, trade unions have often played a fringe role in organising workers protest at first, we claim that it would be misleading to think that this implies the need to rethinking conflict and workers collective action outside the fences of industrial relations.

**Marcus Repa (University of Sao Paulo)**

**The next garage: Brazilian digital games and platforms**

This discussion is limited to the Brazilian debate about video game studios. The aim is to reflect on how digital games are developed in Brazil, particularly pointing out two companies, one based in the South region and the other in the Southeast region of the country. To a large extent, it is questioned what forms of technology structures allow these studios to divide work and their social composition in their productions. Also, what are the newly released digital games and ways to disseminate them on digital platforms for distribution and consumption. Otherwise, it is about investigating how Brazilian digital games are internationally distributed through the process of digitization of work and its new global configurations. In this sense, the development of video games is considered due to their technological structures, since material productions are aligned between social interactions and standardized productive means in skills and creative actions originated in the work routine with technical elements for the creation of artifacts technologies in a heterogeneous way. Thus, technology is built in a relational way, as construction projects are differentiated by inventions and the types of work associated with them, and in this construction, it extends into different relationships and branched systems, which culminate in the use of technological procedures in several areas (RAMMERT, 1997). The digitization and use of the internet for the production and development of technologies provides combined interactions of real-life elements in virtual environments. In this interaction, the data produced (texts, hypertext, photographs, images, videos, audios) are transmitted by users on their social media platforms, connecting digital technologies to familiar, scientific, cultural, and professional instances. These connections reproduce social structures and their forms of power relations, as well as incorporating elements of sociability, aggregating and ranking digital productions (LUPTON, 2015). The recent division of labor implied the development of diverse configurations in the technology applications in the countries. Brazil corresponds to a significant percentage of digital games consumption, as well as some independent studios, producers and publishers with participation in global events and awards. Especially in this article, the cases of the Aquiris and Wildlife studios are investigated. The study is based on digital sociological investigation with data provided by the studios, as well as interviews with representatives in order to question current technology applications affecting Brazilian digital game production and how digitization has been incorporated by these companies in relation to uses of digital platforms. Furthermore, how the strategies for participation in the global video game market are carried out through the mediation of platforms. Thus, it is intended to present how these studios are located in the new configurations of international work and the way in which digital gaming platforms, such as Apple Store, Play Store, Game Pass, Steam, among others, act on the Brazilian scenario.

**Tibor T. Meszmann (Central European Labour Studies Institute)**  
**Precarity with prestige? Migrant workers' invisibility in platform-driven personal transport in Hungary**

In Hungary, work in the platform economy as such is neither defined nor regulated as a separate area, and therefore the new sector appears as a deviating or innovative segment of the traditional sectors. A very specific sector where digitisation via platform companies has occurred in the last decade is personal transport: city level (taxi) and intercity routes. Its innovativeness also came to the fore in the lowered "employment" threshold, and clearcut incentives for drivers to take up jobs. A highly interesting prelude to this development is that the taxi and intercity transport sectors in Hungary emerged already in the 1970s as a tolerated individualised entrepreneurial profession, with associated prestige and status, whereas after 1989 it became a site of capitalisation and outsourcing with occasional events of collective action among drivers themselves.

The presumed absence of migrant workers is puzzling as employment conditions in the platform economy globally are highly precarious, and this work arrangement, due to a low entry threshold, typically attracts people from marginalised social groups and labour market outsiders, including migrants. More specifically, in Hungary platform companies mediating personal transport (Uber, Taxify, later Bolt, etc.) also reached out to some of these marginalised groups, but they continue to be absent or invisible, so much that even a taxi drivers' trade union representative questions the presence of migrant workers among drivers, and one intercity company spokesperson reported that they do not have drivers with "odd sounding names" in the registry. Taking into account this background, the main question of this paper is to explain the invisibility of migrant workers in the personal transport (taxi and intercity) sector in Hungary.

Our research shows that there are migrant workers also among drivers. Therefore, relying on in-depth interviews with drivers, along with material collected from drivers' internet forums in two research projects, (Industrial Relations and Social Dialogue in the Age of Collaborative Economy - IRSDACE 2016-2018, and Bargaining for working conditions and social rights of migrant workers in CEE countries - BARMIG 2020-2022) and discussions with young, marginally active migrant workers (mostly students), this paper seeks to develop two arguments. First, personal transport has an inherent promise of status, gendered "masculine" independence and autonomy, but also a position of small entrepreneurship, which collides with the image of marginalized groups. The specific background, and evolution of the sector, along with the struggle of drivers for better regulation, tilts towards creation of such an image. Second, drivers with migrant backgrounds need to be extremely well integrated if they want to establish themselves longterm in the sector. The latter point will be illustrated with the case of a driver who engaged in entrepreneurial economic activity in the Schumpeterian sense, starting an informal innovative startup which required extensive knowledge of administrative requirements.

**Valeria Pulignano (KU Leuven), Karol Muszyński (KU Leuven), Maite Tapia (Michigan State University) It Needs Three to Tango: Bargaining Power in Freelancing Platform Work**

**It Needs Three to Tango: Bargaining Power in Freelancing Platform Work**

The increasing importance of platform work and the poor quality jobs it entails raise the question of whether and how platform workers can negotiate change in the platform economy. Remote platform freelancers are considered self-employed freelancers that are able to hop from one 'gig' to another online. While some freelancers might enjoy this flexibility, there is a dark side of on-line freelancing which consists of job insecurity and precariousness for freelancers. Platforms reduce the bargaining power of freelancers over clients by intensifying transnational competition through pushing down the rates freelancers ask from their perspective clients. Yet, freelancers can potentially regain their bargaining power by establishing direct relationships with clients through building coherent career trajectories and portfolios as a way to escape the threat of having lowered rates by platforms.

We examine under which conditions online platform freelancers are able to gain bargaining power over clients, given the transnational and cost competitive market. Specifically, we consider the platform's organizational context (i.e. platform's strategies) as well as the product market context (i.e. specific sectors where freelancers operate). In describing organizational context, we draw from Belanger and Edwards (2006) notion of 'concerns' which builds upon an understanding of the contradictory nature of the social relationships at work in order to define the interests and choices made on the part of each agent mainly through action. Secondly, while literature has assessed the agency of platform workers by considering the capacity of freelancers to enter in conflict with the platform (e.g. Wood and Lendhovirta, 2021; Sutherland and Jarrahi, 2020), we show how freelancers can become agents also by creating alliances with clients through building coherent career trajectories and portfolios which help freelancers establishing relationships with clients (Leung, 2014; see also Borg et al., 2015). As we illustrate this matters as it allows freelancers to improve their wages and working conditions by achieving stability. Here, we draw from an employment and labour studies suggesting that cooperation exists not in opposition to conflict (Wright, 2000, 2004; see also Flanders, 1975; MacInnes, 1980; Kochan and Osterman, 1994) as both cooperation and conflict are worked out within the labour process (Smith, 2006).

The paper is based on 70 qualitative narrative interviews, harnessing the work and life conditions of remote freelancers working on various online platforms across 5 European countries.

**Klara Nagy (Central European University)**

**Freedom within Frames. The perception of paradoxical freedom in the food delivery courier sector in Hungary during the COVID-19 pandemic**

The paradox of criticizing and simultaneously embracing the food delivery sector as positive freedom is a main characteristic of the courier community in Hungary. My research and the conference paper aim to answer this contradiction. By doing so, it explores how the cycling food delivery workers accept, normalize, and justify for themselves the precarious working conditions emerging from the ethos of freedom and flexibility, and how the hegemonic discourse of labor market flexibilization supports this sense-making. To understand the food delivery workers' contradictory perceptions, I carried out participant observation, conducted semi-structured interviews and discourse analysis. I worked as a bicycle courier in Budapest in July and August 2021. The research found that food delivery companies maintain the illusion of freedom through continuous internal corporate communication that frames the decline in workers' rights as innovation and increasing freedom. The organization of labor generates the feeling of being liberated from a direct relationship with the employer. In addition, working as a food courier allows geographical mobility during the COVID-19 restrictions, and endows the workers with the prestige of the urban cycling culture. Food delivery work, as part of the gig economy, is embedded in neoliberal economic regimes, which strive for the flexibilization of the labor market. Hence the food delivery workers, who deploy their labor power through platforms as individual entrepreneurs, generate little responsibility on the companies' part. The neoliberal transformation of the economic systems coexists with political and cultural changes endorsed by political discourses and social practices. Since in Hungary the gig economy is not a regulated area, the lack of labor protection policies attracts the major food delivery companies. The sudden boom of the food delivery platform companies partly stems from the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions in public spaces and human encounters. In the last decade, the social reputation of urban and leisure cycling has increased: it has become a middle-class activity from a subculture. It promotes the concept of freedom in a variety of local forms. The sense of freedom in cycling delivery is a relational experience, is framed by local economic, social, and political powers. Since the couriers are promised to work under meritocratic and autonomously shapeable circumstances, food delivery companies accelerate the individualization of labor parallel to generating a sense of freedom. Nevertheless, the perception of freedom is not static in the gig economy (Schüßler & Attwood-Charles & Kirchner & Schor, 2021). The paradoxical freedom of food delivery workers is constructed through internal corporate communication, the absence of direct personal control in work organization, COVID-19 mobility restrictions, and the prestige of urban cycling culture. As little academic analysis has been done so far about food delivery workers in Hungary, my research contributes not only to labor sociology but its emerging subfield of the gig economy in Central and Eastern Europe as well.

**Working lives during pandemic 3 room 1**

**chair: Kamil Filipek**

**Szymon Pilch (University of Wrocław)**

**Work experiences of IT specialists in the business services industry under conditions of lean management in the context of Covid-19 pandemic. The case of Poland**

The paper focuses on the analysis of the ways of attributing meanings to work under the conditions of lean management and ‘agile’ software production in the business services industry in Poland. The crucial context here is the Covid-19 pandemic which influences, i. a., the organization and management of work in the industry under study. As a result of the analysis of 27 biographical narrative interviews with IT specialists working in (Polish and branches of multinational) business services centers in Poland, inspired by analytical procedures of the grounded theory methodology, three tentative ways of ascribing meanings to work were reconstructed. These are original categories named as follows: ‘enthusiasm’, ‘indifference’, ‘scepticism’. The way of attributing them to work depends primarily on the overall biographical experiences of the informants and their subjective meanings of work, the structural – global and/or local – context of work organization, as well as methods of management of teams and projects in companies, and the degree of technological advancement of the enterprise. The crucial condition of a particular way of interpretation of work by IT professionals is their individual – economic, social and cultural – resources (Bourdieu 1986). I will outline, on the general level, the characteristics of tentative typology of ways of attributing meanings to IT specialists work. In the paper I will especially emphasize the qualities of these ways taking into account the (post)pandemic situation. Inspired by the theoretical thought of Peter Drucker (1993), in the experiences of work and the meanings given to work in business services centres I will draw attention to the aspect of (potential) organisational, social and technological innovations as a response to the ‘crisis’ (caused by the outbreak of the pandemic) in the workplace of IT professionals. It can be hypothesized that these innovations are rooted in how enterprises are managed and by whom, and with what resources. It could be assumed that the basis of innovations is the knowledge, not only of managers and of employers, but also of employees. In this sense, I will also be interested in themes that pertain to the experiences of change of organisation of work, relations between co-workers and management staff, work-life balance (especially relations with family), and selected working conditions (work time, benefits, control and surveillance). I will try to find a preliminary answer to what were the main obstacles for IT professionals caused by the impact of the pandemic in the business services industry in Poland and how these difficulties potentially affected the meanings of work of employees.

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**Piotr Prokopowicz (Jagiellonian University), Szymon Czarnik (Jagiellonian University)**

**The Myth of Remote Work Revolution: Changes in the Quality of Work Among Polish Employees During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

According to both popular and academic discourses, the COVID-19 pandemic has deeply transformed our experience of work. The increasing significance of remote work, as well as the health risks and stress related to uncertainty and high workload, have all allegedly led to lower work-life balance, dissatisfaction and reduction in the subjective meaning of work. But do these claims find support in empirical data? How did people experience work before and during the pandemic? Has the extent of remote work and digitization translated to the meaningfulness and quality of work? And how do these relationships impact our understanding of what makes work meaningful? To address these questions we analyzed a unique dataset on the quality of work collected by our team in the Human Capital Study (HCS) in 2019 (before the pandemic) and 2020 (during the pandemic). One of the biggest labour market research programs in Europe, HCS collects data from a representative sample of Polish employers and individual employees on an annual basis since 2010. In 2019 and 2020, a large part of the HCS research was focused on the quality and meaningfulness of work of the workforce i.e. the positive and relevant contributions of work to one’s well-being, and the satisfaction that an individual derives from their job. The phenomenon of the meaningfulness of work has been hypothesized to be closely related to the perceptions of quality of work and in turn, leading to various positive work-related outcomes. Using the data from HCS we are exploring the beliefs of employees about the quality and meaningfulness of work before and during the pandemic. We argue that a large part of the discourse about the changes in the experience of work connected to remote work and digitization misses the points and exaggerates the extent of changes. We show that not only is the remote work revolution limited, but also that different aspects of job satisfaction, as well as perceptions of one’s work meaningfulness, have, for the most part, neither significantly improved, nor decreased during the pandemic. This is generally true even for small entrepreneurs many of whom suffered diminished sales and had rather bleak expectations of the future. We hypothesize that this is related to the more or less stable tendency to perceive one’s job as the satisfying and relatively low transformation of work relations. Finally, we relate the findings to some of the frameworks in sociology and popular discourse, suggesting that “bullshit jobs” have not propagated during the pandemic and might have not existed to a large extent before the crisis.



**Piotr Binder (Instytut Filozofii i Socjologii PAN)**

**Normalization of remote work in the light of longitudinal qualitative research. Towards new employment model and lifestyles modifications**

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the social dimension of work has constantly been changing. To a large extent, this process is related to the accelerated process of digitalization of work relations. However, this was not a result of a new technological breakthrough but a radical change in living conditions, which led to broader use of available technologies, thus intensifying changes in meanings of work. The proposed paper is based on longitudinal qualitative research. The project includes three categories of participants recruited from regional capitals, small towns, and villages: young, independent adults up to 35 years old, parents living with their children, and senior citizens aged 65 and above. The first wave of interviews was collected in the spring and summer of 2020 (N=150). Interviews with respondents willing to continue participating in the study (N=110) were carried out a year later. Due to the epidemic threat, interviews were conducted online in video call mode using Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp applications, or telephone, when online contact was impossible. A systematic analysis of the professional experiences of the research participants formed the basis for the two models of professional life, which will be offered in the presentation. The "classic" model is based on work performed (usually) at the employer's premises, is oriented towards overcoming the existing restrictions (sanitary regime) and returning to the pre-pandemic reality. In turn, the "pandemic" model distinguishes work performed entirely or partially from home (via ICT), assumes the durability of changes in the labor market and the expectation that new solutions will not be temporary. Experiences related to remote work indicate that they can also influence the non-professional sphere. The collected interviews document that such features of remote work as flexibility and the potential to save time stimulated various lifestyle modifications. Among others, they included changes in diet, shopping habits, leisure activities, health care, and even shifts in life priorities. These phenomena were distinctly observable when the accounts of the remote workers were compared to the narrations of participants working within the framework of the "classic" model. For those working outside the home, pandemic perturbations related to restrictions on work or limited access to the institutional environment were primarily a source of periodic disturbances in the rhythm of their lives. In a broader sense, the need to adapt to work in conditions of a long-term epidemic threat has become a catalyst for modernization processes. Remote work has consolidated its position on the labor market and is subject to the progressive process of normalization. Although this mode of work has numerous limitations, the effects of the first 18 months of the pandemic were so satisfactory that both employers and employees remained open to them. At the

same time, the need for more intensive use of ICT has overcome the attachment to many analog solutions also in the "classic" work model.

**Creative professions and vocational decisions room 2**  
**chair: Bartosz Mika**

**Antoni Głowacki (National Center for Culture)**

**I still have my face, I still have my voice. On forced digitalization of artistic work.**

The culture sector have undergone profound changes during the Covid-19 pandemic. Shutdown of cultural institutions paired with the audiences' reluctance to participate in live events have forced many artists to reorganize their working lives around producing online content. This often required a significant change to their everyday work regime. Many artists experienced this period as a time of new possibilities brought by digitalization, but also of essential insecurity. Our paper is based on qualitative data, primarily from 16 individual in-depth interviews with artists, conducted between October and November 2021. Interviewees were chosen as to represent diverse art forms (music, performance arts, visual arts, writing) and employment status (self-employed, contract work, full-time employment). The interviews concerned their work experiences throughout the pandemic (Winter 2020-Autumn 2021), with particular focus on producing online content. Those IDI-s were supplemented with 10 focus group interviews with the audience members who participated in online cultural activities. Our research is focused on the transformations of artists' work during the pandemic. First, we trace their initial reactions during the Winter-Spring 2020 lockdown phase, and subsequent adaptations to variable epidemiological and institutional context. Most importantly, this includes the efforts to mitigate negative consequences, either by transforming their work practices to better employ digital media, or by seeking additional, often unskilled, employment. Secondly, we identify the consequences of the changes in artists' working lives. They include, among others: (1) high mental toll exercised by the need to adapt to fast-changing and uncertain environment; (2) re-evaluation of crucial work skills (rising importance of digital competences and relatively diminished importance of traditional artistic craft); (3) re-definition of the relation between artists and their audience, and (4) changes in the relation between work and pay. Regarding (4), as a consequence of pivoting to producing digital content, the logic of remuneration changes: it becomes less tied to objects or performances (specific exercises of craft prowess), and more dependent on generalized "sponsorship" by audience members. As our research shows, artistic work have undergone significant transformations during the Covid-19 pandemic, often concerning work's essential characteristics. At the same time, the (forced) digitalization have opened new possibilities for the emergence of new forms of creative work, but also for such components of artists' work as building relationship with audience or teaching. On the other hand, both artists and audience members often express preference for pre-pandemic, non-digital cultural experience. In consequence, for many artists the essential question for post-pandemic world concern incorporating new technical possibilities into their pre-pandemic work regimes, and to find new ways of benefitting from their existing assets.

**Elaheh Eslami (Central European University)**

**Iranian Women's Aspirational labor on Instagram: from self-presentation to monetization of self**

This research aims at investigating aspirations of female wannabe micro-celebrities on Instagram. In recent years, there has been a surge in Iranian women's inclination towards starting online careers on Instagram. As these users come from different ages, education and class backgrounds, it is impossible to narrow down the scope of my research now. However, in this study, I am going to focus on users who have based their online career on presentation of self and everyday life. For many female users, online career has successfully brought micro-celebrity and financial prosperity. For many others, whom I call wannabe micro-celebrities, online career is only an aspiration, with an uncertain future, specially after Covid-19 pandemic. Being a micro-celebrity on social media has certain characteristics that seem appealing to users; it is tied to ideas such as creativity, creativity, and doing what you love. From another point of view, online careers are rather exploitative than being empowering. As aspirants, female wannabe micro-celebrities are required to do precarious activities such as constant self promotion and always being on; they work hard on a well-curated online subjectivity. As suggested by the existing literature, aspirants like Iranian female wannabe micro-celebrities (FWM) are active participants of an online sharing economy which encourages users to transform their self-presentation to a 'monetizable product' (Hearn, 2017). Scholars have described users' self-presentation as a form of digital labor, because it produces a valuable commodity (self) that can be sold to advertisers (Scholz, 2013; Andrejevic, 2009) for influencer marketing. This form of labor is also characterized with uncertainty and precariousness. Instead of empowering users, it pushes them to do unpaid labor for an uncertain amount of time. The case of Iranian FWMs is interesting because of the particular context of the country. Having a job as an Instagram micro-celebrity seems encouraging in Iran, mainly because it provides women with an opportunity to overcome socio-economic restrictions (such as high rates of unemployment). In an economy marked by high rates of gender gap (ranked 140 out of 144 countries) and low rates of women participation in the economy (only 16%), online micro-celebrity might seem attractive to those women who do not have access to other forms of employment. By doing semi-structured interviews with these women, I would like to find out FWMs' aspirations on Instagram. To grasp a better understanding of these women's labor, I would use the concept of "aspirational labor", a gendered form of digital labor that encourages users to become creative producers and be compensated one day with social and economic capital (Duffy, 2015, p 4). This will help me to explore possible mythologies that are at work for concealing the precariousness of labor on Instagram. Due to the link between aspirational labor and gender norms (Duffy & Hund, 2015), it is vital to examine whether Iranian women's aspirations on Instagram are reaffirming the gender norms inscribed in governmental policies or not. Due to the increasing uncertainty of digital labor after Covid-19 pandemic, my research will also contribute to the existing literature by providing a new understanding of new forms of women's labor that are emerging on social media.

**Paweł Zalewski (Uniwersytet Warszawski)**

**"I don't know, mum, I could always become a cashier. Family negotiations in educational and vocational decision-making of young adults"**

Contrary to the neo-liberal myth of hard work, studies in the field of sociology of education in Poland and abroad have shown that individual educational achievements have a weak impact on later professional success. While structural factors such as social background or parents' educational level loom large in the current research, we still know pretty little about parental engagement in young people's educational and vocational choices. Asserting that relationship with parents is important for young adults as they tend to consult their educational and vocational choices with their parents, I aim to characterise family negotiations as an interactive way of assigning meaning to educational and vocational choices of young adults. The study is based on the results of a qualitative study based on in-depth individual interviews carried out in 2018 and 2019 with 45 male and female first-year undergraduate students at selected public universities in Warsaw. Interviews were facilitated by a timelining task in order to trace the educational and professional trajectories of the respondents. I present the processes of negotiations between young adults and their parents in two separate time frames: before and during university admission process. The results of the study suggest that both young adults and their parents equate choosing a university programme with choosing a future profession. Negotiating the meaning of the field of study is sequential and can be divided into phases of: 1) expressing preferences, 2) determining an acceptable field of choice and 3) making a decision. During negotiations, young adults and their parents seek to establish how important the discussed field of study might be for the type and quality of future employment. All in all, parents were strongly involved in the decision-making of young adults. For some respondents parents were a source of inspiration, for others a point of reference for planning their professional development. In practice, educational and vocational decisions of young people who enter the labour market are not, as the neoliberal discourse dictates, isolated from the social environment. Taking the family environment into account may have positive influence on vocational guidance services that become increasingly popular in Poland.

**Krzysztof Lepczyński (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń)**

**Journalists: Pioneers, Victims or Luddites of the Digital Era?**

Technological change is closely related to the shape and condition of journalism and journalists' work (Örnebring 2010). Remote work, flexibility, multitasking - the fruits of the pandemic work revolution - are commonplace for many journalists. By drawing from existing work on the quality of work and quality of life of journalists, in my presentation, I analyze the condition of media workers in the context of pandemic and broader technological and economic changes. I recognize journalists as representatives of wider social groups: creative workers and even a large part of the middle class. I will present tentative findings from the ongoing qualitative study (individual interviews) on the quality of life of journalists in Poland. Technological change is one of the main causes of journalists poor working and living conditions. It often takes the form of significant acceleration of the information flow leading to overwork, the need for burdening multitasking, precariousness (Dobek-Ostrowska et al. 2013; Nygren, Dobek-Ostrowska 2015), and, as a consequence, low salaries (Głowacki 2013). The same problems are faced by media workers all over the world. Moreover, poor quality of work is directly translated into poor quality of the entire life (Deuze 2007; Deuze, Prenger 2019). Digitalisation can be understood as a part of market transformation. Polanyi (1944) wrote about making land, work and capital fictitious commodities, which enabled the marketisation of social reality. In cognitive capitalism, information becomes another fictitious commodity (Jessop 2007), and the journalists operating it lose their hegemonic, gatekeeping role, slipping into the masses of the cognitariat. In terms of the new phase of capitalism, they thus experience painful declassing, being forced into cognitive work, of low quality and yet identified with a lifestyle (Berardi 2005). That raises the question: are journalists, former pioneers and beneficiaries of the technological change, just victims of digitalisation? Or rather - looking at the growing opposition to the commercialization among media workers (from trade unions to alternative business models) - the modern Luddites, like the workers destroying the looms at the dawn of the industrial age?

**Migrants' work and careers room 3**

**chair: Olga Czeranowska**

**Dominika Winogrodzka (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities)**

**Stability is a foggy concept". Work (in)stability in the perspective of young people on the move**

In the context of the working life of young people, much attention is paid to the flexibility that very often appears in a positive context, even though variability is not always desirable. Stability is a conceptual companion of flexibility, however, its role has been largely underestimated in the literature on working life (Jonsson 2007, Furåker et al., 2007). The key aim of this paper is to explore the processes of meaning-making of work (in)stability among young people with mobility experience. Focusing on the intersection between career studies, mobility studies and youth studies (Robertson et al., 2018; Cuzzocrea 2019), I aim to answer the following research questions: How do young people "on the move" define stability in the context of the labor market? How do young people relate to work instability? How do parents of young adults perceive (in)stability of the young generation? Based on empirical material from the project entitled "Peer Groups and Migration: Education-to domestic and- foreign labour market transitions of youth: The role of locality, peer group and new media" (2016-2020, National Science Centre Poland, Sonata Bis 5), I discuss the process of defining, redefining and denying the concept of work stability showing that it is subject to continuous verification, re-evaluations and questioning. Today's youth seek alternative definitions that can help them self-anchor in existing social surroundings, however, the Covid-19 crisis disrupted the young lives. There is a great need to conduct research examining the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic on different spheres of people's lives. It is emphasized that the greatest data gains will be made by building upon ongoing longitudinal projects which combine information on life before the Covid-19 pandemic to experiences during and specific to the pandemic (Settersten et al., 2020). Therefore, I will also briefly introduce the "INSIMO: Work (in)stability and spatial (im)mobility from the perspective of young people on the move. Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic" project (2022-2023, National Science Centre Poland, Preludium-20) that precisely meets this need through a research re-visit of the participants of the longitudinal "Peer Groups and Migration" project. Both the perception of work (in)stability and the attitude to spatial (im)mobility is never (pre)determined, but permanently evaluated and ever-evolving. A research re-visit will provide a unique opportunity to check how

these constructs and the way of thinking about them have changed over time. Repeat in-depth interviews will give a chance to capture the dynamics of the participants' changing life experiences. Looking at the effects of the Covid-19 crisis with temporal orientation and a life-course perspective, I will be able to identify risks, vulnerabilities and inequalities which may affect young people's lives.

**Hrvoje Butkovic (Institut for Development and International Relations, Croatia)**

**Changes in the legal framework for the work of migrant workers in Croatia – Views from the social partners**

The Croatian Labor Market has changed significantly since the countries EU accession in 2013. The number of third country nationals on Croatian labor market has significantly increased due to fact that large portion of Croatian nationals (some 300 000 people) emigrated to Western Europe in search for higher wages and better working conditions. The loss of the labor force is particularly pronounced in the labor-intensive sectors such as construction and tourism and hospitality. In order to accommodate these new realities, the Croatian government in 2021 changed the Aliens Act which regulates the work of third country nationals. The previous quotas-based system was replaced with the new marked test-based system which seems to be more flexible. Furthermore, negotiations on the adoption of the new Labor Law have started in fall of 2021 with the aim of improving the regulation of work from a distant location, work through the online platforms, agency work etc. Adoption of the new Labor Law will probably introduce some additional more substantive changes to the overall content of this law aimed at establishing a less segmented labor market. Previously the Croatian labor market was considered highly divided between well protected workers with open ended contracts on the one side, and all other (less fortunate) workers exposed to growing uncertainties on the other. This segmentation particularly effected the migrant workers. In view of this developments, this paper discusses how these implemented and announced legislative changes are perceived by the trade unions and employers and whether and how they changed and corrected their initial positions.

**Olga Czeranowska (SWPS)**

**Polish migrants' occupational lives during the covid-19 pandemic – the role of virtual mobilities**

In this paper, we present the results of the quantitative study on Polish migrants' experiences of mobility and immobility during the pandemic. The study was a qualitative component of the project "(IT)Mobility. Immobility of the mobile, mobility of the immobile - migrants in the times of pandemics and new information/communication technologies" (012 / RID / 2018/19). Our sample consisted of 30 persons born in Poland, currently living in 13 other countries. Respondents were highly diversified in terms of educational attainment and labour market situation. Their work lives were affected by the covid-19 pandemic in various ways, from being furloughed to working from home.

Focusing on two types of mobility: geographical and virtual, we argue that the covid-19 pandemic-related restrictions that had significantly hampered the possibilities of geographical mobility had at the same time led to an increase in virtual mobility. In the

case of Polish migrants, those restrictions had been felt especially acutely, as they represent the "naturally mobile" subpopulation. Travelling internationally (back to Poland and elsewhere) was an essential part of our Interviewees' lifestyle before the pandemic. However, as migrants were using ICT tools and social media widely in their pre-pandemic lives, they already had the skills and knowledge necessary to use them in the spheres of life that were "pushed online" because of the pandemic.

During the pandemic, virtual mobility has also been an essential part of migrants' work-life experience. Some of them were able to use the ICT skills they had gained before the pandemic to work remotely. Others needed to implement new solutions and invest in equipment in order to create a comfortable home office. The final effect of working remotely on migrant's occupational live of general well-being depended on many variables, both occupational and personal.

**Karolina Podgórska (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University)**

**The work of migrants in Poland in the lens of social dialog partners**

In recent years Poland has recorded a large increase in the inflow of foreigners taking up employment. The origin of foreign workers in Poland is mainly Ukraine and Belarus (together 80%) however since 2018 the percentage of Ukrainian migrants has been steadily declining in favor of workers from Moldova, Nepal, India, Georgia or Bangladesh. In the context of this inflow it seems important to ask the question what is the role of social dialog partners in co-creating the new labour reality in Poland. The research showed that the largest national social partners are not very active in the migrant labour market issues in Poland. Trade unions usually do not recognize specific problems of migrants because they perceive them only as temporary workers. Employers' organizations have more interest and knowledge about migrants, by taking single initiatives. On the other side, we can observed the important and still growing role of intermediaries in creating and managing a transnational labour market. Work agencies influence work and living conditions and initiate trends in issues regulating migrants' work. Agencies often mediate between final employer and employees in many labor and social issues like assistance in flat searching, bilingual coordinators, bringing migrants families to Poland, assistance during quarantine, etc. The presentation will be prepared based on the findings form BARMIG project (Bargaining for working conditions and social rights of migrant workers in CEE countries). The data will come from the interviews with labour market actors: employers, trade unions, intermediaries and experts operating in migrant work issues in five sectors: healthcare, platform work, services, construction and metal industry.

**Precarious work and employment room 4**

**chair: Dominika Polkowska**

**Alan Golec (Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny im. KEN w Krakowie)  
Technological unemployment - proposed social and political solutions  
in the context of different models of perceiving the phenomenon**

The issues related to technological unemployment did not yet gain wide interest in the Polish-language scientific discourse - their importance and presence are, however, noticed in the English-language scientific discourse. Technological unemployment is understood (according to the Oxford Reference) as a type of unemployment caused by technological advances. It manifests itself in replacing the services of employees with the services of machines. In the 21st century, this type of unemployment is mainly influenced by the development of artificial intelligence, the use of machine learning of artificial neural networks, the development of expert systems, as well as the use of big data, cloud technologies and fast communication devices. The phenomenon of technological unemployment is potentially related to the so-called "polarization" of professions – that is, displacing workers from routine jobs requiring medium qualifications, while leaving people at higher and lower levels of labor (such professions may also be subject to automation in the future). According to a widely cited Oxford report by Frey and Osborne, as much as 47 percent of existing jobs in the US may be susceptible to automation. The European Commission has estimated that 37 to 69 percent of jobs in the European Union can be partially automated. Facing potentially rising unemployment, it is especially important to look at the proposed social and political solutions connected with this phenomenon. In the scientific discourse, there are solutions such as: the application of a basic income; the introduction of a full employment policy; shortening the length of the working week; the use of tradable amounts of compulsory employment of human (or robotic) workers; encouraging employees to buy shares of the companies they work for; a complete change in the ownership structure of the digital means of production (with the abandonment of the capitalist economy); or finally the transfer of human life to some kind of virtual reality, where everyone would be able to use virtual, unlimited goods and services. So far, several models of changes taking place in the field of technological unemployment have been distinguished - a model based on the replacement of skills, according to which mainly employees in positions requiring low qualifications would lose their jobs; a model based on routine activities, according to which technological unemployment would primarily affect people who perform repetitive activities; and a profession-oriented model that assesses the risks of automation that specific jobs are exposed to. The adoption of each of these models influences the assessment of the proposed social and political solutions. If a model is adopted based on the routine tasks being taken over by robots, a better solution may be to shorten the working day and to introduce a full-employment policy (because although specific occupations will be deprived of some tasks, the remaining tasks for human workers may be shared - so that the remaining amount of work will take less

time). If, on the other hand, one adopts the model of taking over the entire professions by robots, a more desirable solution may be to tax the labor of robots and to introduce a basic income, or even to change the ownership structure of the digital means of production - because wealth will still be produced in the economy and most of the people would not have to work. The conference speech will be an in-depth, theoretical review of social and political solutions proposed in the English-language scientific discourse in the context of adopting a given model of perceiving the problem of technological unemployment.

**Theodoros Fouskas (University of West Attica, Greece)  
From exclusion to integration? Unveiling precarious employment and  
empowerment of female migrant domestic workers in Greece in the  
midst of the COVID-19 pandemic**

International research literature has focused on the aspects and the repercussions of servile labor, caregiving, household chores and personal service work in countries where female migrants reside. This presentation focuses on the case of migrant domestic workers in Greece in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and on how the frame of their work and employment in precarious, low-status/low-wage jobs affect their perceptions and attitudes regarding their work, rights, healthcare access and integration in Greece. It is based on qualitative research in the context of the "Voices of Immigrant Women" (VIW) project funded by the European Commission in the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme, KA2 - Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education and provided a mapping of case studies and success stories of integration of migrant women in the different European partner countries. In Greece, female migrants are employed as domestic workers (cleaning-caregiving) with direct-hire in households of Greek employers as a means of themselves and their families back in their origin countries. There is still demand in Greek society for domestic servants which is a result of deficiencies in the national welfare systems; this demand is found not only in the upper but also the middle class to both meet needs but also to be used as a status fulfillment. According to the results of in-depth interviews female migrants are entrapped in a frame of isolating and exploitative working conditions and face discrimination at work, i.e., personal services, care and domestic work. In this working context, most of the female migrant domestic workers interviewed appear to have developed individualistic behaviours, perceptions and practices. Only few are empowered with an upwards social mobility (e.g. entrepreneurship, higher education studies). They act in an atomized manner, form materialistic beliefs, are indifferent to collectivity and solidarity and are isolated from their compatriots and other workers. They have low self-perceptions and expectations for social advancement and deal with their social and labour-related problems individually, or completely resign from claiming them.

**Anna Kiersztyn (University of Warsaw), Katarzyna Kopycka (University of Warsaw), Viktoriia Sovpenchuk (University of Warsaw)**  
**Do non-standard labour contracts entail employment precarity? A comparison of Poland, Germany, and the US.**

This presentation has two goals. First, we propose a conceptualization of a cross-nationally comparable measure of employment precarity using career history data from national panel surveys. The second goal is to provide a quantitative assessment of the degree to which various types of non-standard labour contracts are associated with precarious employment careers in three countries representing contrasting institutional regimes: Poland, Germany, and the United States.

The rise in precarious work has become a matter of concern for the social sciences as well as a major political issue. However, empirical research into this subject, and especially policy oriented cross-national comparative study is complicated by the multidimensional and dynamic character of employment precarity, which evades simple definitions and raises measurement problems. Many existing studies focus on temporary employment, in particular prolonged exposure to temporary jobs, which are often associated with worker vulnerability to worse working conditions and insecurity. This approach, in our view, hinders further scientific inquiry for two reasons. First, the fixed term employment indicators currently available in cross-national surveys such as the Labour Force Surveys or the EU-SILC apply a single label to workers in different situations, depending on the labour market regulations and structures present in different countries. In addition, these indicators are available for hired employees only, excluding categories of potentially precarious platform workers or dependent self-employed, which have been growing in importance in recent years. More importantly, equating fixed-term employment with precarity precludes an empirical investigation of the relationship between them.

We therefore propose an alternative employment precarity measure not based on the form of labour contract. Our approach involves: (a) analyzing career sequences rather than focusing on work characteristics at one point in time, to account for the changing dynamics and growing heterogeneity of employment careers; (b) using indicators of the actual employment situation of individuals rather than their subjective assessments of this situation, which - while important - may be affected by psychological coping mechanisms and perceptions of reference group status; and (c) using measures which capture basic labour market statuses and events (like employer changes), which convey a comparable meaning across different institutional contexts. We conceptualize employment precarity as a career pattern involving high job turnover, periods of joblessness, and low income, and propose a quantification of this career property in the form of an index.

We then use OLS regression models, with the career-based employment precarity index as a dependent variable, to analyse the relationships between the index and dummy indicators of country-specific non-permanent contracts, controlling for basic socio-demographic characteristics. We use data from panel surveys

conducted in each of the three countries which are the focus of our analysis: the Polish Panel Survey, the German Socio-Economic Panel, and the U.S. National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth NLSY97. Our study is part of the Cross-National Biographies of Youth (CNB-Young) project ([crossnationalbiographies.edu.pl/en](http://crossnationalbiographies.edu.pl/en)), which harmonizes longitudinal data to create an open-source research infrastructure enabling the cross-national comparative study of employment precarity among young adults.