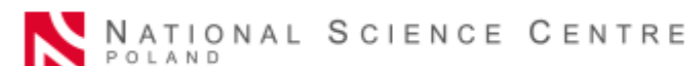




social boundaries of work

Critical Labour Studies in the Times of a Polycrisis

7th International Conference
16-18.10.2024 — University of Wrocław



Program and book of abstracts

Wednesday 16th October 2024 Overview: OPEN DAY*

University of Wrocław Library Fryderyka Joliot-Curie 12 St.

Sessions held in Polish (PL-EN, EN-PL interpretation provided)

9:00-09:30 Registration

9:30-10:00

Opening of the conference: Patrycja Matusz (Vice-Rector for Internationalisation of the University of Wrocław), Magdalena Ratajczak (Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, UWr), Katarzyna Kajdanek (Vice-director, Institute of Sociology, UWr), Adam Mrozowicki (Department of the Sociology of Work and Economic Sociology, IS UWr, Sociology of Work Section, Polish Sociological Association)

10:00-12:00: WORKSHOP I: Working conditions of platform workers in Europe and the forthcoming Platform Work Directive (ERC ResPecTMe Awareness Workshop)

The awareness workshop will present the results of the ERC-funded project ResPecTMe “Resolving Precariousness: Advancing the Theory and Measurement of Precariousness across the paid/unpaid work continuum” that studied working conditions of platform workers in five countries – Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland.

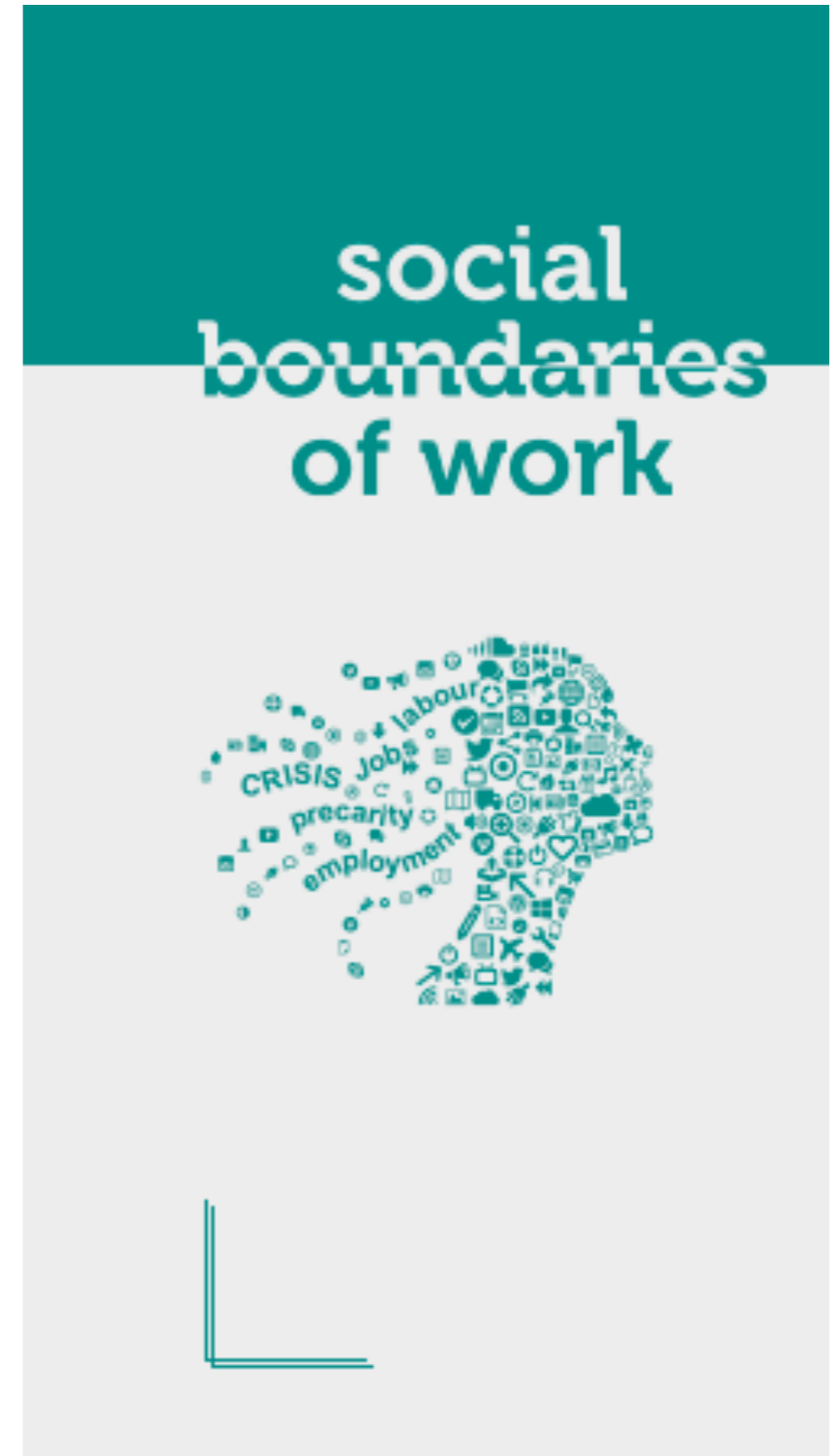
Chair: Bartosz Mika (University of Gdansk)

Introductory lecture: **Valeria Pulignano** (KU Leuven), **Karol Muszynski** (University of Warsaw/KU Leuven)

Panelists: **Barbara Surdykowska** (NSZZ Solidarność / Solidarity), **Stanisław Kierwiak** (OPZZ Konfederacja Pracy / Confederation of Labour), **Arkadiusz Krupicz** (Pyszne.pl / JustEat Takeaway)

12:00-12:30: Coffee break

*The Open Day is supported by the European Research Council (ERC Advanced Grant), grant agreement n° 833577 – Project ResPecTMe, NCN OPUS project COV-WORK funded by the National Science Centre in Poland (UMO-2020/37/B/HS6/00479) and the ENDURE project funded by the Trans-Atlantic



Wednesday 16th October 2024 Overview: OPEN DAY

12:30-14:30: Workshop II: the ENDURE Community Resilience Lab. Labour migrants organizing in post-pandemic world

This workshop will focus on the experience of foreign workers in Poland after 2020, with a particular focus on the challenges that migrants working in direct contact with others during the COVID-19 pandemic (so-called frontline workers) have faced and are facing.

Chair: Olga Gitkiewicz (University of Wrocław)

Introductory lecture: **Mateusz Karolak** (University of Wrocław), **Könül Jafarova** (University of Wrocław)

Panelists: **Ewa Flaszyńska / Marcin Wiatrów** (Department of Labour Market, Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy) [on-line], **Ignacy Józwiak** (OZZ IP / Workers' Initiative)

14:30-15:30: Lunch

15:30-17:30: Workshop III: (Un)usual crisis of public services: the COV-WORK project

During the workshop we will discuss the quality of jobs in public services (education, health, social care, logistics) in the context of the polycrisis, the chronic crisis of the public sector and exogenous shocks after 2020, including the Covid-19 pandemic and Russia's full-scale attack on Ukraine.

Chair: Julia Kubisa (University of Warsaw)

Introductory lecture: **Jacek Burski** (University of Wrocław, UWr), **Jan Czarzasty** (SGH Warsaw School of Economics), **Aleksandra Drabina-Różewicz** (UWr), **Alicja Pałęcka** (UW, SGH), **Szymon Pilch** (UWr), **Adam Mrozowicki** (UWr)

Panelists: **Edyta Odyjas** (NSZZ Solidarność / Solidarity), **Zbigniew Żurek** (Business Centre Club), **Maria Magdalena Malinowska** (OZZ IP / Workers' Initiative), **Jacek Pluta** (UM Wrocław / Wrocław City Council)

17:30-18:00: Open Day Final Discussion

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Thursday 17th October 2024 Overview

Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Wrocław, Koszarowa 3 St.

SESSIONS HELD IN ENGLISH

9:00 - 11:00 Plenary Session: *Critical Labour Studies in the Times of Polycrisis*

(Auditorium A, the Institute of Political Science)

Chair: **Agata Krasowska** (University of Wrocław)

Michele Ford (University of Sydney): Collective Action in the Face of Democratic Regression: Lessons from Southeast Asia [on-line]

Callum Cant (University of Essex): Things can only get... worse: Workers' experiences of 'polycrisis' in Britain

Valeria Pulignano (Catholic University of Leuven): Unpaid Labour and Inequality in Precarious Work

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break (the Institute of Political Science)

11:30 - 13:30 Parallel thematic groups

13:30 - 14:30 Lunch (the Institute of Political Science)

14:30 - 16:30 Plenary session: *Sociology and Trade Unions: Collaboration across Boundaries*

(Auditorium A, the Institute of Political Science)

Chair: **Julia Kubisa** (University of Warsaw)

Paul Stewart (Grenoble School of Management): Critical labour Studies: origins and prospects in the age of neoliberal polycrisis

Jane Holgate (Leeds University Business School): Agents of curiosity. Why the union movement needs political education and critical thinking

Ignacy Józwiak (University of Warsaw): Work, workers' rights and workplace organizing in the shadow of war: a transnational view on Ukraine

Ian Greer (Cornell University): Transgressing the boundaries of academic work in Ithaca, New York, USA [on-line]

16:30 - 17:00 Coffee break (the Institute of Political Science)

17:00 - 19:00 Parallel thematic groups

20:00 Gala Dinner

1st Plenary session: *Critical Labour Studies in the Times of Polycrisis*

Michele Ford (University of Sydney): Collective Action in the Face of Democratic Regression: Lessons from Southeast Asia [on-line]

Labour activism in the Global South – in particular authoritarian regimes and fragile democracies – is a core issue on the agenda of critical labour studies. And, while labour activism takes many forms, trade unions remain a key vehicle for collective action, and collective agency, for the working class. At the same time, the industrial and political space available to unions is highly constrained.

How do unions navigate the space available to them, and what hope do they have of representing their members? Around the world, there are three primary ways that unions act to achieve their goals. Collective bargaining is focused primarily on the workplace or on technocratic tripartite committees. Whether unions rely more on political action, street politics or collective bargaining depends largely on unions' level of institutional embeddedness at the national level and on their workplace strength. The other two action repertoires—street politics and party alliances— are public facing.

Where unions have institutionalized access to the polity through an alliance with a powerful political party, their political engagement will likely rely more on mobilizing workers at the ballot box rather than on the streets. Through these political alliances, unions can extend their power beyond the workplace, tap into valuable political support when they confront employers, and become less dependent on militant action to advance workers' interests. Where they do not have a political ally, they often use mass mobilization as alternative way to influence policy.

In democracies, unions generally focus on collective bargaining, or may partner with a political party to pursue a labour agenda. In Southeast Asia, most unions have relatively little opportunity to engage in workplace bargaining and weak, if any, links to progressive political parties, which leaves them with little choice but to take to the streets. This keynote address will explore this pattern in Indonesia and Cambodia, two countries that have experienced relatively high levels of labour activism despite government repression.

Callum Cant (University of Essex): Things can only get... worse: Workers' experiences of 'polycrisis' in Britain

2008 marked a new stage in the development of capitalism in Britain. The relative stability of the previous 170 years was achieved through a ruling class strategy that combined aggregate real wage increases with a dialectic of political reform and repression. But since 2008, that classical combination been replaced by something new. Real wages have declined, the austerity-stricken state has shrunk dramatically, and political reforms that would benefit the working class have been excluded from the sphere of bourgeois politics. Taken together, these trends have produced a general and sustained decline in working class living standards. We are in a new period, one increasingly characterised by a shift from consent to coercion. Given a future likely characterised by extreme social instability, with interdependent sources ranging from the climatic to the geopolitical, this shift can and should be seen as marking the start of a new phase of class struggle in Britain. This address illustrates this new phase by presenting the initial results of four case studies drawn from across the British economy, covering the logistics, manufacturing, health and food service industries via Amazon; Tata Steel; the National Health Service; and Deliveroo, respectively. By comparing the common experiences voiced by workers across these case studies, it is possible to both formulate conclusions on the nature of the polycrisis currently impacting workers in Britain, and generate some initial thoughts about the sociological study of crisis in the workplace. By beginning from workers' experiences, the goal is to start to articulate how this ongoing recomposition of class struggle is experienced in the hidden abodes of capitalist production and the state. With regards to Britain, it is increasingly obvious that diverse experiences of work across different geographies are frequently marked by the same trends: falling real wages, rising levels of collective action, technologically-enabled work intensification, and the fundamental failure of various forms of state service provision. These trends have been and will continue to be addressed by specific studies, but this macro approach also emphasises the importance of connecting the dots across more micro workplace contexts. With regards to the sociology of crisis, it is notable that the way in which a crisis is being experienced is not as a distinct event with a defined start point, but rather as a gradual intensification of existing trends. This challenges us to think of what has been termed the 'polycrisis' as a process, and indicates the theoretical importance of grounding this novel nomenclature within preceding theories of crisis and the structural analysis of the tendencies that produce them.

1st Plenary session:
Critical Labour Studies
in the Times of Polycrisis

Valeria Pulignano (Catholic University of Leuven): Unpaid Labour and Inequality in Precarious Work

Debates on precarious work often revolve around the aspects of paid employment arrangements. Within the realm of employment and labour relations research, scholars use the term 'wage theft' to describe unpaid labour in paid employment, viewing it as a crucial element of precarious work. However, there remains a need to delve deeper into the connection between unpaid labour and precarious work and to explore how the job market is influenced by this issue. This exploration is vital in understanding the inequalities inherent in precarious work. While it is true that unpaid labour in paid employment can contribute to precarious work, it is not a one-size-fits-all situation, as its impact varies based on individuals' access to individual and collective resources. Those with higher resources, including those who can rely on social reproductive and gendered (unpaid) labour, may be more capable of affording to engage in unpaid work. As a result, precarious work may not automatically affect everyone in the same way. In my ongoing research, I am aiming to shed light on the role of unpaid labour in various sectors and work areas across diverse European countries, which are often associated with precarious conditions. This research seeks to address the issue of inequality in precarious work, where inequality is understood as stemming from class-based distinctions based on income, gender, prestige, and race. Moreover, the research underscores the importance of welfare and collective bargaining institutions as factors that can help mitigate inequality for individuals engaged in unpaid labour and facing precarious work situations. These institutions play a critical role in providing support and protection for those vulnerable to precarious conditions in the labour market.

2nd Plenary session:

Sociology and Trade Unions: Collaboration across Boundaries

Paul Stewart (Grenoble School of Management): Critical labour Studies: origins and prospects in the age of neoliberal polycrisis

'There is a need to invent new forms of communication between researchers and activists, which means a new division of labour between them' (Bourdieu, 1996).

The origins of Critical Labour Studies (CLS), established in 2004, are to be found in the development of a critical labour sociology at the height of the age of fordism. Beginning in the 1960s as a response to the institutionalised character of the sociology of work, principally in the UK and the US, a new form of radical sociology began to take shape in the academy. This radical departure would challenge taken-for-granted nostrums about the way in which sociologists should practice the discipline, the types of methodologies deployed, and an understanding of the ways in which research might be understood. Committed to theoretical and practical interventions in, inter alia, the automotive and textile industries, this new way of critical research engagement would begin to transform the myriad ways in which anti-system labour sociologists could work. In this respect the new radical departure would provide a platform for co-operative and radical research and education within a variety of labour and social movements that would bring together non-academic and academic research activists. However, in the period of the early development of new radical approaches, there was never an attempt, nor was there a desire, to codify a new approach. This was to come later as a result of changes in the wider political economy which had transformational effects on the ways in which researchers within and beyond the academy could work. The value-based approach embodied in collaborative relationships founded on Freirean principles, distinguishes the CLS from a number of critical social science approaches to research and social engagement. This presentation will explore the origins and character of CLS including its critique of the both the Critical Management Studies School and the International Labour Process Conference. CLS is committed to engaging those hidden, silenced, and neglected voices in relation to the diversity of the experience of labour. The arguments presented will address the nature of the radical agendas available to committed researchers in the *longue durée* of neoliberalism.

Jane Holgate (Leeds University Business School): Agents of curiosity. Why the union movement needs political education and critical thinking

This session will consider the role of political education and social movements. In particular, it will address the changes to union education over time and what impact this has had on the way that trade unions function. It will begin with a historical overview and look at the factors that led to a change in direction to the type of training that union reps receive. The political education of trade unionists is no longer something most trade unions even consider to be an important part of what they do. There are many explanations of why this is the case, but I think it's mainly due to the way trade unions have changed over the last 50 or 60 years. The movement prior to this time was led by activists in the workplace much more than it is today. Unions have been 'professionalised', by which I mean that recruitment, organising, negotiation, and collective bargaining are mainly done by full-time officers leaving much of union work at grass roots level to be around individual case work. Since the government-commissioned Donovan Report in 1968, which looked the reform of collective bargaining, the introduction of legal restraints on unions, the functioning of strikes and the expansion of industrial relations training, we have seen an increase in skills-based training and a decline in political education. Unions came to rely on state funding for shop stewards' training courses, but there was a proviso on what could be taught. The focus became on handling of disciplinaries and grievances and health and safety issues—the more functional aspects of the role of a shop steward. This was at the expense of the much broader trade union education of the past that might have included the teaching of economics, politics, and society and how these impact upon the working-class both inside and outside of the workplace.

2nd Plenary session:

Sociology and Trade Unions: Collaboration across Boundaries

Ignacy Józwiak (University of Warsaw): Work, workers' rights and workplace organizing in the shadow of war: a transnational view on Ukraine

In my intervention, I address the wartime work conditions and the way war in Ukraine (since 2014) and its full-scale stage (since 2022) impacted the labour relations and labour movements in the war-torn country. It is based on my research in Ukraine and among Ukrainians in Poland as well as my involvement in the international, union-based Workers' Aid to Ukraine campaign. I pay particular attention to the activities of trade unions and the way war has impacted their activities and priorities. I start from a short overview of industrial relations in Ukraine over the last decade, which also includes a contextual picture of labour migration from this country in the said period. I point to the contexts of: industry, partial deindustrialisation, migration and financial remittances from the migrant workers. Then I move to the Russian full-scale invasion and the processes it has triggered in Ukraine: (1) partial immobility of men aged 18-60 (which is important from the perspective of migration studies); (2) mass population movements, mass destruction of infrastructure, disruption of supply chains; (3) austerity measures and liberalization of labour law; (4) The activity of trade unions in the areas of military effort (something Ukrainian unions have been familiar with since 2014) and labour disputes (something Ukrainian unions have been familiar with since 1980ies). I present the experiences and testimonies of medical staff, miners and metalworkers, railroad workers and students in the face of military aggression from abroad and the austerity measures 'at home'. Full scale war has also triggered full-scale solidarity among trade unionists all over the world, willing to support their Ukrainian brothers and sisters in their resistance against the Russian imperialist aggression and in their struggle for fair work conditions and social justice in Ukraine. With this intervention, I want to contribute to the discussions on solidarities (be it "thick", "workers" or "international"), collective agency (and the limits to agency) at the time of various crises and armed conflicts.

Ian Greer (Cornell University): Transgressing the boundaries of academic work in Ithaca, New York, USA [on-line]

Changing the world through impactful research is easier said than done. The idea of having an impact outside of academia, however, is a fixture of academic discourse, and universities create spaces to do it. Why does it seem a good idea to do impactful research? How does it help anyone? What kind of knowledge comes out of it? I will argue that the answers to these questions depend on the context in which the research is carried out – in particular, class structure and conflicts.

I will first illustrate the micro-politics through an anecdote from the field, before a statistical sketch of the context of my work, Ithaca, New York, USA. Ithaca is noteworthy for extreme income inequality and an intricately structured, racialized class system. Within that structure are conflicts, and some of the protagonists in those conflicts form partnerships with me, the director of the Ithaca Co-Lab in Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations. We conduct research to answer questions, recruit students to do the work, and convene discussions including the relevant stakeholders. In doing so, we mobilize the resources and reputation of an elite research university.

Cornell University's founding aspiration has to do with public service, and the ILR School has a strong history of action research and outreach. My own work is inspired by our Buffalo office, which has been doing outreach work with unions, companies, and community groups since the late 1940s.

The difficulties are evident. Our way of finding answers to research questions while adhering to scientific standards of logic and evidence is one reason why we are asked to work in the world of practice. But we rarely, if ever, serve the "public" or the "community" as a whole. The partners we work with are all engaged in some sort of struggle, and Cornell is the dominant player in the local power structure. Moreover, the origin of Cornell's outreach mission was the 1865 Morrill Act, which set aside parcels of land from which indigenous people had violently been expelled to create income streams for universities.

Moreover, in my efforts to have an impact, I only rarely gather and present the kind of knowledge that could be used to publish an academic journal article. Applied research has to be faster than academic research, and as an applied researcher I have to use different methods than those I was trained to use. My research questions are narrower and more context-specific than in my purely academic work, and they lead me away from the trendy topics and theories of academia.

It is difficult to have an impact both inside and outside academia, and when we choose to have an impact outside of academia we often have to choose sides in social conflicts. The default setting at Cornell is conservative. On the other hand, the university is not monolithic, and radical critics still have some protection under principles of academic freedom.

Group session: 11:30-13:30

G1. Continuity in crisis? Polycrisis and the world of work in Poland in 2020-2024

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Chair: **Mihai Varga** (Free University of Berlin)

Discussant: **Valeria Pulignano** (Catholic University of Leuven)

Adam Mrozowicki (University of Wrocław): The (poly)crisis – game changer or continuation? Interlinked crises in the world of work

Mateusz Karolak (University of Wrocław), **Alicja Pałęcka** (University of Warsaw) Do we need essential work? Unveiling narratives in and about essential sectors in Poland during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Juliusz Gardawski (SGH Warsaw School of Economics): The socio-economic consciousness of working Poles in the post-pandemic situation

Jan Czarzasty (SGH Warsaw School of Economics), **Adam Mrozowicki** (University of Wrocław): The revival of social dialogue or the trigger of social conflicts? Polycrisis in the Polish industrial relations

Jacek Burski, Agata Krasowska (University of Wrocław): Biographical Experiences and Coping Strategies of Essential Workers in Healthcare, Social Care, Education and Logistics

G2. Migration, work and polycrisis

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Olga Czeranowska** (SWPS University in Warsaw)

Tibor Meszmann, Olena Fedyuk (CELSI): Trapping workers' consent? Temporary work agencies' role in reproducing labour power of non-local workers for Hungarian manufacturing companies

Valeria Piro (University of Padova): Spaces of everyday solidarities. Collective forms of agency of unorganised migrant workers

Sara Bojarczuk, Dominika Pszczółkowska, Marek Okólski, Anita Brzozowska, Agnieszka Fihel, Kamil Matuszczyk (University of Warsaw): Employers' interests in labour migration research – a conceptual framework within New Institutional Economics

Imran Sarihasan (Polish Academy of Sciences): How crises work as a barrier activator for immigrant entrepreneurship: case from Hungary during the COVID-19 pandemic

Aniela Partyga (University of Wrocław): Social psychoanalysis of a biography. The case of migrant workers in Poland

Snježana Gregurović, Margareta Gregurović, Simona Kuti, Sanja Klempić Bogadi, Sonja Podgorelec (Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies/IMIN) Employment of migrant workers in Croatia: Between precarity and lack of policies

G3. Digital transformation at work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Bartosz Mika** (University of Gdansk)

Gabriela Julio-Medel, Devi Sacchetto (University of Padova): Italian and Polish workers' positioning at the crossroads of the automotive technological transition

Dominika Polkowska (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University): The end of the taxi as we know it? The role of fleet partners in professionalising the app-based driver profession.

Karol Muszyński (University of Warsaw), **Valeria Pulignano** (Catholic University of Leuven): Why labour platforms use different employment arrangements?

Mirosław Skorek (University of Silesia): Transformation of operational activities of fire protection services in the field of IT technology

Deepa Kylasam Iyer (Cornell University), **Francis Kuriakose** (Impact and Policy Research Institute): Utopias and Crises at work: Exploring Creativity through End-game Scenarios of Artificial Intelligence [on-line]

Olga Gitkiewicz, Szymon Pilch (University of Wrocław): Giants on digital legs: How big tech platforms (GAFAM) are changing the world of work and labour struggles

G4. Capital, class and critical labour studies in contemporary academia

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Paul Stewart** (Grenoble School of Management):

Miguel Martinez Lucio (University of Manchester): Social movements, communities and the renewal of worker representation: Myths, realities and possibilities in the building of connections

Sara Lafuente Hernández (European Trade Union Institute and ULB), **Pedro Chaves Giraldo** (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid): From 'guinea pigs' to actors: Participatory action research and its potential for trade union revitalization

Justyna Kajta (SWPS University in Warsaw): Bringing class into work. On the upwardly mobiles' experiences in professional fields

Adam Ochwat (University of Warsaw): University, work, unions: the birth of a student-led union movement

Helena Antunes (University of Porto): (Re)configurations of the academic profession in times of polycrisis

G1. Continuity in crisis? Polycrisis and the world of work in Poland in 2020-2024

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Adam Mrozowicki (University of Wrocław): The (poly)crisis – game changer or continuation? Interlinked crises in the world of work

The paper will address the implications of the “polycrisis” concept for the discussion of the transformation of the world of work in the 21st century. The concept of polycrisis originally referred to the threat of planetary catastrophe overlapping with other crises (Morin, Kern 1999) and then to the situation of interlinked socio-economic and political crises after the global financial downturn of 2008+ (Zeitlin et al. 2019). It gained popularity in the second decade of the 21st century mainly as a result of the mutually reinforcing public health, migration, environmental, economic and other crises. In the paper inspired by the theory of social reproduction (Bhattacharya 2020; Fraser 2017; Grabowska 2023; Jayasuriya 2023; Mezzadri 2022) and the concept of chronicity of crises (Vigh 2008; Struzik 2023), I point out the need for a critical reflection on the notion of polycrisis. I propose to define a polycrisis as a process in which short-term, largely exogenous shocks interact and overlap with longer-term endogenous systemic crises reflecting the tensions and contradictions between the reproduction of life and social relations under capitalism and the imperative of capital accumulation. I point out that a polycrisis understood in this way was amplified in Poland (and many other countries) after 2020 by exogenous shocks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, political tensions related to the outbreak of war in Ukraine and mass refugee movements. Discussing the popularity of the polycrisis concept in (Western) academic and political debates, I point to the social construction of crises which takes place through political and media discourse. Inspired by Strolovitch (2023), I argue that polycrisis becomes visible when it affects relatively privileged social groups. Meanwhile, as international research shows (Mezzadri 2022; McCallum 2022), the consequences of the chronic crisis of social reproduction are felt over the long term by groups experiencing intersecting social inequalities based on gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, migration status and other factors. Significantly, it is the disadvantaged categories that often do the “essential work,” on the front lines of fighting disasters and catastrophes such as the Covid-19 pandemic. The paper closes with an introduction to the analysis of entangled and overlapping crises in education, health care, social care and logistics in Poland in 2020+. A comparative outlook is also offered based on a pilot study on essential workers’ experiences in health care and social care during Covid-19 pandemic in the USA.

Mateusz Karolak (University of Wrocław), **Alicja Pałęcka** (University of Warsaw) Do we need essential work? Unveiling narratives in and about essential sectors in Poland during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Abstract: In recent years, as in the rest of the world, also in Poland, “crises” have made headlines. Scholars tend to agree that the time of crisis is a particular moment for the “battle of ideas” (Hayman 2007) as it is then when the obvious can begin to seem unobvious, and the unobvious and utopian more real. Yet, the crisis itself is a discursive event. As underlined by t’Hart “the most important instrument of crisis management is language. Those who are able to define what crisis is all about also hold the key to defining the appropriate strategies for [its] resolution”. The role of the narrative of crisis also cannot be underestimated in the world of labor. “Crisis” can foster mobilization or discouragement; it can inspire solidarity or strengthen individual strategies.

Drawing on the aforementioned assumptions, in my paper I look at the formation and changes of narratives about crises in the Polish press in the years 2020-2023, i.e. from the outbreak of the pandemic to the so-called polycrisis. The paper presents the results of topic modeling (LDA) of more than 10,000 articles referring to crisis. The analysed texts come from world-diverse press titles (Gazeta Wyborcza, Super Express, Gazeta Polska Codziennie) and online portals (onet.pl, wpolityce.pl).

Against the backdrop of the constantly changing media landscape of crises, special emphasis will be placed on analyzing the where, when and what role discourses on labor crises played during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Among other things, identified hierarchies of crises in the context of polycrisis will be presented.

The paper is part of the project “COV-WORK: Socio-economic consciousness, work experiences and coping strategies of Poles in the context of the post-pandemic crisis” funded by the National Science Centre in Poland (no. 2020/37/B/HS6/00479)

Juliusz Gardawski (SGH Warsaw School of Economics): The socio-economic consciousness of working Poles in the post-pandemic situation

One of the main research problems carried out by a team of economic sociologists (socioeconomists) from the Warsaw School of Economics, starting from the mid-1980s, was monitoring normative visions of the economy (vision of a well-ordered economy) characteristic of the Polish working class and other social groups (for example entrepreneurs) as well as society as a whole. Research indicated high support for market mechanisms in the long term, as well as the existence of a permanent tripartite vision (liberalism, protectionist market economy, anti-liberalism). The stability of the vision was shaken, on the one hand, during periods of crises on the labor market, and on the other hand, during very good conditions on this market. There were specific fluctuations in support for foreign investments, for state intervention in the economy, acceptance of market-related difficulties and other phenomena. The results of normative research on the vision of the economy for 2017, 2021 and 2023, conducted using the same indicator, allow us to determine the impact of the post-pandemic situation on the expected model of the socio-economic order. In line with the hypothesis, support for protectionism (protection against foreign capital) increased, but, contrary to the hypothesis, it was not accompanied by an increase in expectations for state intervention or the demand to limit market mechanisms. The paper attempts to interpret these attitudes.

G1. Continuity in crisis? Polycrisis and the world of work in Poland in 2020-2024

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Jan Czarzasty (SGH Warsaw School of Economics), **Adam Mrozowicki** (University of Wrocław): The revival of social dialogue or the trigger of social conflicts? Polycrisis in the Polish industrial relations

The arrival of Covid-19 in 2020 is seen as major accelerator of the current poly-crisis. While discussing crises in the context of social dialogue, we can identify – based on the past experiences – two major patterns of reactions: one, in which crisis works as a trigger for social dialogue intensification, either in bi- or tripartite form, and, two, in which crisis at best is a neutral factor but very often contributes to deterioration of social dialogue (Ebbinghaus, Weishaupt 2022). Investigating the impact of the current polycrisis on social dialogue in Poland, we have noticed that neither tripartite concertation nor autonomous social dialogue have benefited much. Quite the contrary, the crisis, beginning from the the outbreak od Covid-19 and continuing with its subsequent dimensions, such as energy crisis, inflation, war in Ukraine and refugee/migration wave rising arguably exposed and further amplified the chronic shortcomings of the Polish social dialogue: unilateralism of the government, inability of social partners representing the two sides of the labour market to effectively cooperate or weakness of collective bargaining. It seems that the path-dependency mechanism has proven resilient as far as the logic of social dialogue in Poland is concerned (Czarzasty, Mrozowicki 2023). On the other hand, failures of social dialogue have not translated into any high wave of industrial conflict (despite some episodes of such, interestingly, usually driven by a grief over substandard working conditions), which would reinforce the old thesis of “labour queiscence” (Crowley, Ost 2001). Yet, we have also registered symptoms of a “hidden conflict”, not necessarily manifested in outward way but still detectable and possibly contributing to mobilization capacity of workers.

We are building our argument mainly on the basis of the original data collected in course of the COV-WORK project supplemented with secondary data and literature review. In particular, we deliver analysis of 42 expert interviews with trade unions’, employers’ and the government’s representatives we conducted in course of the project. In the background, we would refer to the data we have amassed in our quantitative module (two waves of CATI survey, completed in 2021 and 2023, respectively).

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, grant no.: UMO 2020/37/B/HS6/00479

Jacek Burski, Agata Krasowska (University of Wrocław): Biographical Experiences and Coping Strategies of Essential Workers in Healthcare, Social Care, Education and Logistics

The years after the COVID-19 pandemic outburst have been an enormous challenge for communities and individuals across the world. Apart from the pandemic crisis, European societies (including Poland) struggled with war endangerment and humanitarian crisis after the Russian attack on Ukraine in February 2022, and drastic increases in the cost of living. The paper aims to analyse the coping strategies implemented by the essential workers in healthcare, social care, education and logistics against the mentioned crises between 2020 and 2024 in the scope of their biographical experiences.

The empirical base consists of 90 biographical narrative interviews (BNIs) (Schütze 2016), collected as a part of the COV-WORK project with frontline workers in the mentioned branches: in healthcare with doctors, nurses, paramedics and non-medical personnel, in education with primary school teachers and logistics with different occupational groups: truck drivers, app couriers, delivery couriers, warehouse workers. During the analysis conducted, we made use of selected procedures of the biographical analysis (Schütze 2012).

In the paper, we study the emergent configurations and sequences of work-related life strategies influenced by biographical, social, cultural and economic resources. The analysis revealed that coping with the pandemic and consequent crises involved mobility and immobility across various life strategies. The patterns of this mobility (or immobility) are in the scope of our interest as they construct specific types of coping strategies which can be analysed in the context of two main dimensions: (1) the dimension of social ties related to the biographical significance of broad social networks for the realisation of life projects, which include privatised vs. communal vectors; (2) the dimension of action related to the interviewees' general biographical orientation towards their own lives, where we distinguished between proactive or reactive vectors.

By juxtaposition of successive vectors, we were able to create a typology of coping strategies observed in the collected material: from privatised and reactive survival type, through privatised and proactive resourcefulness type, communal and reactive relational type, to proactive and communal solidaristic type. In the paper, we plan to present how these categories unfold among the collected interviews.

The paper is part of the project "COV-WORK: Socio-economic consciousness, work experiences and coping strategies of Poles in the context of the post-pandemic crisis" funded by the National Science Centre in Poland (no. 2020/37/B/HS6/00479).

G2. Migration, work and polycrisis

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Tibor Meszmann, Olena Fedjuk (CELSI): Trapping workers' consent? Temporary work agencies' role in reproducing labour power of non-local workers for Hungarian manufacturing companies

In Hungary temporary work agencies (TWAs) have become prominent, powerful and indispensable actors in providing labour to user companies in electronics and automotives. In analysing such success of the TWA sector, we go beyond a broader production/regulatory environment that provided a fertile ground to the rise of TWAs and a resulting (local) labour control regime. In particular, we highlight the element of workers' consent as a necessary condition for the rise of this sector. We ask how labour power is reproduced at the intersection of control structures - on part of TWAs as formal employers and user companies - and consent - on part of the owners of labour power, i.e. workers. From the workers' perspective, we show that TWAs and the dense triangular employment relationship appears with both multiple offers of temporary 'mobility' and as a platform for individualised, obscure entrepreneurial risk taking, which eventually 'traps' workers' consent to the sector. We show that TWAs shape specific forms of individualised working subjectivities and facilitate particular forms of social reproduction with short-term benefits and long-term vulnerabilities. Our analysis is based on five years of field research, interviews with non-local temporary agency workers, especially from Serbia and Ukraine, employed in six newly industrialised regions in Hungary that are dominated by large multinational user companies.

Valeria Piro (University of Padova): Spaces of everyday solidarities. Collective forms of agency of unorganised migrant workers

Research on migrant workers' forms of organising has blossomed in the last few years. Several scholars in industrial relations focussed on established organisations and their attempts to enlarge their membership as a strategy to revitalise themselves (Marino et al. 2015; Meardi et al. 2021; Holgate 2021). Other labour and social movements studies, instead, abandoning a 'trade union fetishism' (Atzeni 2021), investigated migrant workers' participatory forms of organising through independent unions (Cini et al. 2021; Però 2020; Woodcock&Cant 2022). While migrants' organising, within the boundaries of both established and independent unions, has been largely investigated, collective forms of agency of unorganised migrant workers have been so far quite overlooked. Agency, indeed, has been usually theorized as an individual power, often exerted in terms of mobility (Alberti 2014; Alberti&Sacchetto 2024; Rogaly 2009), and therefore that could even constitute a threat for organising. The paper aims to dismiss this binary understanding of migrant workers' (individual) agency vs (collective) organising, proposing a novel framework that looks at them as two poles of a continuum instead of being mutually exclusive. This lens allows shedding light on migrant workers' informal

networks and groups, considered as 'spaces-in-between': although these are not proper labour organisations, they are pivotal for creating social bonds, providing material support and emotional relief, and producing collective knowledges to navigate precarious working conditions, sometimes also encouraging the emergence of contentious situations against employers.

The paper hinges methodologically on an "actor-centred approach" (Alberti&Però2018) and a "slow research" (Almond&Connolly 2020), and is based on several years of ethnography with migrant workers in Italy. The fieldwork included participant observation inside workplaces, unions' premises, migrants' living spaces, and other meeting spots, counting more than 100 in-depth interviews collected between 2013 and 2023. In particular, two case-studies have been selected: a religious-based informal group whose Ghanaian members were working in different slaughterhouses and meat processing plants in Northern Italy; and a group of Romanian and Tunisian farmworkers living and working inside the same agricultural company in Southern Italy.

In conclusion, the paper argues that migrant workers' informal groups constitute a critical infrastructure bridging individual forms of agency and collective organising. Therefore, the paper theoretically contributes enlarging the debate on precarious workers' forms of organising by suggesting to look at collective forms of agency as in continuity with - and constituting a key factor for - the structuring of organising processes that could benefit of these spaces of everyday solidarity.

Sara Bojarczuk, Dominika Pszcótkowska, Marek Okólski, Anita Brzozowska, Agnieszka Fihel, Kamil Matuszczyk (University of Warsaw): Employers' interests in labour migration research – a conceptual framework within New Institutional Economics

The dominant academic discourse devoted to international labour migration, despite indicating the crucial role of interest groups and employers in shaping policies, undervalues the impact of employers' interests on migration and employment of foreign workers. This is partly due to migration theories overlooking this issue. Dominant theoretical orientations assume that labour demand is a key factor influencing migration flows, without giving much thought to the actors who create this demand. This article aims to provide an analytical framework that allows research on how employers' interests influence the migration and allocation of the foreign workforce in the labour market. It locates employers' interests in the broader theoretical perspective of the New Institutional Economics (NIE), particularly Williamson's (2000) four-level approach to analysing social phenomena. The adaptation of Williamson's four-level analytical model allows to address and explain economic processes through the concept of institutions, in which economic analysis is integrally linked to non-economic factors (historical, legal, socio-cultural, political). This offers a novel approach to the research of labour migration, allowing for the analysis of employers' interests on various levels, to account for the micro, meso, and macro perspectives. In particular, it brings together diverse aspects of the exercise of employer's interests, including collective action, lobbying, and information asymmetry, to name a few.

G2. Migration, work and polycrisis

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Imran Sarihasan (Polish Academy of Sciences): How crises work as a barrier activator for immigrant entrepreneurship: case from Hungary during the COVID-19 pandemic

Objective: The goal of this study, carried out in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, is to show that the difficulties faced by immigrant entrepreneurs in times of economic stability have intensified and become more noticeable throughout the COVID-19 era. The study intends to demonstrate how the pandemic has intensified pre-existing hurdles to entrepreneurship, making these barriers more active by looking at the experiences of immigrant entrepreneurs. **Research Design & Methods:** I applied a qualitative research approach in this research. Using an in-depth online interview method in Hungary, I based my research methodology on 16 immigrant entrepreneurs who established businesses between 2010 and 2019. This specific time frame has been chosen to focus on nascent immigrant enterprises with active business status during the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, I coded and analysed the transcripts based on the similar barrier experiences immigrant entrepreneurs faced during economic stability and the COVID-19 pandemic. **Findings:** In Hungary, immigrant entrepreneurs encounter multifaceted barriers encompassing challenges in accessing financial capital, ethnonational barriers, and constraints related to labour force recruitment, impeding the establishment and expansion of their businesses. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these barriers, highlighting their prominence and impact on immigrant entrepreneurs. Through my research, I have found that these persistent hurdles not only hinder entrepreneurial endeavours during periods of economic stability but also intensify during times of crisis. My findings elucidate that the COVID-19 pandemic has activated and magnified these pre-existing obstacles for immigrant entrepreneurs in Hungary. **Implications & Recommendations:** The research findings suggest that immigrant businesses may face similar difficulties worldwide, not just in Hungary. The study implies that to address the disadvantages that immigrant business owners face; attention should be given to streamlining paperwork and legal processes regardless of their ethnicity. **Contribution & Value Added:** Crises-related research on immigrant entrepreneurship is relatively less. This study's findings contribute to the literature on immigrant entrepreneurship, considering the COVID-19 pandemic. With its findings, this study enlarges our understanding of challenges, highlighting disparities and drawing attention to how crises work as an existing barrier activator for immigrant entrepreneurs and the need for targeted interventions to address systemic inequalities in the Hungarian entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Aniela Partyga (University of Wrocław): Social psychoanalysis of a biography. The case of migrant workers in Poland

The paper aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the experiences of organising a trade union by caregivers in Public Nursing Homes (DPS) in Wrocław. The care workers joined the National Trade Union "Workers' Initiative" (OZZ Inicjatywa Pracownicza) establishing together with caregivers from different cities in Poland an Inter-company Committee of Medical and Qualified Caregivers in September 2021. In May 2022, the workers from the

Public Nursing Homes in Wrocław with the assistance of the National Commission of the "Workers' Initiative" began a formal collective dispute with the employer. The union's demand for a pay rise led the workers to the necessity of organising several protests at the City Council. Finally, in October 2022 a resolution in favour of the caregivers was reached. Interviews with 5 of the most active unionists carried out between January and April 2024 provided material which has been analysed with particular attention given to the class tensions between workers. The life courses that led workers to join the trade union movement and the motivations behind this choice are explored. The research delves into the classified habitus of the respondents, tracing in the trajectories of their lives the specific moments, capitals, instances or ways of understanding the world that contributed to their acquiring the power to resist symbolic violence. The analysis identifies the class conditions that enabled the respondents to come to terms with the significant risks provided by trade union activity and to adopt an attitude of resistance. Thus, the findings of the study are intended to characterise and systematise the particular experiences of trade unionists and, in part, to illuminate the limitations of trade union involvement. Using the perspective of Bourdian class theory allows the capture of the multidimensional class barriers with their heterogeneous effects on the fate of the respondents.

Snježana Gregurović, Margareta Gregurović, Simona Kuti, Sanja Klempić Bogadi, Sonja Podgorelec (Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies/IMIN)

Employment of migrant workers in Croatia: Between precarity and lack of policies In recent years, Croatia has been marked by migration transition, evolving from a country primarily of emigration to a country of immigration. There is a need for migrant workers' employment in almost all sectors, and especially in construction, tourism, hospitality, agriculture, as well as processing industries, transportation, and trade sectors. Although most of migrant workers still arrive from neighbouring countries, in recent years there has been a significant increase of workers from Asian countries. If the pace of migrant workforce immigration continues as in the past three years, by 2030, according to estimates, every fourth worker in Croatia will be a foreign national.

The study is based on semi-structured interviews with representatives of state and public administration, agencies for the employment of foreign workers, trade unions, professional associations, employers, and the workers themselves within the ongoing project "Croatia as a Country of Immigration: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives".

The aim of this paper is to provide insight into the immigration of foreign workers to Croatia and to shed light on their precarious status, employment conditions, and some aspects of their quality of life. Our findings indicate that the selection process and recruitment of migrant workers can be intricate, primarily due to prolonged and hyper-bureaucratic procedures, especially for those who require a visa to enter Croatia.

Additionally, the study explores a lack of supervision over migrant workers employment agencies, inadequate oversight of employers, antagonism between migrant and domestic workers, and issues related to discrimination and xenophobia. The paper also discusses the challenges faced by migrant workers in Croatia, which can be linked to legal regulations (laws and provisions), procedures for the arrival and stay, migrant recruitment costs, social integration, prejudices, and discrimination. Finally, the research discusses study participants' recommendations, primarily focused on aligning the legislative framework with increased immigration, the need for defining (new) migration and integration policies, and proposals for streamlining the procedure for regulating work and stay from both the employers' and migrant workers' perspectives.

G3. Digital transformation at work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Gabriela Julio-Medel, Devi Sacchetto (University of Padova): Italian and Polish workers' positioning at the crossroads of the automotive technological transition

While the traditional European carmakers from the core producing countries have long enjoyed a leading position within the international division of labour and value accumulation, it is expected that the current technological transformation will have important implications for the industry, and especially for the workers along the supply chain (Boewe and Schulten, 2023). The overcapacity of the European automotive industry constitutes a source of pressure on workers to accept worsening conditions, and on governments to both subsidise and slow down the pace of the EVs transition.

Workers' and trade unions' responses to such threats can vary widely, from accepting workers' segmentation (Benassi and Dorigatti, 2015) to cooperative and innovative strategies such as the ongoing dispute at the former GKN factory, a Stellantis (former FIAT) supplier located near Florence (Feltrin and Leonardi, 2022). Our research is concerned with how trade unions and workers in Italy and Poland are positioning themselves at the crossroads of these technological transformations, looking into forms of adaptation (e.g. skills adaptation) and forms of conflict and resistance. The selection of these two cases is based on the one hand, on the historical factors that link the Italian and Polish automotive industry and, on the other hand, on their divergent industrial relations configurations and uneven workers' associational power. Since the 1990s, the Italian automotive supply chain has expanded its presence to Eastern European countries, particularly Poland – which experienced a radical economic liberalisation that weakened workers' leverage (Kajta and Mrozowicki, 2016). While the Italian automotive industry is characterised by centralised collective bargaining and high unionisation levels, the Polish automotive industry features a low union density and a primacy of decentralised collective bargaining. The paper will present the findings of an ongoing research project, focusing on the first results emerging from in-depth interviews with managers, trade union officials and representatives, workers and other key informants, carried out in five companies of Stellantis's automotive supply chain that have production plants in both Italy and Poland. The preliminary results from the interviews conducted with trade unions representatives in Italy seem to indicate a relative concern, at a personal level, that so far has not managed to influence neither a positioning nor a decisive action from their respective federations. Rather, the transition has so far failed to involve both the producers along the supply chain and the unions in a significant manner. Furthermore, while collective bargaining process are still relevant within the Italian automotive industry, in Poland it remains weak and concentrated at factory level. Conversely, in Italy the increasing use of temporary work – via agency work and other forms of temporary contracts – for coping with the uncertainties of the market due to the transition, point to a race-to-the bottom convergence with the Polish labour market.

Dominika Polkowska (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University): The end of the taxi as we know it? The role of fleet partners in professionalising the app-based driver profession.

Uber's entry into Poland in 2014 proved to be a turning point in the passenger ride industry. Operating initially in a legal loophole, Uber and its similar platforms gradually increased their share of the transport market. The way in which they adapted to changing legislation showed that the business model implemented in Poland by the platforms differed from the one we know from Western countries. A key role was played by fleet partners – intermediaries who, on the one hand, took on the responsibility that Uber did not want to assume (constantly remaining solely a technology provider), but on the other hand also became the main (apart from platforms) beneficiaries of this model. Another pivotal moment occurred in 2021, when the amendment to the Road Transport Act (one of many), the so-called Lex Uber, came into force. Finally, the next milestone is related to the Directive on improving working conditions in platform work, which is still pending in the EC, the fate of which is still undecided. This presentation addresses, on the one hand, the role that fleet partners played in the business model implemented in Poland by platforms, and on the other hand, the process of professionalizing of an app-driver: from ten years of work entirely in the shadow economy to achieving a status equivalent to that of a traditional taxi driver, and what role intermediaries have played in this process. The basis of the deliberations is 11 in-depth expert interviews with fleet partners conducted in 2023, 22 in-depth interviews with platform workers conducted between 2018 and 2022, as well as 10 in-depth interviews conducted in 2018 with traditional taxi drivers. The research has shown that fleet partners play a crucial role in the model implemented by platforms in Poland: without their presence, the system could have collapsed at the very beginning. Their role as intermediaries is also crucial in the process of professionalizing the driver's profession: they provide transport licenses, take care of billing and tax issues, register and monitor drivers, and often own the car used by the driver.

G3. Digital transformation at work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Karol Muszyński (University of Warsaw), **Valeria Pulignano** (Catholic University of Leuven): Why labour platforms use different employment arrangements?

Labour platforms are known for using bogus self-employment, where workers are hired as independent contractors despite being in a situation similar to employment relationship. Legislators around the world, including the European Union, have aimed to tackle this issue by obliging platforms to classify workers as employees. Current research illustrates that platforms reacted to policies against misclassification by introducing various forms of 'bogus employment' where even workers formally employed as dependent employees eventually lack basic rights (Niebler et al., 2022). This is due to platforms using institutional loopholes in distinctive national labour markets, including non-standard and standard employment arrangements, such as mini-jobs, zero-hours, flexi-jobs, and subcontracting. On the other hand, the use of different employment arrangements is considered in standard HR as important to ensure workers' commitment to the platforms' organizational goals (Connelly et al., 2021; Duggan et al., 2020). The question arises: why "some [...] labour platforms do actually employ workers directly [...] [while] many platform companies appear, however, to be in the business of creating fictitious contractor relationships[?]" (Drahokoupil & Vandaele, 2021: 40-41), i.e. why different labour platforms use standard and non-standard employment arrangements in the first place? This paper addresses this question by investigating the variety of forms of employment used by different platforms intermediating a wide range of services, such as delivery, care, manual and professional services in Belgium. We draw upon Marsden (2010) to explain how the entrance of digital technology has made it more risky for firms to invest in building up and maintaining their internal labour markets, and to commit long term to the skill structures of occupational markets, due to the increased weight of national and international competition. Loyalty and commitment restrain opportunism on the one hand, transparency is also important against opportunism on the other hand. Labour platforms developed various other tools, such algorithmic management and reliance upon boundaryless carriers, to cushion opportunistic behaviour despite the lack of employment relationship. These tools are however still contained in comparison with the employment relationship that builds long-term commitment from workers. Based on interviews with workers and platform management, our paper argues that platforms engage in more standard employment arrangements if they are facing additional constraints in terms of performance and quality control. Further, as suggested by literature on plural forms of management (Bradach & Eccles 1989, Bradach 1997), platforms that engage in employment relationships can simultaneously utilize non-standard arrangements to try out and test both models of functioning at the same time.

Miroslaw Skorek (University of Silesia): Transformation of operational activities of fire protection services in the field of IT technology

The activities of fire protection services have long ceased to concern the threats related to fires. Local threats such as floods, accidents and chemical threats have become permanent tasks of the services. The development of technology not only provides new solutions for the society, but also requires continuous adaptation of emergency services to emerging threats. This requires continuous research, training and requires rescuers to constantly improve their professional qualifications. What does the process of learning and adopting new technologies look like in fire protection services? The implementation of a new command support system for the operational department in the structures of fire protection services in the case of activities that require the use of a significant amount of forces and resources, as well as the process of testing and adaptation to the requirements of the services, was carried out in 2023 during exercises of companies of Volunteer Fire Brigades at cooperation of rescue and fire-fighting units from the district where the exercises took place and officers of the Operational Department of the Provincial Headquarters of the State Fire Service in Katowice. Already at the first stage of system design, it was decided to use the knowledge and experience not only of the end user, but of as many people as possible who take part in rescue operations. The exercises of the volunteer companies were a very good opportunity for such activities. It is worth noting that volunteers hold many different positions in many different industries on a daily basis, so it was assumed that their experience could be useful in building the system by taking a fresh look at the tasks assigned to the staff. However, it should be remembered that the lack of affiliation to professional structures does not diminish the professionalism of volunteers. Several exercise locations within the Silesian Voivodeship were used during the tests. The organizers also tried to diversify their approach in order to develop an innovative model of implementing IT systems for operational activities. Of course, fire protection services use various applications on a daily basis, but the command activities have so far been limited to minimizing IT solutions like using text editors rather than dedicated solutions. The application testing process allowed to observe the culture of learning new knowledge by officers of the State Fire Service and members of the Volunteer Fire Department. Work on the implementation, apart from launching the system, gave the opportunity to observe a diversified approach and involvement of the people involved. The differences, which might seem obvious, did not result solely from the position held in the service structures or from membership in a professional or voluntary formation. The involvement process of learning and, perhaps more importantly, sharing what they see was very diverse. Proper preparation of company exercises, matching the organizers' approach to test and implementation participants, can bring benefits and increase the usability of the implemented system by increasing the effect of learning and knowledge sharing, with minimal costs and effort.

G3. Digital transformation at work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Deepa Kylasam Iyer (Cornell University), **Francis Kuriakose** (Impact and Policy Research Institute): Utopias and Crises at work: Exploring Creativity through End-game Scenarios of Artificial Intelligence [on-line]

What is the relationship between utopia and crisis? The rapid descent of smart and intelligent technologies has added an additional dimension to this question that opens our thinking towards how technology is going to impact human nature and identity. With skilled workers and artists joining militant action such as strikes and protests in the summer of 2023 in the US, the question had concrete elements of what the future of work will look like in many sectors. The striking workers also collided the different worlds of academia, activism, and media to raise connections between their understanding and communication of tech-utopias and crisis among themselves.

In this article, we argue that utopias – real and imaginary - are an effective conceptual frame for evaluating the potential of crises and change. Rather than ex-post evaluation of crisis, ex-ante free thinking of utopias can yield rich and rewarding results. We use creative work as our site of examination of utopia and crises. Specifically, we examine the question: what will happen to our understanding of creativity and its theorization if some of the utopian ideas about AI's possibilities were coming to pass? Anchoring that wide research focus, we ask how does such an imaginary future impact our understanding of human imagination, skills, and craftsmanship? To analyze these questions, we turn to two types of data sources. First, we examine sites of real utopias, which are already existing social movements at the fringe of mainstream. These sites include communities that are experimenting with AI in their own terms. The second site is imaginary utopias which are ideas that are yet to happen, whose seeds are present in manifestoes, call for action, and other forms of forethought. We excavate what each of these strand grapples with about the future of creativity in the presence of AI and how they compare with each other. We conclude that real and imaginary utopias are interconnected through consonance and dissonance. Where the utopias are consonant, the probability of solving a future problem is more likely. A dissonant real utopia can persist as sub-culture whereas a dissonant imaginary utopia can persist for a long time without enactment.

This research has impact on our current ideas of theory building. Unlike theorization based on observing and generalizing current facts or predicting the future, we call for enacting desirable futures based on conceptual ideas. Our study calls for the renewed role of imagination and action for theory building. This feature has the potential to invite stakeholders outside of the academia namely the media and community into the active site of theorization. Finally, our arguments also encourage us to think about how we can extend our idea of scientific knowledge to this new strand of theory that performs the futures. Beyond the criteria of falsification, we ask what are the criteria of rigor for such novel methods?

Olga Gitkiewicz, Szymon Pilch (University of Wrocław): Giants on digital legs: How big tech platforms (GAFAM) are changing the world of work and labour struggles

Big Tech platforms, often labelled as GAFAM (Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, and Microsoft), function as multinational corporations delivering a variety of infrastructure services to public institutions, private enterprises, and individual users. Platformisation is defined by Kenney & Zysman as the growing number of digitally mediated activities in business, politics and social interactions. According to some studies, platform owners appear to have developed power stronger than that of factory owners in the early industrial revolution, with powerful consequences for society, markets and firms. Drawing also on the thought of Marx, Harvey, and Silver, platformisation is understood as encompassing technological, organizational, product, and spatial fixes (defined as strategies) aimed at counteracting the labour power. This study examines the impact of platformisation on industrial relations and labour power. Platformisation influences the redefinition of the roles of workers and employers, changes in organization both by traditional and new workers' organizations, and the emergence of new industrial relations actors and institutions, including new and radical trade unions, workers' collectives, employers' initiatives and state institutions. The primary research question addresses the role of various actors in the evolution of industrial relations within a platform economy. Additionally, the study explores how platforms are transforming the labour landscape and national industrial relations systems in four countries (Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain). We pay attention particularly to Poland as a country in which platformisation aggravates previous trends such as deteriorating working conditions, weakening of labour power etc., and show the actions of IR actors to platformisation expansion against the background of other countries studied. The empirical foundation of this research comprises qualitative interviews: 16 in-depth interviews were conducted with Polish employees of Amazon, as well as 8 expert interviews at the Polish level and 15 expert interviews at the level of EU institutions. A database of approximately 40 in-depth interviews conducted with Amazon, Meta and Apple employees in Spain, Italy and Portugal was used as contextual comparative material. The empirical material considers the perspectives of a wide range of actors, including workers involved and not involved in the disputes, labour law experts, trade union representatives, representatives of employers' organisations, state institutions and NGOs.

G4. Capital, class and critical labour studies in contemporary academia

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Miguel Martinez Lucio (University of Manchester): Social movements, communities and the renewal of worker representation: Myths, realities and possibilities in the building of connections

The subjects of social movements and community/non-workplace forms of activism have entered the current discussion regarding work and employment in recent years although to some extent it has always been relevant. The concepts of trade union 'renewal' or 'revitalisation' have been coupled with, and integrated to, these 'external' dimensions within labour relations. It is argued that trade unions need to link to, or appear like, social movements whilst also engaging more clearly in the spaces of local communities if they are to advance and have a positive impact on the increasingly changing labour market and sphere of work. This has become a significant feature of debates in the sociology of work and labour relations. In addition, certain forms of worker organisations are judged to be moving towards new identities and activities linked, or similar, to social movements. The problem we face though is how do these different dimensions in terms of the social and the industrial interact, and to what ends? The political and ideological aspects of these new forms and alliances are important in understanding how a new form of social mobilisation is being configured within labour relations. The presentation will therefore reflect on how spatial and social movement dimensions have been often approached in a unidimensional manner by academics and activists. The presentation will highlight aspects of these debates with regards to the local and national spaces of social movements in relation to industrial relations. The presentation draws on a review of some of the relevant literature and a reflection of how the concepts of social movements and locality has been developed in the context of debates on work. The session will primarily be based on an oral presentation outlining various issues and developments in the debate.

Sara Lafuente Hernández (European Trade Union Institute and ULB), **Pedro Chaves Giraldo** (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid): From 'guinea pigs' to actors: Participatory action research and its potential for trade union revitalization

A key concern in contemporary European trade union studies and policy is whether, and how, will labour organisations be up to the challenges of the 21st century's world of work amid multiple crisis, given a steady decline in their affiliation and power since the 1980s (Gumbrell-McCormick 2022; Mundlak 2020; Huzzard and Björkman 2012). These concerns have pushed up again renewal, revitalisation and workplace democracy in trade union agendas in the past decade (ETUC 2023; Hennebert, Pasquier and Lévesque 2021). This paper argues that participatory action research (PAR) - qualitative social research strategies designed to actively involve 'the researchers' and 'the researched' in the process of coproduction of knowledge and create bonds between them- can fruitfully support trade union revitalisation endeavours. PAR mobilises methodological tools that can enhance union capabilities and more democratic ways of functioning, strengthening labour organisations' associational and discursive power in the long-term. This approach sees trade unions as partners of knowledge production and actors of transformative policies, rather than as passive objects of research,

prioritizing research with trade unions rather than on, or solely for, trade unions (Huzzard and Björkman 2012). However, despite PAR being particularly well suited to solving collective problems in organisations or communities, it has rarely been applied in industrial relations and union settings, with only a few exceptions (Huw and Turnbull 2023; Martin et al. 2003).

Drawing on a recent PAR project conducted in Endesa - a major energy company in Spain- which involved the authors and one of the main trade union delegations active in the company (Comisiones Obreras), the chapter introduces PAR as a social science methodology and explains its under-utilisation in industrial relations, despite its potential benefits particularly in the field of worker participation and union revitalisation.

While presenting the 'Democratising Endesa' PAR project as a case study, the chapter evaluates this methodology and reflects on challenges that were encountered. It concludes with recommendations for activist scholars and trade unions interested in using PAR to better understand and influence union revitalisation processes.

Justyna Kajta (SWPS University in Warsaw): Bringing class into work. On the upwardly mobiles' experiences in professional fields

The presentation aims to examine class-related experiences in the workplace. As the literature shows, class background not only influences individuals' educational and professional choices but also their position and relations within professional fields (cf. Crew 2020; Friedman and Laurison 2019; Friedman 2022). By focusing on the narratives of academics and artists with working-class backgrounds, the paper explores the meaning of class in two professional fields perceived as prestigious spaces of cultural production, holding publicly recognized symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1984). In alignment with other scholars, this analysis acknowledges the potentially challenging experiences associated with crossing class boundaries, which may involve coping with emotions such as uncertainty, anxiety, dislocation, and feelings of 'impostor syndrome' in a bourgeois world (Crew 2020; Ferenc 2012; Friedman 2016; Lawler 1999; Łuczaj 2023; Reay 2018; Walkerdine et al. 2006). Against this backdrop, academic and artistic fields, with the embedded significance of cultural and social capital, can be especially challenging for individuals who grew up in working-class families and need to learn the rules and stakes on their own (cf. Crew 2020). The findings are grounded in the analysis of 40 biographical-narrative interviews (Schütze, 2012) conducted as part of the author's two research projects titled "Crossing (in)visible boundaries: Experiencing upward mobility in individuals' biographies" and "RaM-CLASS. Class reproduction and mobility - biographical experiences in academic, artistic, and business fields". Through a comprehensive examination of the collected life stories, this paper will focus on addressing the following research inquiries: do the interviewees narrate their class background and experience of crossing class boundaries as important for their work identity and situation? Do they experience 'class moments' in the relations with other representatives of the field? How do they cope with potential challenges, and what strategies of management of their own class identity do they have? The paper will contribute to ongoing discussions on the experiences of the first-generation academics and artists. Taking into account that in the UK or the US context, there are increasing voices advocating consideration of different situations of working-class students or academics (e.g., establishment of the Alliance of Working Class Academics and the Association of Working Class Academics), it is worth to consider if similar initiatives could be developed in post-socialist context.

G4. Capital, class and critical labour studies in contemporary academia

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Adam Ochwat (University of Warsaw): University, work, unions: the birth of a student-led union movement

In 2023, Polish students came to life after a few quiet years. However, this time, we are not seeing a short, bursting wave of protests against a reform of higher education, as has been the case in recent decades. The student movement born around the Workers' Initiative and its youth structures (koła młodych) has not only successfully struggled for a new public canteen, saving a dorm from privatization, and millions in Ministry spending for the advancement of student housing. It has managed to question the way we thought about the modern-day student. A student torn between their studies and work, increasingly often full-time, to make ends meet in the ravaged housing market. They are not recognized by law as either full-fledged workers (umowy cywilno-prawne) or tenants (umowy najmu okazjonalnego). The university does not offer much financial support and affordable housing anymore. Precarization of the young generation has become the norm during the past decade. After the devaluation of higher education in the 90s and 00s, the trend has turned around. Less and less people graduate, and success in many courses simply a question of financial support from parents. Using the results of a study I co-conducted at UW in 2023 ("Ile kosztują Cię studia?"), articles from a student-run union newspaper ("Alarm studencki") and a book titled "Jowita zostaje. Historia 10 dni ruchu studenckiego", which I co-authored following the occupation in December 2023, I want to shine a light on the nascent social movement forming at the crossroads of student and worker struggles in Poland. Could it finally pose a solution to the neoliberal agenda of disassembling the welfare state? Precarization and the end of large workplaces means a lack of a right to strike and a barrier to unionizing. The Workers' Initiative has managed to bypass that through allowing youth and local, aside from strictly workplace-based structures. The tools forged along the two hundred years of worker struggle are seeing a renaissance at the hands of students, as proven by one of the postulates posed during the occupation of Jowita, which calls for a formal right to strike for students in trade unions, a phenomenon currently unregulated in Poland.

Helena Antunes (University of Porto): (Re)configurations of the academic profession in times of polycrisis

i) Background

This presentation is part of the project for my doctoral thesis in Sociology at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto. The aim is to analyze the working conditions of academic professionals, with a focus on teachers, in the light of the public policies implemented in higher education.

ii) Main objectives of the presentation

The presentation aims to highlight one of the topics under analysis in my doctoral thesis project, which relates to changes in the academic profession based on transformations in higher education institutions. Based on the literature review, the results of the exploratory interviews with key informants, and some partial results of the interviews with teachers, the aim is to discuss the changes in the academic profession in Portugal.

iii) Theoretical approach

Based on the literature review, it can be seen that the academic profession is facing a period of polycrisis, where multiple challenges are intertwined, transforming the understanding of what the academic profession is. In addition to the traditional roles of teaching and research, academics have often been called upon to play roles in administrative management and knowledge transfer, thus broadening their responsibilities (Musselin, 2008; Galego, 2016; Santiago & Carvalho, 2008, 2011). This multiplicity of roles that academic professionals take on has led to a significant (re)configuration of identity (Dubar, 1995, 2002). This change in the perception of oneself and one's role in the academic community, and even in society, is influenced by market principles that increasingly permeate higher education institutions and the academic profession itself. According to some authors (Beck & Young, 2008; Carvalho, 2012; Galego, 2016; Harris, 2005; Santiago & Carvalho, 2011), the role of academics in the current context has undergone several changes, including a loss of autonomy and socio-professional status. The growing pressure for productivity and tangible results, characteristic of managerialist principles, has undermined their intellectual freedom and socio-professional recognition (Teichler, Arimoto & Cummings, 2013; Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013). In addition, the intensification of digital work, imposed by the covid-19 pandemic, has also influenced the academic profession (Garcia, 2009; Watermeyer, 2021).

iv) Methodological approach

For this presentation, we will use the technique of documentary research to support the theoretical frameworks on the changes that have been taking place in the academic profession. In addition, through exploratory interviews with key informants (higher education union leaders and members, higher education teachers, among others) we will present the results that relate to changes in the academic profession. Similarly, partial results of semi-directive interviews with public university and polytechnic higher education teachers may already be presented.

v) Contributions of the presentation

The aim is to spark debate on the transformations in public higher education institutions, based on the public policies and educational reforms directed at the sector in recent decades, which have had an impact on the way we understand the academic profession and the way it is practiced. We believe that this reality is evident not only in Portugal, but also in several European countries.

Group session: 17:00-19:00

G5. Accessibility of the world of work for persons with disabilities

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Ewa Giermanowska** (University of Warsaw)

Anna Drabarz (Polish Disability Forum), **Wioleta Hryniewicka-Filipkowska** (University of Białystok): The European Union as an inclusive employer of employees with disabilities – assessment of the compliance and effectiveness of the employment policies of selected EU institutions and bodies

Kamila Albin (University of Warsaw): Between social involvement and working for living: activism and the work in the narratives of women with disabilities

Magdalena Kocejko (SGH Warsaw School of Economics), **Zbigniew Głąb** (University of Łódź): Policy of professional activation of people with disabilities in Poland from the perspective of cruel optimism. A thing about unfulfilled promises

Jerzy Bielecki, Tomasz Płachecki (Educational Research Institute, IBE): Career guidance as a process to support the construction of educational and vocational pathways for learners with disabilities

Dorota Żuchowska-Skiba (AGH University of Krakow): The impact of technology on employment for people with disabilities

G6. ENDURE: Essentiality, inequality and livelihoods

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Chairs: **Mihai Varga** (Free University of Berlin), **Mateusz Karolak** (University of Wrocław)

Emina Bužinkić (Institute for Development and International Relations), **Nina Čolović** (Serb People's Council): Female teachers in minoritized education in Croatia: precarity, nationhood, and the capitalist neoliberal grammar

Soner Barthoma (Uppsala University), **Susan Beth Rottmann** (Ozyegin University), The politics of waiting, contested belonging(s) and negotiated spaces: Precarious lives of migrant workers in Istanbul in times of Covid-19

Christian Fröhlich (Free University of Berlin): The role of biographical resources in how essential workers coped with the Covid-19 pandemic in Germany

Mateusz Karolak, Adam Mrozowicki, Könül Jafarova (University of Wrocław): Navigating the Storm: The Lived Experiences and Coping Strategies of Migrant and Non-migrant Logistics Workers in Poland During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Mihai Varga (Free University of Berlin): Boundary or underpinning? The social context of work in poor households

Aline Hasegawa (University of Campinas); **Marina Fontolan** (University of Texas); **Leda Gitahy** (University of Campinas): Vale do Ribeira, Serra da Bocaina, Complexo da Maré, and the Amazon: study cases on community resilience in Brazil during the Covid-19 pandemic [on-line]

Sofía Vinasco, Yenny Ramírez (National University of Colombia): Payment in advance: income, family and marks on the bodies of women returnees to Colombia [on-line]

G7. Emotions in organizations and professional work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Justyna Kajta** (SWPS University in Warsaw)

Martina Kolářová Veverková (Charles University in Prague): The Czech employees' stories of the pandemic – work stress and sense-making in a complex social crisis

Teresa Ferreira (Iscte – University Institute of Lisbon): Occupational burnout in public institutions – how new public management principles lead public servants to work-related suffering

Beata Pawłowska (University of Łódź): Emotions in the everyday medical staff work

G8. Care work in crises

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Dominika Polkowska** (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University)

Patricia Ward (University of Bielefeld): Our bosses think we are 'glorified warehouse workers': logistics, labor and humanitarian aid

Franziska Baum (University of Hamburg): Care in crisis: platforms and self-employment in care: who's dependent on whom?

Aniela Partyga (University of Wrocław): Class conditions for organising a trade union. Attitudes of caregivers in nursing homes in Wrocław

Jiahui HOU (Kobe University): The Actual Conditions of Job Seeking in the Domestic Service Industry: From the Perspective of Domestic Workers

Luca Villaggi (University of Padova), **Samuel Maruszewski** (University of Wrocław): Labouring citizenship. Welfare state transformations between Italy and Poland

G5. Accessibility of the world of work for persons with disabilities

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Anna Drabarz (Polish Disability Forum), **Wioleta Hryniewicka-Filipkowska** (University of Białystok): The European Union as an inclusive employer of employees with disabilities — assessment of the compliance and effectiveness of the employment policies of selected EU institutions and bodies

The paper will examine the European Union's efforts to be an inclusive employer of persons with disabilities, focusing on an evaluation of disability employment policies at selected EU institutions and bodies. Despite the EU's legal and political commitment to disability rights and non-discrimination, research indicates there is still a significant employment gap for persons with disabilities across Europe. This study assessed the compliance and effectiveness of disability employment policies at major EU entities like the European Commission, European Parliament, and EU agencies, drawing on data from EU reports, policy documents, and academic studies and assessing key aspects including: 1) Adherence to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and EU disability law and strategies 2) Implementation of reasonable accommodation measures 3) Recruitment and retention practices for employees with disabilities 4) Accessibility of workplaces and information 5) Training and awareness programmes. Preliminary findings indicate uneven progress across EU institutions and bodies. While some have made strides in areas like workplace adaptations, others lag in recruitment targets and accessibility. Common challenges include inadequate data collection, limited career advancement opportunities, and persistent attitudinal barriers. The paper concludes with recommendations to strengthen the EU's role as an inclusive employer, including enhanced monitoring mechanisms, expanded positive action measures, and greater involvement of persons with disabilities in policy development.

Kamila Albin (University of Warsaw): Between social involvement and working for living: activism and the work in the narratives of women with disabilities

Despite all activities undertaken as part of vocational rehabilitation, whose aim is to (re-)incorporate people with disabilities in the labour market, the labour force participation rates for this cohort in Poland are far from those registered in most of other EU countries. Issues related to vocational rehabilitation and labour force participation of people with disabilities have long been widely discussed in Polish sociological literature. Unfortunately, very often these studies portray people with disabilities as objects, rather than agents, of public policies. In my talk I intend to go beyond the issues related to vocational rehabilitation. Instead, I want to focus on disabled people as active agents who transform their communities and creative actors who shape their careers as both professionals and activists. Between 2022 and 2024 I have conducted 26 narrative autobiographical interviews with women with disabilities in Poland, including leaders of non-governmental organisations and self-advocates, with the experience of both disabilities from birth and those acquired at a later stage of life. Importantly, the interviewees discussed the process of becoming an activist and actions that those

female activists have taken to transform the existing situation to the benefit of a community. In most of the cases, the community of disabled people. Another important element present in most of the narratives are the actions taken by interviewees to enhance their opportunities for professional career development.

In my talk I will look into narratives concerning activism and work. I will demonstrate how women with disabilities interpret their activism, what meanings and senses do they ascribe to it, and in what ways their activism is connected to their professional work. I will also try to shed light on the relations between these two spheres of life and how women with disabilities move between them. Lastly, I will explore the nature of boundaries between activism and work.

Magdalena Kocejko (SGH Warsaw School of Economics), **Zbigniew Głąb** (University of Lodz): Policy of professional activation of people with disabilities in Poland from the perspective of cruel optimism. A thing about unfulfilled promises

The paper will present the application of the theoretical perspective of cruel optimism in the analysis of the situation of people with disabilities in education and on the labor market in Poland. Cruel optimism is understood as a set of unfulfilled promises offered and valued by contemporary consumer society. At the same time, these promises are status markers, and their very existence is associated with social pressure to pursue them at all costs - including the degradation of the individual. The subject of the analysis conducted was the programmatic and strategic documents shaping disability policy in Poland in the areas of education, labor, and employment, as well as the key projects identified in these documents and the available results of their evaluation. The analysis did not focus on any specific disability. The presented analysis aims to identify promises made to people with disabilities as part of various practices and solutions related to education and the labor market, as well as to indicate the reasons for failure to fulfill them. Among the most important promises are inclusive education, vocational education and pro-employment measures. Opportunities for avoiding (or reducing) the effect of cruel optimism in shaping public policies toward people with disabilities will also be pointed out. Research demands and observations related to the application of the perspective of cruel optimism in the evaluation of measures aimed at people with disabilities will also be presented.

G5. Accessibility of the world of work for persons with disabilities

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Jerzy Bielecki, Tomasz Płachecki (Educational Research Institute, IBE): Career guidance as a process to support the construction of educational and vocational pathways for learners with disabilities

For learners with disabilities, the stakes of educational decisions are particularly high. Firstly, because of the higher risk of failure. Secondly, because continuing their education requires more investment from both them and the education system than in the case of learners without special needs. In order to make good educational and career choices, it is needed to assess the chances of success and the benefits of possible success (Breen, Goldthorpe 1997). Lack of access to reliable information needed for educational and career planning can be seen as a dimension of deprivation for groups that occupy a dominant position in the capitalist system (Beaud, Pialoux 2022 228-234). Career guidance and access to information play a key role. The analysis we will present aims to find out 1) How are success and failure defined in career guidance for learners with disabilities? 2) What alternatives are considered? 3) What are the risk factors in relation to their choice of career? 4) What kind of information is needed to support decisions about the educational and vocational pathways of learners with disabilities? We will use an analysis of policy documents on career guidance in the European Union (e.g. Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 21 November 2008 on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies; Riga Conclusions 2015), interviews with decision-makers on the educational and vocational pathways of learners with disabilities, and selected results of Secondary Schools' Graduate's Tracking System.

Secondary Schools' Graduate's Tracking System, based on data from public registers, has been in place since 2021, when it was included in the Education Act as a task of the Minister of Education and Training (Journal of Laws 2023, item 2005, art. 26b). One of the statutory objectives of tracking is to provide information on the careers of graduates of post-primary schools in order to prepare learners for their choice of profession and educational direction. Plans for the development of the tracking system include providing information on the situation of graduates who have had their special educational needs recognized during their education in secondary schools, as well as adapting the scope and presentation of the results to the needs of different user groups - including social partners and researchers. Our presentation will also be an invitation to reflect on the role that a tracking system can play in reducing the uncertainty surrounding decisions about the educational and vocational pathways of learners with disabilities and in adapting education to the needs of this group. The conclusions will be used as a basis for recommendations concerning Secondary Schools' Graduate's Tracking System.

Dorota Żuchowska-Skiba (AGH University of Krakow): The impact of technology on employment for people with disabilities

Current technological changes significantly impact the way work is performed, affecting the overall job market and the experiences of individuals with disabilities related to employment. Recent studies have shown that modern technologies open up new employment opportunities for people with disabilities, both through remote work options and by adapting job positions to individual needs. Unfortunately, they can also contribute to further exclusion of individuals with disabilities from the job market and lead to the emergence of new inequalities in this area.

Analyzing these changes in the context of employment for people with disabilities is crucial for identifying potential challenges and issues faced by the job market evolving under the influence of new technologies. Understanding the directions of these changes and their specifics will enable better adjustment of employment policies and support systems to the new technological realities.

In my presentation, I will analyze the impact of modern technologies on employment and working conditions for people with disabilities. The study will be based on interviews conducted with 10 individuals with disabilities who utilize assistive technologies in their professional duties. My main objective will be to reconstruct the opinions and experiences of individuals with disabilities regarding remote work and the availability of supportive tools.

The conducted research will also help identify the problems encountered by the participants in the job market within the context of technological advancements, as well as the challenges associated with adapting the work environment to their needs. By analyzing the participants' statements in the interviews, I will portray both the positive aspects, such as remote work opportunities and the availability of supportive tools, as well as the challenges, such as digital exclusion or the need to adapt the work environment to their needs. This will allow me to highlight innovative solutions that, according to the participants, can create a more accessible and inclusive work environment for people with disabilities.

G6. ENDURE: Essentiality, inequality and livelihoods

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Emina Bužinkić (Institute for Development and International Relations), **Nina Čolović** (Serb People's Council): Female teachers in minoritized education in Croatia: precarity, nationhood, and the capitalist neoliberal grammar

This paper centers the experiences of female teachers as essential workers engaged in schooling of ethnic minorities, refugee and migrant children during the Covid-19 pandemic across rural and urban areas in Croatia. The core questions for this ongoing research are: What are the experiences of female teachers in education of minoritized youth during lockdowns, online schooling and otherwise education during the Covid-19 pandemic in the rural and urban areas teaching us about the complex meanings of gendered and racialized labor and precarity? How are the experiences of teaching, domestic work, care and community work in crisis expanding our understanding of gendered and racialized labor? What has the changing nature of life and work regime back in the day revealed about the politics of neoliberalization pushing further commodification and capitalist functionalism of the education industry? The authors ground and theorize these questions through the social reproduction theory (Bhattacharya 2017; Vogel 1983) and the feminist critique of precarity (Lazar, 2005; Flores-Garrido 2020), critical race theory (van Dijk 2016; Davis 1983), and the concepts of intersectionality (Collins Hill, 2019; Bohrer 2019), as well the concepts of vulnerability, resilience and resistance. Furthermore, this work builds on the feminist ethnographic research (Bužinkić, 2023; Davis & Craven 2022; Nagar 2015) weaving female teacher's biographical narratives (Chamberlayne, Bornat & Wengraf 2000; Kutsyuruba & Mendes 2023). On the basis of eight biographical interviews, conducted with teachers working with ethnicized and racialized children, this critical narrative analysis will concentrate on unraveling meanings and patterns of the way teachers understand and interpret their life trajectories and teaching. In addition, both authors tie in their autobiographical narratives (Kamler, 2001) about their precarious labor in education, domestic care work and community organizing to situate their researcher as relational to female teachers' experiences. This paper contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexity of female teaching labor and its challenging shifts in the era of neoliberal capitalism and the capitalist reproduction functionality of the teaching profession.

Soner Barthoma (Uppsala University), **Susan Beth Rottmann** (Ozyegin University), The politics of waiting, contested belonging(s) and negotiated spaces: Precarious lives of migrant workers in Istanbul in times of Covid-19

This article examines migrant workers' experiences of waiting, their struggles to hold on to life during/after the Covid-19 crisis in Istanbul - a cosmopolitan city that has become a transit-destination hub for migrants in recent decades. The study looks at two different groups of migrant workers - Syrian and Central Asian migrant workers, and it looks at several time periods - during and after the pandemic and in the midst of a severe economic crisis. Both groups are subject to similar poly-crises, but experience different forms of waiting and temporality (temporary residence for Syrians, temporary work permits for Central Asians) and have different migration aspirations. Living within the boundaries of temporality, both groups have developed strategies to negotiate their

space and belonging and to hold on to their lives in the context of entangled crises. Using the concepts of waiting (Hage 2009; Khosravi 2014; Paul & Anders 2023), precarity (Butler 2009, 2016), and agency (Triandafyllidou 2018), we examine how the entangled crises affected migrant workers' livelihoods and their temporal and protracted dispositions; how they navigated the uncertain temporality of their lives and exercised agency. We also highlight differences between the two groups, such as increased inequality for Syrians that impacted migration aspirations. One important contribution of this study will be to provide empirical insights about governance of 'time' and 'livelihoods' by migrants against the backdrop of structural constraints.

Christian Fröhlich (Free University of Berlin): The role of biographical resources in how essential workers coped with the Covid-19 pandemic in Germany

As the Covid-19 pandemic hit Europe, Germany was among the states that implemented rather fast rather strict measurements to contain the spread of the virus. In order to maintain the functioning of the public health system and keep numbers of infections low, the first year of the pandemic between spring 2020 and spring 2021 was characterized by a series of full and partly lockdowns of public life. At the same time, a number of so-called "system-relevant", or essential, professions upheld the basic functioning of society. This chapter focusses on essential workers in the spheres of health care, education, and retail and how they met the manifold challenges to their livelihood and what resources they mobilized to cope with them.

This chapter engages with the discussions on resilience, meant as the coping with a crisis situation, with a focus on the livelihood strategies of people (see Quandt 2018). While the literature on resilience has been concentrating on how individuals or communities are coping in the aftermath of a crisis, this analysis joins more recent efforts by studying people's responses to it during crisis. In doing so, it follows efforts to account for the coping strategies that help individuals and collectives to adjust to rapid changes in their livelihoods (Mosberg and Eriksen 2015). While structural and institutional factors have been emphasized for their impact on successful coping with crisis (Hall and Lamont 2013), this chapter focuses on biographical resources, thus, skills, experience, but also norms and beliefs formed by previous biographical events that people mobilize for their resilience strategies (Promberger 2017).

The interview data shows how respondents across all three groups draw on various forms of individual biographical resources in order to cope with stress, uncertainty and the demand on improvisation under constant changing, unforeseeable work conditions. Preliminarily, there are two patterns emerging from the material: 1) workers who have been (radically) changing their professional trajectory (shortly) before the onset of the pandemic, show high capacity for improvisation and innovation under the constant changing and limiting work conditions during lockdowns and other containment measures. 2) workers with a long and successful trajectory in their current profession seem to have accumulated a high degree of experience under different and changing work conditions that they show also a strong capability to adapt to the crisis situation under Covid19. However, this is less related to innovations, but to subversions and changes of the 'usual ways' in order to maintain the core processes despite disturbances. However, both groups show a strong commitment to their profession and sphere of activity that has already developed before the pandemic and presents now an important personal resource to cope with the crisis.

G6. ENDURE: Essentiality, inequality and livelihoods

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Mateusz Karolak, Adam Mrozowicki, Könül Jafarova (University of Wrocław): Navigating the Storm: The Lived Experiences and Coping Strategies of Migrant and Non-migrant Logistics Workers in Poland

During the COVID-19 Pandemic Our chapter offers a critical examination of work experiences in the logistics sector in Poland, an area that is pivotal yet frequently overlooked in discussions of essential work. The logistics sector plays a crucial role in the global capitalist economy and the COVID-19 pandemic, with its unprecedented challenges, has further highlighted its importance, revealing vulnerabilities and resilience within global supply chains, especially in the face of border closures and lockdowns. This disruption not only emphasized the sector's critical role as during the lockdowns people increasingly relied on home deliveries for goods and food, but also increased the demand for labour in logistics, encompassing both warehouse workers and last-mile delivery couriers. During the pandemic, logistics workers were often designated as essential front-line workers, a status that brought to the fore the dual reality of their work: the increased risk of coronavirus infection due to direct human contact, and the indispensable nature of their role in maintaining societal functioning and reproduction. Yet, despite its critical role during the pandemic, the logistics sector is characterized by precarious working conditions, including high work intensity, low wages, and high levels of job flexibility. In this context our chapter focuses on the lived experiences of migrant and non-migrant logistics workers in Poland during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the analysis of 31 biographical narrative interviews with food delivery couriers (16), parcel couriers (5), and warehouse staff (11) (some interviewees did several jobs), we explore how the pandemic has affected their daily work life and beyond. We examine both the traditional challenges of the sector and the novel issues brought about and intensified by the pandemic (e.g. health risk as a crucial dimension of precariousness, lack of the right to sickness leave of workers with civil-law contracts, limited health insurance coverage), along with individual and collective coping strategies. Our analysis goes beyond the narrow focus on paid work to include perspectives from social reproduction theory and theories of racial capitalism, offering a comprehensive understanding of workers' experiences in a changing socio-economic landscape. Our analysis has identified a variety of similarities and differences in the experiences of the two researched groups. Individualistic coping mechanisms are prevalent, often leading to the normalisation of precarious conditions (in the sense of defining them as an expected in lower-skilled logistic jobs). Simultaneously, while postpandemic polycrisis served as a driver for collective mobilisation of workers across the supply chain, it involved mostly Poles and, unlike in some other countries in Southern and Western Europe, very rarely migrant workers. Furthermore, migrants' biographies often reflected intersectional exclusion related to their gender and ethnic background. In the context of the pandemic, the reach and strength of social networks also proved to be important.

Mihai Varga (Free University of Berlin): Boundary or underpinning? The social context of work in poor households

The relationship between work and the context that ensures its social embeddedness has formed the heart of a debate between approaches centering on the "capital" types supporting work and those that emphasize how the social structures that enable the reproduction of workers contribute to capitalist exploitation. Both camps - the Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) framework and Social Reproduction Theory (SRT) - have produced extensive literatures, and the former - SL - has left an indelible mark on poverty reduction programs and international organizations over three decades, notwithstanding the criticism it has received from the latter, SRT. This paper seeks to transcend this divide by demonstrating that a broader and divergent approach to the social relations addressed by SRT allows for new and more realistic insights into the "social" in social sustainability and sustainable livelihoods. Specifically, the paper argues that intra-household relations between genders and generations should be understood less as labor boundaries or as underpinning capitalist exploitation, and more as arrangements that both motivate and obligate (even compel) household members to participate in markets for labor and services. The paper illustrates its argument with ethnographic material and interviews with poor people in the Romanian-Ukrainian (historical) border region of Bucovina.

G6. ENDURE: Essentiality, inequality and livelihoods

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Aline Hasegawa (University of Campinas); **Marina Fontolan** (University of Texas); **Leda Gitahy** (University of Campinas): Vale do Ribeira, Serra da Bocaina, Complexo da Maré, and the Amazon: study cases on community resilience in Brazil during the Covid-19 pandemic [on-line]

This chapter presents the five case studies Brazil is involved in, highlighting how workers and communities developed and/or improved networks within their communities to survive the Covid-19 crisis and Bolsonaro's government. Even though some of those communities are officially protected by different instances of the Brazilian government, this protection does not exist in practice, and the Covid crisis made the communities much more aware of this situation. This spun a process of (re)building and reinforcing their solidarity networks, enhancing forms of survival strategies and work relations, based on local communication and resource distribution techniques and tools, which avoid situations of hunger and complete isolation for specific families. In São Paulo, we present the cases of the Community Forums of Vale do Ribeira and Serra da Bocaina, whose communities developed food distribution networks, focused on people suffering from food insecurity in different cities. In Maré, we highlight the resilience actions and essential work carried out by residents and community leaders, through projects by the NGO Redes da Maré in partnership with institutions such as Fiocruz, which implemented testing and vaccination of the Maré's population. The reports collected revealed how resources, especially institutional and community, were crucial in protecting local population and workers against the impacts produced by Covid-19. In Amazonas, we researched the context of resistance of some isolated indigenous communities, as well as communities on the triple border (Brazil, Colombia and Peru), such as the Kokama and Tikuna. The chapter concludes that workers from traditional communities in Brazil developed and/or enhanced resilience strategies that had a lasting impact, starting before and going beyond the Covid-19 crisis.

Sofía Vinasco, Yenny Ramírez (National University of Colombia): Payment in advance: income, family and marks on the bodies of women returnees to Colombia [on-line]

The conditions in which the women who returned to Colombia during the pandemic lived can be understood thanks to the effects generated by the social reproduction work they carried out in the countries of the global North, which generated: a. a "plante" base of economic resources; b. support from their families, who sustained part of their lives with the income generated by them; c. effects on the body as a late consequence of the efforts demanded by the work they carried out. To begin with, social reproduction refers to "how food, clothing, and shelter are made available for immediate consumption, how the maintenance and socialisation of children take place, how to care for the elderly is provided and how sexuality is constructed (Bezanson & Luxton, 2006). Along these lines, it is important to note that the jobs for the reproduction of life are performed by migrant women, generally from the Global South or peripheral areas of the European Union (Kofman & Raghuram, 2015) and are performed in key roles such as caregivers of the elderly and children, people with disabilities, food production, and health care, among others. They can be unpaid when in private or community settings, such as canteens, or they can be paid when working for the state or the market (Arruzza & Bhattacharya, 2020; Pantanali, 2022). However, before the pandemic, what was meant by "essential work" was rather vague, but this category has become a central trope in debates about work and Covid-19 and includes all those sectors crucial for the regeneration and maintenance of life in times of emergency. As Mezzardi (2022) puts it, within this loose definition, essential work may coincide with what is meant by jobs for social reproduction (p. 387). In this scenario, we find the stories of two Colombian women who worked for social reproduction and life in the United States and Spain and who, after returning to Colombia, went through the period of polycrisis generated by the pandemic in "relatively stable" conditions compared to the economic and social precariousness that in other cases has been identified by multiple studies in recent years (de Haan, 2020; Di Martino, 2021; El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, 2020; Yayboke, 2020). However, the security and protection guarantee they enjoyed during the pandemic were mainly the product of savings in a foreign currency that allowed them to invest in livelihoods in Colombia, as well as to rely on extended family as a support network. Through their stories, no significant presence of the host state or the state of origin can be identified, which partially or totally supported the conditions necessary to survive the confinements and closures experienced during the pandemic. Amid neoliberal logic, each person, with their support networks, had to assume their social protection individually, in the absence of policies guaranteeing rights. In addition, although the socio-economic conditions that the women in our stories had been stable, this contrasts with the effects on the body that appeared after having fulfilled the efforts demanded by the work carried out both in foreign lands and now in the country of origin. These affectations are marks that have an impact on the quality of life and condition the capacity to work in the present. This allows us to propose that "they paid in advance" with their health and capacity to work in the USA and Spain the "financial security" that enabled them to face the polycrisis of the pandemic, and that their health condition and their bodies present a deficit balance due to the effects and consequences of such work, a balance that neither the State nor the former employers will pay, and it is then that the family replaces the gaps in social protection.

G7. Emotions in organizations and professional work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Sciences

Martina Kolářová Veverková (Charles University in Prague): The Czech employees' stories of the pandemic – work stress and sense-making in a complex social crisis

The Covid-19 pandemic can be seen as a multi-layered social crisis, strongly affecting, among other things, the world of work. In the Czech Republic, the initial success of anti-pandemic measures was replaced by high infection rates, long and strict lockdowns, including school facilities, and weakening of the supportive policies. However, there was little regulation and control when it comes to workplaces, as some of the experts and public actors pointed out (Prokop et al. 2021; Veverková and Váňová 2022). In the later stages of the pandemic, we observed increased public criticism of the government steps and massive manifestations against anti-pandemic measures and vaccination. This shift can be understood through lenses of conflicting modes of responsabilization of the citizens, rooted in post-socialist realities (Stöckelová, Kolářová, and Senft 2023). These features of CEE countries are conceptualized as patchwork capitalism, defined among other things by weak and incoherent institutions and deterioration of healthcare and social systems (Gardawski and Rapacki 2021). The presented qualitative research seeks to understand the employee experience of the pandemic, namely mechanisms of work stress, and connect it to their sense-making of the situation and more general set of beliefs in the above explained context. It is based on 29 narrative in-depth interviews (Elliott 2005) with heterogenous sample of Czech workers – health care and social care workers, remote white-collar workers, blue-collar workers and workers who lost their job due to the pandemic situation. As current societies face increased risk of acute crises (Beck 1992, 2006) that affect the world of work (due to climate change, war conflicts or prospect of another epidemic situation), there is a need to explore the challenges and burdens that they may pose to working people and identify mechanisms to protect their well-being and social cohesion.

However, established theories of work stress are designed for standard situations, and conceptual models of work stress during a crisis are not sufficiently developed 1. Building on existing theories, especially the stress-strain model (Koslowsky 1998), this paper aims to identify mechanisms of work stress that are specific for the pandemic, and potentially transferable to another situation of acute and complex social crisis. Preliminary results: Specific stressors related to the pandemic situation are fluctuations in the workload, high level of unpredictability, rapid organizational or job content change and new sources of interpersonal conflict at work (related especially to pandemic measures (non-)compliance). Important factors contributing to an increased stress are discomfort of wearing protective equipment, difficulty of complying with the measures, and, in case of remote work, inadequacy of technical tools. These in-work factors interact with the extra-organizational context – the pandemic itself, which translates to a generalized feeling of insecurity and unpredictability of the situation, as well as with individual factors, like perceived insecurity of one's position and responsibilities related to close people. The shared experience is a sense of state failure, defined by erroneous decision making and putting disproportionate burden and limitations on the citizens. On the other hand, top-down and non-transparent decision making in the organization is widely accepted by the employees, even if it sometimes suffers from the same issues. The overall narrative of the pandemic situation (and adherence to or refusal of its' mainstream interpretation) differs based on two main circumstances – the way of experiencing management practices and finding one's role in the crisis.

G7. Emotions in organizations and professional work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Teresa Ferreira (Iscte — University Institute of Lisbon): Occupational burnout in public institutions — how new public management principles lead public servants to work-related suffering

The world of work based on the free market neoliberal utopia brought about the flexibilization of working time, insecurities, uncertainties, and loss of boundaries (Beck, 2008). In the name of prosperity and economic growth, labour precarity is revealed to be transversal to all branches of modern society. However, the public administration sector, especially in Portugal, remains attractive due to its secure, lifelong employment contracts. Despite labour relations stability and the opportunity to carry out tasks that contribute to the common good—the public mission (Pandey, S. K., Wright, B. E., & Moynihan, 2007; Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999; Wright, 2007)—public employees are not safe from work-related suffering. Occupational burnout (Freudenberger, 1974; Maslach, 1976), defined by the World Health Organization as an occupational phenomenon (WHO, 2019), synthesizes the suffering that stems from working relationships' violence (Oliveira & Nunes, 2008), but also violence in the organization of work (Oliveira & Nunes, 2008), underpinned by the neoliberal principles of the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm (Pollitt, C., & Bouckaert, 2011). To fill the gap in sociological studies on this phenomenon, a mixed-methods study was designed, comprising four interweave phases: 1) documental analysis; 2) interviews with key informants; 3) an online survey; and 4) in-depth individual interviews. Based on the documental analysis and the results of the interviews with seven key informants, the online survey "Burnout among central government employees" was designed and conducted, targeting civil servants working in central public administration services in Portugal. The survey was carried out between February and October 2023 in three public organizations from different government areas whose work is not dedicated to human care, and it gathered 214 employees. From the survey, nine in-depth interviews were conducted between June and July 2023 with public servants who said they had gone through a burnout experience. Based on a descriptive and regression statistical analysis of the data and a narrative analysis (Bruner, 1987; Riessman, 2008) of the individual interviews, this presentation explores organizational and structural burnout causal factors particularly related to the work organization model in public administration. The purpose of this presentation is to discuss the relationship between burnout lived experience in the context of three public institutions and: 1) leadership profile; 2) hierarchy dysfunction; 3) support from colleagues and bosses; 4) competitiveness and hostile behaviour between colleagues; and 5) individual experiences of humiliation and isolation. The findings of the study highlight the importance of understanding how this social phenomenon is shaped by the work organization model framed by relations of power and violence, but also by the NPM paradigm that drives public administration organizations.

Beata Pawłowska (University of Lodz): Emotions in the everyday medical staff work

Performing specific duties, working in a specific profession implies the release and/or suppression (hiding) of specific emotions. Medical staff of all wards and levels work under conditions of high emotional burden, mainly negative emotions, including stress. This definitely affects job satisfaction. Emotions are also related to the management style adopted by the head of the ward. Emotions at work are also stress, which is reflected in the work performed and the quality of contact with the patient and colleagues. The paper will present the factors causing the greatest emotional burden in the work of medical staff. The aim of the article is to show how the emotions influence on the power level and actions of medical staff in a hospital. Emphasis will be placed on the emotion of pride as one that relates to the diagnosis of social status and allows for other emotions such as joy, happiness, satisfaction, and fear. Frequent feelings of some emotions can lead to an increase in self-esteem and job satisfaction. I will try to show how the power level possessed influences the feeling of one basic social emotion, at the same time indicating the two-way nature of the interaction of the level of feeling power and emotions. It will also be interesting to show communication strategies used by medical staff in contacts with colleagues and superiors. It will be particularly important to show the professional relationships between nurses and doctors and to point out the lack of symmetry in the communication process between these professional groups. An important variable influencing the construction of professional relationships is hierarchy and the system of authority and power. Asymmetry in professional relationships creates a boundary between employees belonging to different groups of medical professions. Lower-level staff in the socialization process internalize and thus maintain the boundary between medical workers while maintaining the status quo. This hierarchy system is superimposed on the level of power and status felt and perceived by each employee, which implies the emergence of specific emotions. They influence interactions, shaping their course. Theoretical backgrounds are the T. Kemper and T. Scheff concepts. Pride is treated as a social emotion in terms of a sociological perspective and an interactive approach. The following reflections are the result of: 1) multiple participant observations conducted by the author in the years 2017-2022 in the two medical organizations; 2) unstructured interviews conducted with doctors, nurses, rehabilitators and other medical staff

G8. Care work in crises

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Patricia Ward (University of Bielefeld): Our bosses think we are 'glorified warehouse workers': logistics, labor and humanitarian aid

Over the past few decades, research has been prolific on the economic, social and cultural effects of the global (re)organization of supply chains on work and workers, highlighting continuities as well as transformations in terms of labor processes, workers' mobilities and solidarities, the role of the state, and the reproduction of the colonial division of labor. Yet, the majority of this work focuses on the private sector. What is missing from these analyses is the inclusion of transnational humanitarianism: a major global industry that embeds logics from both profit and non-profit sectors in its operations, and organizes labor in and beyond 'crisis' contexts. Amidst a backdrop of 'unprecedented' humanitarian displacement crises and conflict, humanitarian logistics is increasingly situated as critical not only for responding, but also preventing the latter from growing even further in the future. At the same time, its meaning(s) are considered ambiguous in their scope and effects (Oloruntoba and Banomyong 2018; Ziadah 2019). Part of this ambiguity lies in the fact that we have yet to fully account for who are humanitarian logisticians, what they do, and how they and others perceive their work. Drawing upon critical interdisciplinary scholarship on logistics and sociological analyses of the labor process, this paper subsequently considers how humanitarian supply chains organize labor relations in the contemporary economy, focusing on the role and construction of the 'humanitarian logistician' as a particular category of work and worker. Empirically, this paper draws upon interviews with logistics workers, as well as preliminary ethnographic observations of major humanitarian logistic hubs located in Italy and Dubai, spaces where multiple state and non-state stakeholders strive to satisfy a variety of 'clients' and 'mandates' on humanitarian emergency premises. I find that the labor relations that manifest and are produced from these spaces urge more elaborate explanations about first, how market, but also other logics organize labor and workers. Second, the vehicles of power stakeholders mobilize to construct and delineate skill and social value. I argue that thinking with and through humanitarianism as logistics expands explanations about the processes that construct the international division of labor and thus mappings of global power broadly construed.

Franziska Baum (University of Hamburg): Care in crisis: platforms and self-employment in care: who's dependent on whom?

Digitalization of care is manifold, shaped by a shortage of labor. Care platforms are a major field of investments in care, due to demographic changes, aging societies, and marketization of social services for elderly at home. However, research on elder care platforms and their embeddedness remains scarce (cf. McDonald et al. 2023). From a worker's perspective platforms in care can facilitate paid labor in times of multiple crisis. However, the contribution purports that on German elder care platforms the underprivileged workers remain scarce. Rather, analyzing platform profiles as a dataset illustrates that it is (semi-)professional care workers, who seek self-employed additional income. Recently, published papers on care and platforms have excavated more and more industry specific features of platforms in care, such as the presence of care-ethical

concerns of workers (Khan et al. 2023; Pulignano et al. 2023). Building on this, the paper asks: How do institutional logics of elder care shape, support, and, as I argue, mainly limit digital technologies of elder care platforms in comparison to the findings regarding care.com and child care-taking, that shape thus far our idea of care platforms? The aim of the paper is to show, that within a digital, post-industrial and post-welfare society, the institutional embeddedness allows care workers to find meaning in self-employed care, which they emphatically choose instead of employment or in addition to it. Data and Methods: The contribution draws on data from different care platforms based in Germany, specialized in facilitating self-employed carer-client connections. Findings build on three different data types: strategic PR on care platform work retrieved from an elder care platform, a web crawl of 2000+ workers profiles from a German elder care platform, and interviews with self-employed care workers who use the internet and platforms to find clients. The triangulated findings from elder care work platforms illustrate that, what matter most to workers, is establishing proficiency and autonomous care time. Additionally, the perception of a care and poly crisis enables workers to charge self-employment with meaning and care-ethics. The interviewed workers understand themselves as experts in the field of welfare state benefits. Hence, the goal of workers is not to be employed or improve the conditions of their labor/settings, but to address the care deficits of society and call for better funding for care-taking. Beyond Platforms? Implications for Research: The aim of the contribution is to critically expand and challenge our understandings of self-employed care work, that can be facilitated by platforms, but still is a choice. The case of elder care platforms goes beyond the usual case of care platform workers showing that platform work in care is greatly connected to the welfare state affordances and labor regulations in elder care (cf. Baum 2024/forthcoming).

Aniela Partyga (University of Wrocław): Class conditions for organising a trade union. Attitudes of caregivers in nursing homes in Wrocław

The paper is a part of the closed session by the Student Scientific Circle of Leftist Thought on "How has the labour market turned the University into a student factory?". It is based on empirical research conducted throughout the academic year 2022/23. It analyses the experiences of young migrants who left their family villages to live in the city of Wrocław. The data collected through individual in-depth interviews with four representatives of two different social classes is interpreted using the class reproduction theory of Pierre Bourdieu. The experiences the respondents recounted during the interviews do not constitute hard evidence of class attribution - young people are at a crossroads, from which paths may lead to different places in the social structure. Their habitus, shaped by border conditions, is realised in the decision to migrate and study. Pierre Bourdieu's class theory seems an appropriate tool for interpreting their experience - a tool that can capture the tensions, contradictions and inconsistencies that bear witness to the shape of the class structure, which does not resemble a regular ladder with two ways of ascending and descending, but a community of classes with their lifestyles and attitudes towards the legitimate culture. The narrations of the different classes are mutually antagonistic, revealing the class conflict within the group and allowing the identification of different perspectives on the process of moving from peripheric areas to a big city. Thus, the illusion of a shared world is torn apart. The migrants, nevertheless, show points of conjunction in their struggles with the effects of neoliberal politics. In this context, the antinomies and contradictions within the young generation become a matter of the contemporary social structure changes, updating the knowledge of the ways in which class reproduction, as theorised by Bourdieu in the 1970s in France, takes place in modern Polish society.

G8. Care work in crises

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Jiahui HOU (Kobe University): The Actual Conditions of Job Seeking in the Domestic Service Industry: From the Perspective of Domestic Workers

Driven by the shortage of care in developed countries, the international migration of domestic workers, known as the "global chain of care," has become a major phenomenon. A similar situation has arisen in China, but the difference is that domestic workers in China are not international migrants, but domestic migrants. From the perspective of Ethics of Care, this study will take the job search period of domestic helpers as the research object, and will try to clarify the following points: the reasons that push them from unpaid work in their own families to paid work in other families; and the key factors that affect the salary conditions in the specific job search.

The research methods were a case study and a semi-structured interview survey. First, using a case study, the period from March 19, 2021 to April 2, 2021 was selected, and the "self-introductions" of 95 people looking for domestic worker jobs through the domestic service intermediary company X in Ningbo City during this period were used as the analysis material. A semi-structured interview survey was then conducted with six domestic workers seeking domestic service jobs through Company X in order to better understand the actual situation. The survey period was two months, from September to October 2023, and the main survey topics included family structure and personal background, experience as a domestic worker, certification of domestic service-related qualifications, and desired working conditions.

According to the conclusion, reasons for wanting to engage as domestic workers are closely related mainly to economic factors. Barriers to entry into the domestic service industry are low, but there are also considerable differences in income due to differences in the gravity of the work content. It is not only the nature of the work that is related to income, but also the economic disparities between regions. As a result, many live-in domestic workers are likely to be concentrated in economically affluent areas.

Such economic disparities encourage the migration of domestic workers within China. This will solve the problem of lack of reproductive labor in some urban households and provide more diverse forms of childcare, but in contrast, it will inevitably reduce the number of domestic workers, migrant women themselves, who are responsible for household chores and childcare at home. In some situations, domestic workers are forced to choose between economic gain and the building of family ties due to their employment status of living in the homes of others on a long-term basis.

Luca Villaggi (University of Padova), **Samuel Maruszewski** (University of Wrocław): Labouring citizenship. Welfare state transformations between Italy and Poland

The contemporary polycrisis exacerbated the effects of a long-standing crisis of social reproduction. This signals a key contradiction of contemporary capitalism, which fails to promote social recognition and decent working conditions for workers employed in the life-making sectors and to guarantee the livelihoods, especially for the most disadvantaged social groups (Fraser, Jaeggi, 2019; Mezzadri, 2022). Welfare services are at the centre of this contradiction, due to social provision cuts, retrenchment of the public sector and outsourcing to private and non-state providers and a general reorientation towards market logics, which impact on the working conditions of the employees as well as on the communities serviced (Dowling, 2021; Farris, Bergfeld, 2022; Williams, 2021). Welfare providers seem to have progressively adopted a strategy of depreciation of social and care work, as the lowering of labour costs and the work intensification and precarization allow them to cope with budget constraints or to even maximize their profits (Haubner, 2020). Moreover, the ability of workers in the social and care sector to counter deteriorating working conditions through industrial actions seems to be limited by the triangular relationship between workforce, employers, and clients, whereby managers can pit workers' and clients' rights against each other (Kubisa, Rakowska, 2021; Müller, 2019). The paper aims at analysing how, in a context of welfare state retrenchment, the welfare users' social citizenship rights are increasingly achieved at the expense of the working conditions of care and social workers, but also by their strategies to counteract the lowering of welfare provision. From this perspective, citizenship is understood as the outcome of social processes and practices rather than a formal condition, and especially as the outcome of labour processes and practices, constantly shaped by work organization, subjectivities, as well as by dynamics of conflict and collective action (Isin, 2017; Ong, 2003). The paper first examines how the welfare services restructuring has affected the working conditions of the employees. Then, it shows how social workers' ethics of care and solidarity with the clients operates both as a lever that allows employers to legitimize low wages, precarity and high workloads, but also as a channel for the workers to attach meaning and value to their activity and finalize their work effort to an emancipatory and dignifying treatment for the clients. Finally, it discusses how this ethic of responsibility and solidarity constrains the emergence of labour conflicts in the social sector, but it is also deployed by the workers to demand greater rights for them and for the clients, opening up a reconceptualization of workers' organizing as a coalition among different groups in society and as an articulation between labour rights and a broader sphere of citizenship rights. The data have been collected during an extensive fieldwork conducted for 6 months in Italy (especially in the municipality of Bologna) and for 7 months in Poland (especially in the municipalities of Wrocław and Warsaw), through interviews with representatives of labour unions and local institutions and care and social workers employed in public, private, and NGOs-run facilities.

Friday 18th October 2024 Overview

Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Wrocław, Koszarowa 3 St.

SESSIONS HELD IN ENGLISH

9:00 - 11:00 Parallel thematic groups

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break (the Institute of Political Science)

11:30 - 13:30 Parallel thematic groups

13:30 - 14:30 Lunch (the Institute of Political Science)

14:30 - 16:30 Plenary session: *Challenges and Perspectives of the Critical Labour Studies*

(Auditorium A, the Institute of Political Science)

Chair: **Adam Mrozowicki** (University of Wrocław)

David Ost (Hobart and William Smith Colleges): *Why Workers Often Oppose Democracy?*

Bridget Kenny (University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg): *Trade unions and logistics in South Africa: Racial capitalism returned or new routes to organising?*

Julia Kubisa (University of Warsaw): *Rules of engagement? Positioning the practice of public sociology in industrial relations research and cooperation with trade unions*

16:30 - 17:00 Closing remarks (Auditorium A, the Institute of Political Science)

social
boundaries
of work



3rd Plenary session: **Challenges and Perspectives**

David Ost (Hobart and William Smith Colleges): *Why Workers Often Oppose Democracy?*

This piece argues that workers and unions are not necessarily a pro-democratic force. The literature arguing otherwise typically looks only at political democracy, or what I call Democracy I. But the democracy that is increasingly under attack today centers on its egalitarian and formal-institutional aspects (Democracy II and III). The paper looks at how both higher and lower-skilled workers relate to the three types of democracy, arguing that the only certain positive correlation is between workers and D-I. “Dominant-essence” workers (those with the privileged ascriptive characteristics of the given national community) often gain by being anti-egalitarian (opposed to D-II), while only college-educated workers have a structural propensity to be concerned with institutional autonomy (D-III). Whether labor supports democracy or helps undermine it depends on their view of democracy, on which party or ideology they accept as their own. Being a worker or a union doesn’t determine much in itself.

Finally, the piece addresses the paradox of Poland’s Solidarność movement. Contrary to the norm in capitalist societies, where workers vigorously support D-I but not D-II or III, Solidarity in its first years, during communist times, supported D-II and III but not D-1. Today, however, long after capitalism’s return, Solidarity reverts to the capitalist-society norm: with firm support for D-1 but not for D-II or III. The paper explains this in three ways: the changing class composition of Solidarity’s membership, the transformation of the Polish left, and the economic policies of the populist Right.

Bridget Kenny (University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg): *Trade unions and logistics in South Africa: Racial capitalism returned or new routes to organising?*

This presentation will use my current work on logistics warehouses in greater Johannesburg (Gauteng Province), South Africa to examine how workers experience new forms of warehouse work and how trade unions engage this growing sector. Based on interviews with industry experts, warehouse workers and trade unions in the sector, I outline the labour process in new e-commerce warehouses through the use of digital technology, and I examine the conditions necessary to explain the expansion of e-commerce in South Africa. The presentation focuses on contradictions within trade union organising in e-commerce and discusses global union campaigns around Amazon, which is establishing its own logistics presence in South Africa in 2024, after several years of battles with activist groups. Grounding analysis of Johannesburg warehouses within an expanding literature on critical logistics studies (Tsing 2009; Cowen 2014; Chua et al. 2018; Danyluk 2018; Mezzadra and Neilson 2019) and analysing these practices as ‘conjunctural’ (Hall 1980; Hart 2023), this presentation seeks to pose questions about how South African trade unions engage new technologies and changing economic geographies within longstanding relations of exploitation and oppression. Within this context, it will also examine the relationship between academic research and union concerns.

Julia Kubisa (University of Warsaw): *Rules of engagement? Positioning the practice of public sociology in industrial relations research and cooperation with trade unions*

Sociology of work is a sociological sub-discipline that has a long history of being close to trade unions. This, however, translates to different connections, positions and therefore obligations of sociologists. The position of trade unions in research also can be seen as at least twofold. Sociologists study the working life experiences of workers that often marginalized in the neoliberal media and public discourses. At the same time, trade unions are influential stakeholders, with a socio-economy-political agenda and various interests, leadership models, often engaged in conflict and competition with other stakeholders.

The following questions set the framework for discussion on the rules of our engagement for us as sociologists of work: what is the role of a researcher within the public sociology framework? How do we disseminate our scientific knowledge to empower people who share their life experiences with us? What do we do when the groups that we study have a clear political standing? What happens when the studied group’s actions may worsen their position? I will discuss the challenges and pitfalls of positions of engagement of sociologists of work in relations with trade unions, shaped by public sociology approach, expert position and tempered radical position. The discussions on „rules of engagement” in the field of industrial relations can enrich the understanding of public sociology as well. It enables to reflect on the possibility of romanticisation of the position of sociologist, the change of position from scientist to political actor, and of the agency of the studied groups and individuals, their expertise and strategies. I will be specifically interested in the shortcomings and challenges of different forms of engagement, looking at different power relations in the research field, limitations for development of further research and criticism, limits of reciprocity and threat of instrumental approach etc. In my presentation I will rely on the experiences of various forms of cooperation and dialogue with trade unions, using autoethnographic material and positioning it in the traditions of practice of sociology of work in Poland and Europe.

Group session: 09:00-11:00

G9. (Re)Defining Work in the Internet Age: Unveiling Dynamics of Online Labor Markets

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Karol Muszynski** (University of Warsaw)

Kamil Łuczaj, Aleksandra Drażczyk (University of Lodz): When does work happen for Internet content creators? Exploring work-for-labor, the intelligentsia habitus, and social legitimization

Kaja Kaźmierska (University of Lodz): Conflict of roles or conflict of discourses — the meaning of work in the narratives of large family mothers

Paweł Zalewski (University of Warsaw): Exploring the life trajectories and digital capital accumulation of micro-influencers

Lisa Yuk-ming LEUNG (Lingnan University, Hong Kong): Perceived 'micro-aggression' among racial minority workers across on and offline job sectors in Hong Kong

G10. The chronic crisis of precarious work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Dominika Polkowska** (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University)

Anna Kiersztyn (University of Warsaw), **Katarzyna Kopycka** (University of Lodz): „Good luck trying to become a professor if you don't have family money” - prolonged fixed-term employment at labor market entry in Germany, Poland and the UK.

Beata Boór (University of Vienna): The value(s) of work for young people: analysing claims of age-based differences

Stefan Bieńkowski (University of Warsaw): „I'm better out of the system — on my own”: The Experience and Meaning of Non-standard Employment in Poland

Hanna Szalecka (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan): Gastro-problems. Precarity of Polish cater workers

Ksawery Olczyk (University of Lodz): „Icarus Flight for Life”. — An analysis of the experience of precarious work in the stories of young food service workers

Klara Babińska (Lille University): What kind of autonomy for the „unemployable” in an experimental French Return-to-Work Program?

G11. Climate crisis and green transition

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Chair: **Szymon Pilch** (University of Wrocław)

Vasiliki Krommyda (National Technical University of Athens), **Stelios Gialis** (University of the Aegean): Transforming labour regimes in the context of a socio-ecological fix: The case of lignite phase-out in Western Macedonia, Greece

Vassil Kirov, Rumiana Jeleva (Bulgarian Academy of Science): Not yet Green and Digital? The challenges faced by the construction sector in Bulgaria

Mauricio Torres (University of Pará — UFPA), **Thais Borges de Farias** (University of Pará, Brazil), **Brian Garvey** (University of Strathclyde): Mining the future: the porous boundaries of land and law

Natasa Szabó (Central European University): Labour and the climate crisis: the effects of green transition and Chinese investments in the Hungarian automotive industry

Stephanie Daher (Grenoble School of Management): When Sustainability initiatives and Indigenous Realities meet: Ontological Violence in the case of the 'Paiter Suruí Carbon Credit REDD+ Project'

Lucas Cifuentes (University of Manchester): Clean Energy Transition on Whose Shoulders: The Experience of the Strike by Workers in the Atacama Salt Flat

G12. Professional groups in times of polycrisis — part I

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Justyna Zielińska** (The Maria Grzegorzewska University)

Marta Gospodarczyk (University of Warsaw): Drought, war, and the European Union — narratives of interlocking crises in the narratives of Polish farmers

Olga Czeranowska (SWPS University in Warsaw): Gender of career success? Definitions and experiences of career success in gender occupational minorities

Małgorzata Suchacka (University of Silesia in Katowice): The role of universities in shaping market attitudes of entrepreneurship

Hubert Kotarski, Agata Ludera-Ruszel (University of Rzeszów): Work-life balance — an analysis of the challenges of work-life balance among higher education staff

Cagatay Edgucan Sahin (Ordu University): Dynamics of labor market and employment practices on substandard vessels: An ethnographic inquiry [on-line]

G9. (Re)Defining Work in the Internet Age: Unveiling Dynamics of Online Labor Markets

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Kamil Łuczaj, Aleksandra Drążczyk (University of Lodz): When does work happen for Internet content creators? Exploring work-for-labor, the intelligentsia habitus, and social legitimization

The paper delves into the boundaries of work within the realm of Polish internet content creators, exploring the concepts of work-for-labor, the intelligentsia habitus, and social legitimization. Drawing on autobiographical narrative interviews conducted with Polish internet content creators born between 1980 and 2004, the primary aim of this presentation is to unveil the implicit definition of work within this social context. The analysis unfolds in three layers. Firstly, by employing Guy Standing's distinction between proper work and work-for-labor, we scrutinize the activities and circumstances that categorize them as either the former or the latter. Secondly, delving into the ideal of a politically active intelligentsia, traditionally assuming roles as political commentators, we focus on the biographies of creators inclined towards political engagement. This investigation addresses specific queries related to their political involvement, the significance attached to education, and the lifelong learning process, including self-education. Thirdly, by concentrating on external evaluations of their work, as portrayed in the interviews, we explore when and under what circumstances internet content creation is perceived as legitimate work by significant others such as family members or friends. The presentation posits that a distinct line is often drawn between professional work, understood as the recording or preparation of material, and work-for-labor, encompassing research and knowledge acquisition as prerequisites for their professional activities. At the same time, self-development is typically perceived not as a goal in itself but as an instrumental necessity. In contrast to the intelligentsia participating in the economy of symbolic goods (as outlined by Pierre Bourdieu), these creators engage in capitalist market exchanges, framing their activities within a neoliberal discourse. The same market logics play a pivotal role in establishing the value of their work in the eyes of significant others, prioritizing material outcomes over the symbolic value of the content itself. An alternative self-understanding emerges only when the interviewees align themselves with the intelligentsia habitus, framing their profit-making endeavors not merely as a consequence of personal interest but as a mission intricately linked to their core identity.

Kaja Kaźmierska (University of Lodz): Conflict of roles or conflict of discourses – the meaning of work in the narratives of large family mothers

The presentation is focused on the results of the analysis of two narrative interviews conducted with multi-children mothers. In both cases, having four children induces the narrators to suspend their professional activity. In the perspective of the stereotypically assigned categorisations, they represent a family model with a rather traditional assignment of roles - it is the man who is professionally active and supports the family, whereas women – mothers stay at home. However, the analysis of the narratives shows the non-obviousness of this categorisation and the meanings that the two female narrators assign to their (un)professional activity. The process of negotiating these meanings between themselves and the environment representing different discourses shows the place of work in their biography and the construction of individual identity.

Paweł Zalewski (University of Warsaw): Exploring the life trajectories and digital capital accumulation of micro-influencers

The ubiquity of digital technology necessitates a nuanced understanding of its impact on individuals' lives. This study examines the life trajectories of micro-influencers, who focus on their particular niche and cultivate smaller but much more engaged audiences, contrary to the most prominent influencers. This paper explores how micro-influencers build their online presence and the role of digital capital in this process. To explore this issue, I will present two life stories from two micro-influencers to illuminate the commonalities and distinctions in their approaches to building their online presence. This paper discusses the preliminary results of a larger research project regarding digital capital accumulation in young adults, during which several young adults aged 23-29 were interviewed using the Biographic-Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM). The analysis will show how interviewees describe their process of digital capital accumulation, which is linked to their educational and career trajectories, involving tensions between structural factors (field in Pierre Bourdieu's terminology) and individual capacities (habitus). Understanding this process sheds light on how micro-influencers leverage resources to build their online presence. Preliminary findings suggest that micro-influencers may not prioritize expanding their accounts, questioning the pursuit of a career solely through influencing. By exploring the experiences of micro-influencers, the research contributes to broader discussions about the digital landscape, including issues related to digital entrepreneurship and career choices.

G9. (Re)Defining Work in the Internet Age: Unveiling Dynamics of Online Labor Markets

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Lisa Yuk-ming LEUNG (Lingnan University, Hong Kong): Perceived 'micro-aggression' among racial minority workers across on and offline job sectors in Hong Kong

Research on racialized labour studies have increasingly focused on the variegated precarities that racial minority workers face, especially in the face of gig-gified labour and global pandemic. This paper attempts to contribute to this line of scholarship by articulating the possible differences of perceived micro-aggression among racial minority workers (both migrant and local) across platformed as well as conventional job sectors. The proposed paper asks this question in a specific post-colonial context such as Hong Kong, where some racial minority groups have settled in the territory for generations, yet are still subjugated to years of 'structural minoritization'. The paper is based on findings from a funded research which examines the labour conditions among South Asian minority employees across gig and conventional job sectors in Hong Kong. Drawing from surveys and focused interview findings, this paper discusses firstly how and to what extent 'micro-aggression', could be perceived differently between gig and non-gig workers. It would also reveal how migrant and locally raised minority (gig) workers could rationalize and respond differently to discriminatory acts in the workplace. These findings would help expose the deeply entrenched racism that has been formed from years of colonization could manifest throughout the entire labour process across gig and conventional job sectors. Eventually, it also proposes the notion of 'cultural health' as part and parcel to the call for enhanced occupational health, to resolve the 'augmented precarities' facing migrant/ minority workers in the platformized economy. In a bid to articulate the solidarity agency among (racial) minority workers, the paper will also outline acts of 'mediated resistance', from Youtube video-making, social media production to organized actions, among these minority workers, in increasingly neoliberal and authoritarian polities.

G10. The chronic crisis of precarious work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Anna Kiersztyn (University of Warsaw), **Katarzyna Kopycka** (University of Lodz): „Good luck trying to become a professor if you don't have family money” - prolonged fixed-term employment at labor market entry in Germany, Poland and the UK.

We assess the heterogeneity of wage and occupational status trajectories of young people who experienced fixed-term employment in the initial years of their labor market activity. In particular, we investigate whether trajectories characterised by prolonged initial contractual instability among individuals with higher education differ systematically depending on parental socioeconomic status (SES) of individuals in three countries representing differing institutional contexts: Germany, Poland, and the UK. Recent empirical evidence and subsequent theorising suggest that persistent temporary employment is not restricted to the low skilled workforce, but has become a problem for young highly educated professionals entering the labor market. Technological progress, globalization and increasing competition, coupled with the rise of investor capitalism with its emphasis on shareholder value, have spurred the move towards customized and flexible production, which involves the increased use of temporary workforce, outsourcing and project-based work teams, accompanied by corporate downsizing and restructuring. Such changes are undermining the advantageous position of high skilled workers, exposing them to heightened levels of uncertainty and competition and pushing them to maximise productivity in order to keep their jobs and maintain their employability. Our study is the first to assess the interplay of socioeconomic inequalities and temporary employment in shaping the dynamics of wage and occupational career trajectories by focusing on the type of employment not only at labour market entry, but also in the following years. In that way, we take into account the heterogeneity within temporary work arrangements, which can either act as stepping stones to permanent positions or trap workers in sequences of fixed-term jobs. Furthermore, allocation to these paths may be driven by educational attainment and parental socioeconomic status, with differing implications for subsequent career outcomes. Using data from national panel surveys (the German SOEP, UKHLS Understanding Society and Polish Panel Survey POLPAN), we apply a regression analysis on random slope estimates in order to investigate the effects of education and parental SES on career entry patterns in the first three years of employment histories after leaving education. We distinguish “stable” early careers characterized by constant permanent employment, “stepping-stones” characterized by mobility from initial fixed-term to permanent employment, and “traps” – the most unfavourable entry patterns, in which there is no transition to permanent employment. To assess the relationship between type of labor market entry and later careers, we estimate growth curve models of occupational attainment and wage mobility during up to ten first years of work activity, including interaction effects to examine how this relationship is moderated by education and parental status. Our findings have important implications with regard to the ways in which labour market change is affecting the patterns of intra- and intergenerational social mobility in different societies.

Beata Boór (University of Vienna): The value(s) of work for young people: analysing claims of age-based differences

While the Austrian labour market struggles with ongoing issues of labour shortage, discourse in media and parts of the public deems a change in work values in young people towards idleness and an overly demanding attitude to be the cause of them. Even though previous research could not provide empirical evidence about age-related differences in work ethic, it remains a trending media topic. But, where does this discrepancy of perception come from and how can we explain this rise in cultural contestation? Considering that the meanings, expectations, and values attached to work affect the way people engage in it and thus shape the world of work in the future, it is crucial to understand what works means to people today.

This paper seeks to explore these questions by examining the individual factors that influence and shape the meaning of work for young people. Building on a dialectical understanding of a mutually reinforcing level of structure and agency, a practice theoretical approach is applied to identify the factors influencing the value(s) of work and to highlight the heterogeneity of younger age groups. Drawing on a set of quantitative analyses based on the Austrian Corona Panel Project (ACPP) I countercheck the mentioned popular claims, show that age is only one of many influencing variables and demonstrate the need for labour market actors to focus on the quality of work rather than further clinging to unsupported positions.

Stefan Bieńkowski (University of Warsaw): „I'm better out of the system – on my own”: The Experience and Meaning of Non-standard Employment in Poland

This paper aims to describe and analyse the experience of work with non-standard employment and meanings ascribed to such work in Poland. Non-standard employment is understood as any type of employment other than standard employment relationship, and non-registered work. The study is based on 24 biographical interviews conducted with two distinct groups: care workers caring for elders and data analysts. The interpretation is situated within the context of the shift from welfare states to workfare states and the deregulation of employment in Poland. The analytical focus is placed on the intersection of experience and meaning. Following the micro-level approach the paper describes various experiences of non-standard work among two groups of workers, pointing to the whole spectrum from voluntarily choosing such an employment to pressure from employers that is leading to exploitation. Experiences are then juxtaposed with meanings attributed to the work, which spread from self-entrepreneurialism and positive valuations to condemnation and rejection. The visible rupture between experiences of struggle and exploitation and positive meanings associated with the non-standard employment are explained with biographical contexts of each individual. This research is conducted as a part of a PhD project developed at the University of Warsaw.

Social Boundaries of Work 2024 Wrocław Friday 18th Oct. 2024

G10. The chronic crisis of precarious work

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Hanna Szalecka (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan): Gastro-problems. Precarity of Polish cater workers

Gastronomia jest prężnie rozwijającym się sektorem gospodarki, który aktywnie porządkuje naszą codzienność. Według szacunku Stanisława Lipca (2022) w polskiej gastronomii zatrudnionych jest pół miliona osób, o których pracy i statusie niewiele jednak słyszymy, zarówno na poziomie dyskursu akademickiego, jak i publicznego. Jednocześnie temat ten wiąże się z socjologią krytyczną oraz socjologią pracy, a także z dyskusją na temat praw człowieka i emocji w miejscu pracy, i to właśnie w tych ramach chciałabym osadzić moje wystąpienie. Podążając za myślą Guy'a Standinga (2014) na temat prekariatu zamierzam przeanalizować osoby pracujące w gastronomii i wykonywaną przez nich pracę przez pryzmat prekarności i jej najważniejszych cech – niepewności, niedoceniaenia i frustracji (Graeber, 2019). Aby wypełnić tę lukę w wiedzy realizuję obecnie projekt badawczy dotyczący polskich pracowników gastronomii. Składa się on z dwóch etapów: ilościowego i jakościowego. W ramach swojego wystąpienia chciałabym skupić się na pierwszym z nich, zaś dane z badania jakościowego (którymi są indywidualne wywiady pogłębione prowadzone przeze mnie obecnie) stanowiąby cenne uzupełnienie danych ilościowych. Stworzony przeze mnie kwestionariusz ankiety internetowej (CAWI) wypełniło 444 osób respondenckich. Kwestionariusz, wyłączając sekcje metryczkę, składał się z siedmiu głównych części dotyczących (1) stażu i charakteru pracy w gastronomii, (2) umowy, (3) warunków w pracy (bezpieczeństwa), (4) dobrostanu i zdrowia, (5) wynagrodzenia, (6) relacji w pracy i (7) życia prywatnego. Ankieta skupiała się na odpowiedziach zamkniętych (z wyjątkiem jednego pytania otwartego, oferującego poruszenie innych, ważnych dla osób odpowiadających wątków), w których zastosowałam zarówno odpowiedzi jednokrotnego, jak i wielokrotnego wyboru, a także skalę Likerta. Zebrane dane pokazują: prekarny charakter zatrudnienia w tym sektorze, brak odpowiedniej reprezentacji pracujących w gastronomii osób, poczucie braku doceniaenia społecznego, nieproporcjonalność ilości pracy do otrzymywanego wynagrodzenia, problemy zdrowotne wynikające z charakteru wykonywanej pracy, nieposzanowanie dla podstawowych potrzeb fizjologicznych, złe warunki w samej pracy, duży wpływ pracy na życie prywatne oraz złą organizację samej pracy. Wnioski płynące z etapu badania ilościowego pokazują niepokojący obraz gastronomii: eksploatację czasu, zdrowia i dobrostanu psychicznego pracujących w gastronomii osób, które otrzymują nieadekwatne do ilości pracy i jej niewypowiedzianych konsekwencji wynagrodzenie, co zwrótnie oddziałuje na jakość i komfort ich codziennego funkcjonowania. To z kolei, w połączeniu z brakiem reprezentacji i społecznym niedoceniaeniem, potwierdza tezę Standinga o „czterech A” : anger, anomie, anxiety i alienation oraz udowadnia, że pracowniczki i pracownicy polskiej gastronomii zdecydowanie zasługują na zainteresowanie i miejsce w dialogu.

Ksawery Olczyk (University of Lodz): „Icarus Flight for Life”. — An analysis of the experience of precarious work in the stories of young food service workers

In the lecture I would like to draw attention to the consequences of the phenomenon of precarious labor in the branch of the service sector, which is gastronomy in the broadest sense. I will base my speech on the conclusions of my analysis, made as part of my own master's degree thesis. The source of inspiration for my research was constructivist-oriented grounded theory. I conducted the study itself by means of unstructured in-depth interviews. However, it was preceded by a kind of "participatory observation" of several months in one of the pubs of Lodz. The choice of "gastronomic world" as the main topic of my work turned out to be important for me, due to its specific character. It compasses all the inherent characteristics of precarious work such as instability, transience, and unfavorable working conditions. Despite the notoriety of this type of employment, many young people not only opt for it, but also stay in it much longer than they initially expected. Over time, this work no longer functions just as an opportunity for temporary income. It becomes a lifestyle and sometimes an individual's identity. Regardless of the specific conditions of work, undeniably affecting the health and life decisions of the individual, young people often declare enjoyment of their work. The intensity of the activities and the "here-and-now" lifestyle allows the inner voices and doubts associated with the problematic period of early adulthood to be relatively silenced. The structural problems imprinted on an individual's life can only intensify the need for escapism. Precarity experienced in gastronomic work, allows one to escape from life's worries at the same time allowing one to "live life" intensely. This bipolarity had its vent in the narrative carried out by the respondents, in which "enjoying life" was often used interchangeably with "life pouring between the fingers." It also became symptomatic of their escape from boredom, which was often combined with panic attacks or feeling of "wasting time." In order to temporarily prevent negative emotions, they use alcohol, drugs, or work. In my interpretation, I see the young precariat as the mythical Icarus, who, blinded by the beauty of the sun, burns in its flames. As it seems, from the fate known from the painting by Pieter Bruegel, the individual can only be saved by abandoning his current flight path. However, in an unstable modern age, is this surely the expected alternative?

Klara Babińska (Lille University): What kind of autonomy for the „unemployable” in an experimental French Return-to-Work Program?

The aim of this presentation is to explore the notion of autonomy in an experimental French program designed to combat poverty by putting people to work. This program, which we investigated as part of a long-term ethnographic study (2 years) during our doctoral research in sociology, is based on the model of a work-integration enterprise, and integrates former long-term unemployed men and women into the workforce by offering them activities in the field of reuse, in conjunction with a local network of social economy actors. We consider the program as at the crossroads between the integration sector and the world of conventional employment. Operating on a voluntary basis, it aims to empower employees who are expected to get involved. In the presentation we focus on the reconfigurations of autonomy within this program, which is apprehended in the light of the desire to govern poverty. We question the organization of work, with the forms of supervision it puts in place to produce employee autonomy. This autonomy is questioned through the notion of resistance which takes place through different ways of diverting the uses of the program. Our research has shown that experience and intimate knowledge of this program to which employees are subjected produces a form of autonomy that is different from the empowerment formally expected. We have also demonstrated the relational nature of this autonomy, which is achieved through a reappropriation of work.

G11. Climate crisis and green transition

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Vasiliki Krommyda (National Technical University of Athens), **Stelios Gialis** (University of the Aegean): Transforming labour regimes in the context of a socio-ecological fix: The case of lignite phase-out in Western Macedonia, Greece

The paper examines the ongoing restructuring of electricity generation in the context of the climate crisis. It focuses on the intricate interplay between changing labour regimes and evolving energy landscapes resulting from the lignite phase-out through the theoretical concept of socio-ecological fix. The Greek region of Western Macedonia is used as a case study to examine the power dynamics shaped by long-standing mining and lignite-based energy production. In doing so, it employs a mixed-methods research approach, namely, interviews and focus groups which are combined with secondary data, policy measures and grey literature to examine the labour and socio-ecological ramifications of the transition to renewable resources, in particular solar and wind energy.

The research focuses on different dimensions such as technological change, labour control, spatial restructuring, social reproduction and the agency of workers and local actors. These facets indicate the mechanisms that shape labour regimes and energy geographies. This study aims to stimulate a discourse on ongoing socio-ecological fix, eliciting fundamental enquiry into the evolving nature of labour in changing energy geographies and the increasing precarity that accompanies it.

The analysis shows the emergence of a privatised energy landscape characterised by fragmented and devalued working conditions. It emphasises that socio-ecological fixes in regions that are phasing out coal-fired power generation, such as Western Macedonia, are confronted with constraints resulting from technological rigidities, spatial and temporal limitations of renewable energy and contradictory action strategies of local actors. Grassroots movements against land grabbing play a particularly important role in this dynamic.

Vassil Kirov, Rumiana Jeleva (Bulgarian Academy of Science): Not yet Green and Digital? The challenges faced by the construction sector in Bulgaria

The European Commission, under the leadership of Ursula von den Leyen, formulated two major priorities in 2019: the European Green Deal and the digital transformation, known together as the twin transition (European Commission 2022). Moreover, EU-level discussions on the links between digitalisation and the environment have been gaining momentum in recent years (Kirov 2023). The EU recognizes that the green and digital transitions are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. However, in the context of polycrisis entire regions, sectors or companies have experienced significant difficulties to adapt to this twin transition, endangering employment levels and quality of work (Hallman 2013). The objective of this paper is to focus on the case of the construction sector, based on the results of the empirical study titled "Trends in the Development of Occupations and Skills in the Construction Sector", conducted as part of the EU funded project "Strengthening Industrial Relations in the Construction Sector in Central and East

European Countries". The primary objective of this research was to gain insights into the perspectives of the Bulgarian construction industry regarding evolving professions, disappearing roles, and the emergence of new skills, as a result of the impact of digital technologies and advancements in energy efficiency and green energy on the sector. In the continuum of pessimistic to optimistic scenarios about job destruction/job creation/job change/job replacement (Degryse 2016), we claim a more nuanced view on the possibility of job destruction, focusing on job change (Warhurst et al. 2019; Kornelakis et al. 2022). The empirical research employed a comprehensive methodological approach that combined both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative aspect of the study involved surveying representatives from construction companies affiliated with the Bulgarian Construction Chamber (BCC). The data collected in from this 2023 survey (a total of 264 completed questionnaires) was analysed. The research findings reveal that a significant portion of Bulgarian construction companies have not yet been substantially impacted by the twin transition, nor have they introduced significant operational changes in recent years. Many of these companies have not adopted new technologies and believe that their employees possess the requisite skills for their roles. Overall, training opportunities for employees within the sector are infrequent and rarely focused on digital integration or the green transition. Nevertheless, more than half of the surveyed companies anticipate forthcoming changes that will shape their skill demands and corporate policies. In this perspective, the availability of national and funding opportunities opens certain avenues for social dialogue development that will be explored in the conclusion of the paper.

Mauricio Torres (University of Pará — UFPA), **Thais Borges de Farias** (University of Pará, Brazil), **Brian Garvey** (University of Strathclyde): Mining the future: the porous boundaries of land and law

A map of so-called "protected areas" in the Amazon; indigenous lands, environmental conservation units and agrarian reform settlements, suggests that large tracts of the biome are formally prevented from becoming private property and thus lie outside of the market. These types of areas do, to a large extent, play an effective role in terms of guaranteeing the territorial rights and working livelihoods of traditional peoples and communities. Superimposing the layers of deforestation on these areas, it becomes clear how they act as a barrier to predation promoted by the expansion of capital in the Amazon. However, these limits are under threat for two main reasons. The first of these is non-compliance with imposed legal restrictions. Although, legally, certain predatory activities are prohibited in these areas, invaders ignore these limits and, with impunity, plunder such territories and commercialise their theft. The second point is perhaps even more worrying. It is about the construction of a legal and political apparatus that creates legal loopholes for capital to appropriate the territory, by controlling the subsoil and the forest. In both cases, the products of territorial exploitation incorporate commercial networks in "regular" transnational negotiations for minerals and timber that reach the London stock market. By presenting research collected over two decades in two regions of the Brazilian Amazon that was updated in field visits in 2023, this article highlights how mining companies increase the value of their shares through dismissal, co-option or coercion of traditional occupants of resource-rich biomes.

G11. Climate crisis and green transition

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Natasa Szabó (Central European University): Labour and the climate crisis: the effects of green transition and Chinese investments in the Hungarian automotive industry

The decarbonization of the economy poses burning questions about the future of labor in the green transition. With the shift to electromobility, the automotive industry is at the forefront of the green capitalist modernization. The electrification of the automotive industry entails more than a technological shift: it marks a reorganization of value chains, production regimes and ecologies. Chinese electric vehicle (EV) and battery companies are at the center of this transformation, contributing to a potential rupture with the current Toyotist production models by importing highly flexible labor organization techniques prevalent in the electronics industry. My paper deals with the socio-ecological consequences of the intertwined processes of electric transition and the growing international presence of Chinese firms in the automotive industry. I present the initial findings of an ethnographic study of the labor regime in the Hungarian automotive industry, with a focus on the city of Debrecen. Debrecen serves as a strategic point for studying these interlinked processes, facilitated by the Hungarian government's approach to compete for FDIs through the relaxation of labor standards and environmental regulations. The clustering of Chinese battery and electric vehicle producers in Debrecen has been accompanied by concerns about health, safety, and pollution, leading to locals' protest against the factories. Simultaneously, the labor pool of the factories has been extended to include precarious university students and temporary workers from the Global South, reminiscing flexible 'dormitory labor regimes'. My paper asks: What new modes of organizing labor and ecology are emerging from these intertwined processes? The paper is based on ethnographic research in two Chinese firms in Debrecen: an electric car component factory and a battery separator factory. Studying these two factories allows me to grasp different aspects of the green transition: while the electric car component factory is more labor intensive and closer to "traditional" car manufacturing, the battery separator factory is more automated and requires less skilled labor force, easily filled by temporary workers. The project integrates the traditions of labor regime analysis, environmental labor studies and anthropology of labor. I consider the broader labor regime formed around factories as multiscale systems of labor control and regulation, which produce and reproduce workers and ecologies. This perspective allows me to connect the everyday experiences of workers to broader processes of capitalist reorganization, valorization, and racialization, and to see social reproduction and ecology as integrated components of the production process. Also, it enables me to extend my research from the factory floor to include the multiple actors (protest groups, trade unions, local/national institutions and government agencies) influencing the labor regime. I will therefore study both factories in their respective social context. Besides interviews and participant observation with workers and management I will focus on trade union efforts to organize in these greenfield factories with Chinese employers, and on the interaction of workers, employers and local environmental civic initiatives protesting the factories.

Stephanie Daher (Grenoble School of Management): When Sustainability initiatives and Indigenous Realities meet: Ontological Violence in the case of the 'Paiter Suruí Carbon Credit REDD+ Project'

Sustainability initiatives are increasingly engaging with Indigenous realities across the world. Developed through a diversity of frameworks and supported by public and private actors, sustainability initiatives involve claims of conservation and development. However, such development notions often presume common ground between Indigenous realities and sustainability initiatives, neglecting foundational differences that can lead to contemporary forms of colonization and violence. In this paper, we explore how sustainability initiatives and Indigenous realities engage with each other by empirically engaging with the 'Paiter Suruí Carbon Credit REDD+ Project' in Rondônia - Brazil. Drawing from a political ontology lens, we examine ethical imposition and ontological violence over the life of this program, describing their mechanisms. We argue that despite the positive potentials of such programs, sustainability initiatives can lead to a process by which indigenous modes of life are disrupted by the imposition of external discourses and practices.

Lucas Cifuentes (University of Manchester): Clean Energy Transition on Whose Shoulders: The Experience of the Strike by Workers in the Atacama Salt Flat

The paper "Clean Energy Transition on Whose Shoulders: The Experience of the Strike by Workers in the Atacama Salt Flat" delves into the historic 2021 strike at the lithium mine in Chile's Atacama Salt Flat, a first and singular event in the country's lithium industry. Led by the workers' union of the North American-owned Albemarle company, the strike endured for over 30 days, marking a significant milestone. The research adopts a comprehensive approach, incorporating interviews with workers, community leaders, Albemarle representatives, and local political authorities. These interviews offer unique insights into the motivations, demands, and perceptions of the various stakeholders. Additionally, the study is supported by meticulous archival research to contextualize and complement the information gleaned from interviews. The strike's duration and unprecedented impact are best understood through the shared experiences of those directly involved. Indigenous communities surrounding the salt flat played a crucial role by actively supporting the strike, providing material, political, and moral assistance, adding an extra layer of complexity to the labour dispute. This article not only dissects the strike events but also highlights intersections between labour, territorial, and community dimensions. The analysis unfolds within the context of a global production network, underscoring the global relevance of the lithium industry in the transition to cleaner energy sources. In conclusion, "Clean Energy Transition on Whose Shoulders" draws from archival data, statistics, and firsthand perspectives of those involved, offering a nuanced understanding of this labour phenomenon within a 400-word limit. The article contributes significantly to the analysis of contemporary labour mobilizations, emphasizing the importance of considering social and community dimensions in the context of the energy transition.

G12. Professional groups in times of polycrisis – part I

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Marta Gospodarczyk (University of Warsaw): Drought, war, and the European Union – narratives of interlocking crises in the narratives of Polish farmers

The recent farmers' protests across the EU, including in Poland, have directed the general public's attention towards farming, which is currently deeply affected by many interlocking and concurrent factors: climate crisis, the ongoing war in Ukraine and its' consequences, and the new Green Deal regulations across the EU. This paper will focus on Polish farming households as micro case studies on the impact of these co-existing factors on farmers and their family members. My research touches upon the coping and decision-making strategies of the members of farming households in Poland, especially the process of negotiating said strategies, while they are being influenced by larger societal crises. Initially, it was limited in scope to the impact of agricultural drought; however, during the research, it has become increasingly clear, that drought occurs concurrently with other crises (such as the aforementioned war in Ukraine and resistance towards new EU regulations regarding agriculture), and to separate them would be to lose a valuable perspective. The concept of polycrisis is an apt tool to describe the situation in which the members of the investigated farming households find themselves and the way these circumstances influence their decision-making processes and coping strategies. The research was based on individual in-depth interviews with members of the farming households in two selected gminas (communes) in Poland, as well as participant observations, conducted in 2023 and 2024. The presentation will touch upon the interconnectedness of drought, and war in Ukraine as well as state-level and European regulations in the narratives of household strategies, as told by their members. The several crises occurring simultaneously, with differing intensity, make up the framework that shapes said household strategies - they influence the decisions made by the members of the farming households. They serve as both constraints on the productivity of the households, as well as possibly incentives for undertaking political actions (i.e. engaging in farmers' protests). The gendered dimension in the decision-making process within the household, as well as in experiencing these crises, will also be explored.

Olga Czeranowska (SWPS University in Warsaw): Gender of career success? Definitions and experiences of career success in gender occupational minorities

Gender is one of the most important factors influencing an individual's situation in the labor market. Despite sociocultural changes and anti-discrimination regulations, women still face various types of discrimination in the. Gender occupational segregation is one way in which gender influences career. This phenomenon occurs in two forms: vertical and horizontal. Vertical segregation is connected to barriers that prevent women from being promoted to the highest, most prestigious and best-paid positions. Horizontal gender segregation relates to some occupations or sectors of the labor market being

considered "feminine," while others are considered "masculine." Division of the labor market into "feminine" and "masculine" affects women's chances of achieving high prestige and high-income job positions – "feminine" occupations and sectors are the ones with low salaries and few promotion opportunities. Despite the established division between "feminine" and "masculine" occupations, resulting in actual feminisation/masculinisation of those occupations, there are some individuals who deviate from these gender-based occupation norms in their choice of the occupational path. The presence of men in feminized occupations and women in masculinised occupations is referred to as non-traditional employment or gender-atypical employment. We propose an alternative term, "occupational gender minorities," which is more focused on individuals and acknowledges their minority status. Although some aspects of occupational gender minorities' work lives have been relatively well-researched, to the best of our knowledge, no study has focused on their perceptions and experiences of career success. The present qualitative analysis investigates two highly skilled groups of occupations, who were chosen based on Bourdieu's (1998) practical principles of gender occupational segregation: IT/new technologies for women and childcare and education for men. We analysed the interviewees' definitions of career success and their experiences in achieving (or not achieving) career success within their occupational trajectories. Furthermore, our investigation delved into the factors influencing career success, particularly emphasizing the influence of gender. We use occupational gender minorities as extreme cases, enabling us to analyse gendered meanings of careers success and its' role in men's and women's careers.

Małgorzata Suchacka (University of Silesia in Katowice): The role of universities in shaping market attitudes of entrepreneurship

Universities not only educate specialists in specific fields but also play an important role in creating appropriate competencies necessary on the labor market. The presented research conducted in 2022 concerned the foundations of creating start-ups and the role of universities in this process. The research was of a qualitative nature - it consisted of interviews with experts - representatives of Silesian universities. The effects are part of a broader project commissioned by SPIN-US, including quantitative research among residents, local government business communities and start-ups. The analyzes conducted show certain gaps in university strategies regarding support for people applying to establish a start-up. On the other hand, we can point to many very interesting individual cases of activities in which entrepreneurship, openness and conditions for the inspiration of talented students are shaped. This fits into European and global trends concerning mobilization and organization of labor - especially of young people. The conclusions critically refer to the difficult role of universities, which shapes human capital and entrepreneurship, facing the challenges of different expectations of the labor market, including processes of both professionalization and deprofessionalization. Young employees. In conclusion, certain imperfections of the university system and its strengths in shaping the market basis of entrepreneurship can be pointed out.

Social Boundaries of Work 2024 Wrocław Friday 18th Oct. 2024

G12. Professional groups in times of polycrisis – part I

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Hubert Kotarski, Agata Ludera-Ruszel (University of Rzeszów): Work-life balance – an analysis of the challenges of work-life balance among higher education staff

The clash between the professional and private spheres is inherent in the nature of employment, especially employee employment. The employee, in exchange for the benefits of his or her work, gives up, to a certain extent, his or her freedom to decide about his or her private life during the time devoted to the provision of work. The question of what is the right balance between the employee's private and working time is of crucial importance. The justification for the balance between an employee's working and private time is based on fundamental human rights, which include the right to protection of life and health, protection of privacy, protection of family life. This also applies to protection against social exclusion and protection against unequal treatment, especially in the context of family life, when family responsibilities limit the employee's ability to prepare for, start and participate in professional activities. Balancing the private and professional spheres remains a considerable challenge for higher education staff. To the widest extent, this applies to research and teaching staff. Work-life balance, in this case, has to be referred to all three spheres in which work is performed, namely research, teaching and organisation. The interpenetration of the private and professional spheres is strongest in relation to scientific activities. To a lesser extent, it occurs in the performance of the employee's organisational and teaching duties. The article will present the results of the study, which focused on analysing key aspects of work-life balance in the context of human rights: 1) the right to family life, understood as this balance is also crucial for the realisation of the right to family life, which is protected by numerous international conventions such as the European Convention on Human Rights. Employees in the higher education sector should have sufficient time to engage with their families, raise their children and participate in society; 2) the right to health, understood as access to health leave, restrictions on overtime and support in the workplace with specialised assistance (e.g. psychological); 3) the right to equality and non-discrimination, understood as a balance in the context of gender equality and the development and implementation of internal discrimination legislation in the workplace; 4) the right to personal integrity, which in the context of digitalisation and remote working increasingly blurs the boundaries between private and professional life. Ensuring that workers in the higher education sector can disconnect from their professional responsibilities and have protection from constant accessibility is important for privacy and personal integrity. The aim of the survey was to provide knowledge on the challenges of work-life balance for higher education employees in the context of human rights protection, particularly in the area of scientific activity. The survey covered employees of Polish public higher education institutions employed in research and research and teaching positions. The research technique used was CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interview), and the survey covered all groups of employees of Polish public higher education institutions employed in research and research and teaching positions. The results obtained may be helpful in identifying areas in need of legal changes and in developing recommendations to support employees in achieving a better balance between these two spheres of life.

Cagatay Edgucan Sahin (Ordu University): Dynamics of labor market and employment practices on substandard vessels: An ethnographic inquiry [on-line]

Approximately 90% of the world's trade is carried by international maritime transportation due to its cost effectiveness compared to other modes of transportation. The main elements of maritime transport are warehouses, ports, commercial cargo ships and the seafarers who work on these ships. Merchant ships as living and working spaces are isolated, mobile, risky, noisy, male-dominated, and hierarchical. Seafarers working on merchant ships form transnational communities whose living and working standards are regulated according to international standards and who work on fixed-term contracts of several months. On the other hand, the living and working conditions of seafarers depend on the type of ship they work on, the age of the ship, whether the ship operates as a liner or tramp, whether the maintenance processes are carried out in a timely and effective manner, the quality of the provisions, the company's personnel policy, whether there are enough and experienced seafarers on board, whether seafarers have the opportunity to leave the ship in port cities, and the condition of the accommodation. This study focuses on the labor market conditions and employment practices of seafarers, with a special focus on cost minimization and profit maximization at the expense of seafarers, and systematic exploitation. The study is using qualitative data based on 4.5 months of participant observation on board a substandard ship in 2021 and 2023 (which is owned by an Istanbul based company), and a series of semi-structured face-to-face interviews conducted both on board and ashore. Main results of this study can be summarized as follows: 1- Substandard shipping is not limited only with the material conditions of vessels. It is also related with seafarers training, qualifications, daily onboard operation practices and the operational logic of the shipping company. 2- Seafarer candidates in İstanbul, were coming from a great variety of background such as bakeries, cleaners, retired steel workers, unemployed car workers, tailors, high-school dropouts, economists, textile workers, and so on. Possible reasons of this composition are structural unemployment, and the median wages that under the poverty line. These candidates constitute of a part of transnational community, who search for the hope at sea. 3- Middlemen/brokers are integrated parts of substandard shipping. It is almost impossible to find a job onboard without brokers since they share their intermediary fee with the personnel managers. The fees can be paid before or after getting onboard and this varies by national identity, being a first-timer onboard or not, and so on. All interviewed seafarers (Azerbaijan, Georgian, Syrian, Turkish) stated that they join the ship via their national middlemen, who operates her/his job from İstanbul. The process of capital accumulation and racialization of labor are intertwined in the substandard shipping. 4- The companies use late pay policy. However, to pay some extras for the engine crew can be considered as a norm as the vessel is old (20-25 years). National identities become rapidly invisible between Georgian, Azerbaijani, Turkish, and Syrian seafarers when the wages paid later than usual. 5- Substandard shipping companies calculate daily calorie needs of seafarers only on the paper and the provisions (food onboard) mostly insufficient. 6- Onboard working conditions are labor intensive, and near-misses are among the daily routine. 7- There are common factors affect seafarers' psychology, who work vessels achieved industrial standards, such as stress, fatigue, sleeplessness, loneliness, noise, and vibration. Since there are lots of unexpected events in substandard ships such as frequent black outs, run agrounds, problems arise from low quality fuel, low quality of provisions, and late night provision deliveries, seafarers experience extra fatigue and sleeplessness and this cause work accidents.

Group session: 11:30-13:30

G13. The world of work and therapeutic culture

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Chair: **Agata Krasowska** (University of Wrocław)

Katarzyna Waniek, Joanna Wygnańska (University of Lodz): Internet work as therapy

Andrzej Frączyk (University of Lodz): What is 'worldwork'? The social in the perspective of therapeutic experts – the case of Process Oriented Psychology

Alicja Pałęcka (University of Warsaw): Work refusal as self-care. Case studies of the practices of the Polish unemployed

Jerzy Stachowiak (University of Lodz): Practical interest in the subordinates' psyche. On the problem of objectification

Jacek Gądecki, Katarzyna Hetmańczyk, Wojciech Kowalik (AGH University of Krakow): The harder the better. Makers practices as work and a hobby

G14. Popularization of remote work in critical perspective

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Olga Czeranowska** (SWPS University in Warsaw)

Michelle Mielly (EM-Lyon School of Management), **Lena Kurban Rouhana** (American University of Dubai): Flexible work arrangements and liquid flexibility: dissolving boundaries at the work-life confluence

Zuzanna Kowalik (University of Warsaw): Working from home and job satisfaction: A mediating effect of organisational culture

Azad Heydarov (University of Wrocław): Navigating new norms: the intersection of digital nomadism, tourism, migration, and the socio-economic implications of health and housing vulnerabilities

Piotr Binder (Polish Academy of Sciences): Transformations of remote work in a longitudinal perspective — towards remote work models

G15. Professional groups in times of polycrisis — part II

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Jacek Burski** (University of Wrocław)

Assaf Bondy (University of Bristol), **Ronen Mandelkern** (Tel-Aviv University): An odd couple? When mainstream economists join forces with trade unions

Bartosz Mika, Wiktor Sokół (University of Gdansk): Professionalization as a social process. Creation of the occupation on the example of physiotherapists in Poland

Michał Cebula (University of Wrocław): Social class, working conditions and resilience to crisis: An analysis of the Polish class structure

Justyna Zielińska (The Maria Grzegorzewska University): Job quality in the professions of psychotherapists and psychiatrists in contemporary Poland

G16. How the labour market turned the University into a student factory

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Chair: **Aniela Partyga** (University of Wrocław)

Małgorzata Damek (University of Wrocław): Feminisation in higher education

Adrian Prokopczyk, Piotr Woźniak (University of Wrocław): Changes in university infrastructure and its consequences for students

Pola Melonowska (University of Warsaw): Celebrations in a student factory: the loss of collective joy and rituals on Juwenalia festivities in Poland

Stefan Zaleski (Polish Academy of Sciences): Labor taxation as a source of social inequalities

G13. The world of work and therapeutic culture

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Katarzyna Waniek, Joanna Wygnańska (University of Lodz): Internet work as therapy

The paper will be based on empirical data collated within the research project: "Post-transformation in the perspective of biographical experiences of people born between 1980 and 2005. Sociological analysis" (NCN OPUS-21, UMO-2021/41/B/HS6/02048, project leader: prof. Kaja Kaźmierska). The aim of the project is to analyse the biographical experiences of people born between 1980 and 2005 in order to capture the mutual influence between the individual perspective (biographical experiences of the informants) and the macro-social and cultural processes (also reflected in media discourse) characteristic of the period referred to in the study as post-transformation. We assume that post-transformation should not be understood as 'post-transformation time', but as a significantly new aspect of ongoing social change shaped by processes of a global nature. In this optic, an important thread emerging from the collected research material is the aspect of locating the biographical experience of work on the Internet as a form of therapy. This is a new symbolic resource introduced by the narrators, which was not acknowledged at the level of constructing the assumptions of the research project. In the presentation, we will refer to the interviews with the creators of content shared on the Internet: Arabella, Piotrek, Julka, Franciszek and Zbyszek, pointing to the multiple dimensions of the therapeutic function of their online activities. Our reflections will take up the aspect of embedding this kind of activity in the frame of: (1) coping with fears, (2) the search for structures of meaning in the experience of profound disorder, (3) facing the difficulties arising from the biographical experience of a culture of invalidation, (4) finding a certain mission in the language of therapy and therapeutic culture. We will also show that the very category of work in the perspective adopted here does not necessarily involve financial gratification.

Andrzej Frączysty (University of Lodz): What is 'worldwork'? The social in the perspective of therapeutic experts – the case of Process Oriented Psychology

The dynamic evolution of therapeutic culture as a modernizing force in Polish society is an established reality. Over the years, a strong homology between the therapeutic domain and other sectors—scientific, educational, media, etc.—has been observed and documented (Jacyno, 2006). Notably, while criticism, both scholarly and popular, of other aspects of therapeutic culture is commonplace, a critical examination of the expert realm associated with psychotherapy is less frequent. Consequently, psychotherapy often appears as a neutral tool fostering progress in specific spheres of reality. It is perhaps this ideological neutrality that renders access to psychotherapy a contemporary subject of cross-class demands (Sadura & Sierakowski, 2022). Moreover, therapists or psychologists frequently assume the role of universal experts in public discourse (Dembek, 2009). In this context, I aim to present the preliminary findings of a study on a specific therapeutic approach—Process Oriented Psychology (POP). The study encompasses participant observation in Open Group Processes, analysis of selected

training materials, and several narrative-biographical interviews with practitioners of this psychotherapy current. The ethnographic study of Open Group Processes conducted between September 2023 and June 2024 holds particular significance for my research. Therapeutic experts describe Open Group Processes as a method of working with groups on issues pertinent to them, facilitating their self-discovery and helping them to embrace diversity (Duda, Mindell, & Szymkiewicz, 2013: 210). This method is utilized, among others, in POP training seminars, intended as a tool to help local communities, and used "in seminars on global issues (social, political, etc.), called worldwork" (ibid.). The notable aspect of therapeutic expertise offering methodologies not only for individuals, couples, or families but also for entire communities grappling with social or political conflicts underscores the importance of examining this facet of therapeutic culture from the perspectives of critical mental health studies and critical labour studies. In my presentation, I will first delve into the content of the (social) self-knowledge of therapeutic experts—its constituents and manifestations. Subsequently, I will endeavour to critically analyse this self-awareness, with a keen focus on instances of displacement, rupture, and understatement.

Alicja Pałęcka (University of Warsaw): Work refusal as self-care. Case studies of the practices of the Polish unemployed

Refusal of work is a strategy of insubordination towards the obligation to work or, more broadly, towards a work-centric society. It manifests itself in various ways. In its strong form, it entails complete non-participation in the labour market and abstention from paid work, as well as ceasing to seek paid employment. In its weaker form, it is also interpreted as work limitation: reducing working hours, performing fewer tasks, exhibiting laziness, and engaging in workplace sabotage (Frayne, 2015; Paulsen, 2014). Kathi Weeks (2011) primarily perceives the refusal to work as an expansion of freedom and practicing creativity. An ethnographic study of unemployment in Poland revealed various forms of work refusal. However, it is a relatively isolated and rare practice. Among the 56 people interviewed about their experiences of unemployment and interactions with labour offices (urzędy pracy), only a few actively engaged in work refusal. Moreover, only some of them did so as a result of a conscious choice and decision. These few cases provide material for further analysis and demonstrate both individual and structural factors that contribute to resistance to work. In analysing interviews, I seek reasons and motivations for prolonged resignation from paid employment. I confirm the motivations observed by David Frayne (2015) regarding work refusal and Roland Paulsen's (2014) observations regarding empty labour. However, I extend these authors' conclusions to include external conditions, such as those unrelated to direct motivations for refusing to work, yet enabling resistance (such as social capital and strong relationality). To address the thematic group theme, the "slackers," in their acts of self-responsibility, sought self-realization and creativity outside of both work and therapeutic culture. Some of them engaged in radical self-care, temporarily breaking away from work subordination and work culture. In the process, solidarity networks and welfare institutions were crucial in enabling their choices, despite their instability and unsustainability in the long term.

Data used in this paper comes from research projects financed by National Science Centre, Poland: "Negotiating norms in Polish labour market institutions. Perspective of the unemployed" (directed by Alicja Pałęcka, project no. 2018/31/N/HS6/01964) and "Information technologies in public policy. Critical analysis of the profiling the unemployed in Poland" (directed by dr Karolina Sztandar-Sztanderska, project no. 2016/23/B/HS5/00889).

G13. The world of work and therapeutic culture

Room: 203, the Institute of Sociology

Jerzy Stachowiak (University of Lodz): Practical interest in the subordinates' psyche. On the problem of objectification

In contemporary capitalist societies work planning treats an interest in the subordinates' psychology as a practical necessity. It is considered necessary to deal with an equally vast and intangible domain of knowledge, skills, values, thought patterns, motivation, individual experiences, professional competencies, etc. This paper suggests some ways to comprehend what it means for contemporary work planning to be practical about the psyche. It is based on a discourse analytical study on socio-historical transformations of the culture of capitalism since the mid-19th century. To illustrate the problem of being practical about the domain of the inner life of subordinates two contemporary examples are used. Both are advisory texts taken from a leading Polish monthly magazine "Personel i Zarządzanie" ("Personel and Management"). These texts are advisory in the sense that they instruct on what to do better and what better to do with employees, how to handle the intangibility of their psyche, and how to deal with it efficiently. Being practical about these matters, this paper argues, amounts to being able to consider what is said to be going on in people's heads and hearts on the pattern of manipulation of objects. Despite the modern legitimacy of democratic and egalitarian relationships between the "top" and the "bottom" of the power hierarchy, being practical about the psyche relies on a specific and widely used type of objectification. It does not emerge as a new instance of Taylorism or authoritarianism. This specific type of objectification is a result of a massive historical process of the civilizing of objectification. It is argued that a specific interest of work planning in the subordinates' psyche does not reveal the techné of psychology. Rather, it reveals how being practical is based on an image of technological manipulation of objects.

Jacek Gądecki, Katarzyna Hetmańczyk, Wojciech Kowalik (AGH University of Krakow): The harder the better. Makers practices as work and a hobby

In the speech, we present the preliminary results of our research on amateur do-it-yourselfers. We seek to explore their relationship between, work, materials and tools in the context of serious leisure, that transcends work and leisure situating DIYers between professionals and amateurs. In the popular book "Making is Connecting" Gauntlett (2011) notes that making can be thought of as connecting 1) materials 2) people 3) communities and environments. The growing popularity of DIY culture in Poland is still largely underexplored. Therefore, it is important to search for meaning in amateur work. There is a lack of comprehensive and cross-individual coverage of the so-called "serious amateurs" work. Serious amateurs find therapeutic value in their work: they find meaning in the activities they carry out, and they seek a deeper connection with their environment, their work, and other makers, balancing between amateur and professional work. Our research focuses on methods such as: investigating manufacturing practices in workshops (participant observation and analysis of artifact collections) and research into individual production practices (object interviews and video diaries of makers). We try to find the meaning of "real work" and "serious amateur" including specific values related to DIY and craft.

G14. Popularization of remote work in critical perspective

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Michelle Mielly (EM-Lyon School of Management), **Lena Kurban Rouhana** (American University of Dubai): Flexible work arrangements and liquid flexibility: dissolving boundaries at the work-life confluence

The rise in Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) and the post-pandemic normalization of hybrid work has placed ever-increasing pressures on organizations and their employees, with particular implications for working women. This conceptual paper uncovers divergences at the intersection of gender and FWAs, where a simultaneously supportive and intrusive employer offers the promise and peril of flexibility. Two predominant visions emerge from the literature: a household-centric approach on the receiving end of flexibility, and a workplace-centric approach on the sending side. We explore both perspectives to challenge paradigmatic approaches to work-life boundaries and borders, theorizing that flexibility is unbounded, liquid, and predominantly unidirectional, flowing downstream into the home more effortlessly than upstream into the workplace. Conceptualizing liquid flexibility yields two key implications. It suggests first that we are now in a 'post-boundary' era situated at the confluence of work and life; and second, that the flexibility flowing into the home is absorbed more acutely by working women. We call for more critical scholarship to develop nuanced understandings of how unbounded liquid flexibility affects working women's lives globally.

Zuzanna Kowalik (University of Warsaw): Working from home and job satisfaction: A mediating effect of organisational culture

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the world of work by triggering an unprecedented shift towards working from home, which noticeably impacted working conditions and boundaries between private and professional life. The effect of working from home on various outcomes associated with workers' well-being has been extensively studied. It has been shown that WFH may lead to better integration of family and work responsibilities and, therefore, reduce work-role stress and overall fatigue (Gajendran and Harrison, 2007). WFH and job satisfaction might also positively correlate (Niebuhr et al., 2022). Employees working at home occasionally reported a more significant sense of well-being and less stress on days they did not have to commute to work (Bosua et al., 2013). However, telework might negatively affect an individual's mental and physical health, mainly due to extended hours and lack of delineation between work and home (Allen, Golden and Shockley, 2015). Telework was also associated with increased stress and decreased happiness (Song and Gao, 2019). Lack of contact and reduced collaboration opportunities might also cause social problems and isolation (Golden, Veiga and Dino, 2008). Research aim: Amidst the challenges that may impede the advantageous aspects of working from home, obstacles such as limited opportunities for professional advancement and inhibited collaboration with colleagues emerge prominently. However, these impediments are likely mitigated in environments characterised by a robust organisational culture, where emphasis is placed on fostering effective communication and collaboration practices. This paper delves into the relationship between working from home, job satisfaction and organisational culture. As companies transition to remote work and hybrid models, understanding what shapes job satisfaction in such novel settings becomes crucial. Method: This study utilises a novel German linked employer-employee dataset, the Linked Personnel Panel (LPP), to investigate the consequences of WfH. The LPP offers unique insights into private-sector establishments and their employees, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between WfH, organisational culture, and job satisfaction. I use multiple linear regressions as the primary analytical method to explore the interplay between various factors influencing the phenomenon. Results: Analysis reveals that individuals working from home report higher levels of job satisfaction. However, further examination uncovers that this effect is mediated by organisational culture. Specifically, employees in companies with a strong organisational culture exhibit greater job satisfaction than those with an average culture. Moreover, individuals who work from home and experience a positive organisational culture demonstrate even higher levels of job satisfaction. These findings underscore organisational culture's importance in shaping remote work's perceived benefits and highlight potential avenues for intervention and policy development to enhance WfH experiences.

G14. Popularization of remote work in critical perspective

Room: 25, the Institute of Political Science

Azad Heydarov (University of Wrocław): Navigating new norms: the intersection of digital nomadism, tourism, migration, and the socio-economic implications of health and housing vulnerabilities

This presentation proposes an academic exploration into the evolving dynamics between tourism and migration, focusing on the transition Bauman highlighted from settled to nomadic societies. It examines the rise of digital nomadism and its influence on the new trend where individuals increasingly engage in non-ownership and rent spaces, navigating between roles as tourists and migrants. It scrutinizes the implications of this evolution, particularly the move away from traditional ownership towards flexible living arrangements that obscure the distinctions between tourists and migrants. At the forefront of this study is a thorough examination of digital nomads' experiences, with a special focus on vulnerabilities related to health and housing in the face of cultural otherness and feelings of estrangement. Employing video blogs as a key data source, the research provides insightful glimpses into the personal stories of digital nomads. It reveals how their itinerant lifestyles influence their perceptions of home, community, and belonging, engendering a sense of estrangement from established societal frameworks. The exploration also addresses the health challenges these individuals encounter, including the complexities of maintaining physical and mental well-being and accessing healthcare in diverse locations, all framed within the larger socio-economic contexts of the gig economy and neoliberal leisure practices. The presentation explores how digital nomadism reshapes identity and social interactions, illustrating how this lifestyle reflects and amplifies broader global mobility patterns and changes in the labor market. It reconceptualizes our understanding of work, leisure, and community in the contemporary era, critically rethinking social norms and behaviors. Through a methodology that blends ethnographic strategies with symbolic interactionism, the study aims to unpack the multifaceted essence of digital nomadism. This approach facilitates a broad exploration of the interconnection between individual experiences and wider societal movements, offering deep insights into this way of life's socio-cultural and economic bases. Expected to deepen the dialogue on global mobility, emerging work trends, and lifestyle transformations, this research dovetails with the conference's exploration of socio-economic upheavals and transformations. The findings are expected to contribute significantly to the discourse on global mobility, work trends, and lifestyle changes, aligning with the conference's themes of socio-economic challenges and transformations in the labor market and society at large. The paper articulates the relevance of understanding how digital nomadism intersects with societal changes, especially in the context of critical labour studies and the current polycrisis.

Piotr Binder (Polish Academy of Sciences): Transformations of remote work in a longitudinal perspective — towards remote work models

The proposed paper analyzes one aspect of contemporary social change: the increasing flexibility of work regarding its time and place. Possibilities of performing professional duties via ICT were spreading gradually long before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, only this period contributed to a sudden increase in the popularity of remote work and a wider use of remote work components. These include technical solutions such as e-mail, instant messaging, and online platforms, as well as organizational solutions like flexible working time organization and partial reduction in commuting to work. The paper's thesis is that the changes initiated during the pandemic were not temporary but became embedded in employees' practices and solutions adopted by employers. Over time, the progressive diversification of practiced solutions has led to the crystallization of various remote work models. The study's empirical basis is semi-structured interviews with 50 people who worked remotely with varying intensity between 2020 and 2022. During this time, participants were interviewed thrice annually as part of the longitudinal qualitative research. In the theoretical dimension, the analyses of the collected materials were inspired, on the one hand, by the concept of 'teleworkability,' which refers to the extent to which a job can be performed remotely, enabling us to go beyond the binary opposition in-office/remote. On the other hand, the study was guided by the 'boundary theory,' which is sensitive to changes at the intersection of the professional and private spheres and how remote work blurs these boundaries. The result of the analysis is the typology of remote work models. The basis for its construction are two dimensions (attributes) of this phenomenon: the scope of duties performed remotely and the organizational flexibility of the workplace. This made it possible to extract from the data four separate models, including (1) the occasional work-from-home, in which remote work is one of the solutions available in the workplace, although used rarely and irregularly; (2) the office-first, in which most of the work is performed at the employer's premises, but remote work remains part of the professional routine (e.g., 1-2 days a week); (3) the remote-first, in which most of the work is performed remotely (e.g., 3-4 days a week), but work in the office remains a permanent part of the performance of duties; and (4) the fully remote, where duties are performed via ICT and in-office contacts are limited (e.g., twice a month or less often). The inquiry indicates that during the pandemic, remote work components began to play a significantly greater role in participants' professional lives. Consequently, work's spatial and temporal frameworks became more flexible, allowing the shifting of the boundaries between work and private life. In addition, the fact that the way work is organized is not always reflected in the employment contract means that the total scale of changes in the labor market is not fully reflected in the measurement of the remote work phenomenon. These changes and the diversity of professional contexts represented by participants indicate a broader cultural dimension of ongoing changes in the work sphere.

G15. Professional groups in times of polycrisis – part II

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Assaf Bondy (University of Bristol), **Ronen Mandelkern** (Tel-Aviv University): An odd couple? When mainstream economists join forces with trade unions

The doubtful tendencies of neoclassical economics towards interventions in labour markets put it at odds with trade unions, whose *raison d'être* is protecting workers from market dynamics. Organised labour seeks to empower workers and reduce power disparities vis-à-vis employers; as these concepts are absent from neoclassical economic theory, which is generally suspicious towards such interventions. Accordingly, economists' involvement within trade unions has usually been limited by one or more of the following conditions: First, the professional background of influential union economists has been heterodox rather than neoclassical economics. Second, the influence of union economists with neoclassical background usually pertains to macroeconomic issues rather than micro-level collective bargaining. Third, involved in micro-level collective bargaining, economists usually operate as backstage assistants rather than frontstage leadership. Given the basic tension between neoclassical economics and trade unions, and the historically significant but limited position of mainstream economists within unions, the recent economic professionalization of Israel's main Labour Federation, the Histadrut, is puzzling. By "economic professionalization" we refer to an institutional change, through which mainstream economists, whose expertise is based on neoclassical economics, have rapidly gained a leading position in micro-level collective bargaining within the Histadrut, alongside (and sometimes instead of) elected workers representatives and union officials. Accordingly, the article focuses on two questions: First, which conditions drive this institutional change? Second, what are its consequences, especially in terms of the union's approach to collective bargaining? To address these questions, we develop a novel theoretical framework which bridges between industrial relations and power resource theories, and the literature on the political influence of economists. Following the literature on industrial relations liberalization and respective changes in unions' power resources, we suggest that processes of decentralization and marketization encourage trade unions to rely on the professional advice of mainstream economists. In a political-economic context which increasingly empowers employers, unions turn to rely on professional economists as an additional power resource. We further argue that economic professionalization not only empowers unions but also affects how they define their preferences and how to achieve them. The neoclassical background of mainstream economists brings into the union a depoliticized view of industrial relations which undermines the role of cross-class power relations. In addition, mainstream economists also tend to support market-friendly adaptations of collective agreements like flexible wage-setting mechanisms and performance-based compensation. Thus, economic professionalization is not just the outcome of industrial relations liberalization,

but also contributes to their further liberalization. We corroborate these arguments through an in-depth analysis of our case study, based on 29 semi-structured interviews with union leaders and economists involved in industrial relations, and on internal documents of the Histadrut's Economics Division. Our analysis suggests that liberalization is affected not only by the (external) environment in which unions operate but also by intra-organisational processes of depoliticized professionalization within unions themselves.

Bartosz Mika, Wiktor Sokół (University of Gdansk): Professionalization as a social process. Creation of the occupation on the example of physiotherapists in Poland

The presentation will focus on the initial findings of ongoing research dedicated to the practices of masseurs and physiotherapists. One unique aspect of working in a specific occupation is the social acknowledgment of certain tasks as constituting a distinct job. Establishing the social boundaries of an occupation is an intricate and enduring process. The presentation will concentrate on establishing the occupational status of physiotherapists through formal processes, integrating the profession into legislation (2015 bill), and social structures creating guild-like societies that protect occupational boundaries (the Polish Chamber of Physiotherapists). The professionalization process for physiotherapists in Poland is relatively recent and easily available for examination. Legislation devoted to physiotherapy was established in 2015, regulating the practice of physical therapy, acquisition of the right to practice, professional training, and professional liability. In December 2016, The Polish Chamber of Physiotherapists was established, representing the profession and defending the occupational rights of its members. Both processes were interlinked and created the formal framework for physiotherapy as an independent medical occupation. We reconstructed the process of professionalization of physiotherapy by conducting in-depth interviews with experts involved in passing the 2015 bill and active members of the aforementioned Chamber. Additionally, we enhanced our research by conducting more than 20 detailed interviews (IDIs) with physiotherapists and masseurs. During the presentation, we will analyze the boundaries of both occupations by examining their competences, job certificates, skills, and work goals. We will demonstrate how professionalization, defined as the establishment of distinct professional boundaries within subjective worker narratives of similar yet separate job roles, is acknowledged in legal frameworks. Furthermore, we will examine the mutual relationship between legal background and work processes, emphasizing how the social context of establishing boundaries based on distinction between physiotherapists and masseurs and social organization of workers in influential interest groups is crucial in creating and defending distinct occupations.

G15. Professional groups in times of polycrisis – part II

Room: 26, the Institute of Political Science

Michał Cebula (University of Wrocław): Social class, working conditions and resilience to crisis: An analysis of the Polish class structure

According to traditional approach, social classes are sets of structural positions that comprise people with specific components of their objective living conditions in common, especially their positions within labor markets and production units. This emphasizes the centrality of work and employment relations in class analysis. Following this line of thought, the aim of the presentation is to reconstruct a space of working conditions in Poland and their homologies with socioeconomic groups and other characteristics of individuals. As such, the study fulfills the postulate of Bourdieu's (1987) sociology to analyze differentiations and inequalities in relational manner, that is, here, by situating each socio-professional groups in the space defined by working conditions. Rather than treating conditions of work as inscribed in class divides (already accounted for by existing class schemes), the study problematizes these conditions and asks how they are differentiated and distributed in the social space. It enables us to establish what horizontal and vertical discrepancies can be detected and then where the boundaries between classes lie. Since working conditions may vary vertically and sectorially, the study applies Oesch's (2006) class analytical framework which complements the classical vertical axis of stratification between the higher and lower rank occupations with a horizontal axis of differentiation based on the work logic characterizing an occupation. Four work-logics are distinguished: interpersonal, administrative, technical and independent. Empirically, I utilize data from the European Social Survey (Round 10), conducted in 2020-21, that contain information on individual fulfillment (job satisfaction), work autonomy, integration into work collectives, relations with superiors, working overtime, type of contract, work-life balance, remote working. The inequalities in working conditions are additionally tested in terms of individual consequences of corona-pandemic outbreak. The study contributes to better understanding of class divides and class boundaries as well as more general processes of precarization of work and resilience to occurring crises.

Justyna Zielińska (The Maria Grzegorzewska University): Job quality in the professions of psychotherapists and psychiatrists in contemporary Poland

This paper presents the results of empirical research on job quality among psychotherapists and psychiatrists during polycrisis. Psychotherapy and psychiatry are professions of particular social importance as they aim to provide professional support to people experiencing mental distress and disorders. The recent surge in global and local crises, known as polycrisis, has led to a rise in feelings of uncertainty and mental distress among various social groups, particularly youth and children (WHO 2022, CBOS 2023). The demand for professional mental health support has increased due to the polycrisis, and this has resulted in various tensions and challenges in the professions of mental health specialists. The paper presents the outcomes of a qualitative research that was initiated in 2023. Field research consisting of individual in-depth interviews with psychiatrists and psychotherapists is scheduled to take place from May to July 2024 in Poland. The research is based on the perspectives of sociology of professions and sociology of work. It is comparative in nature between the two professions and includes issues such as work history, everyday professional experiences, emotional labour, job quality and transformation of work, challenges, and coping strategies with tensions and difficulties.

G16. How the labour market turned the University into a student factory

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Małgorzata Damek (University of Wrocław): Feminisation in higher education

The paper is a part of the closed session by the Student Scientific Circle of Leftist Thought on "How has the labor market turned the University into a student factory?" and it will focus on the gender aspect of this problem. Based on in-depth interviews with female students at Wrocław's universities, there will be a comparison of perceptions of typically "masculine" and "feminine" fields of study, whether such correlations are relevant to respondents, and how they affect the value of a given education and choices regarding it. As it goes for methodology the interviews are conducted using the method of biographical narrative interviews in accordance with the principles of research design and analysis using the Fritz Schuetze method. The use of Bourdieu is not accidental, the role of his concept of habitus is key to the interpretation of interviews. Through it, an individual perceives, evaluates, and reacts to the world in accordance with the patterns established in each environment. Habitus is created in conditions imposed by dominant groups, and when it comes to gender, it will be men. In Bourdieu's book *Masculine Domination*, the topic of women's choices regarding education is correlated with their habitus. Even though the formal obstacles are gone (every woman can go and study at polytechnics), the self-exclusion mechanism still operates. Biographical narrative interviews will be a perfect way to look at respondents through the lenses of Bourdieu's theory, to see how their upbringing formulated their habitus and how they perceive their choices. Such internalized traces of domination do not mean automatic acceptance of them, but they do affect the dispositions and thinking patterns of those subject to them, thereby influencing life choices, including those concerning education. Statements by respondents representing female or male-dominated degrees will highlight the mechanisms of symbolic violence and the tensions generated by it. But it's not the only reason for use of Bourdieu. It was also because of his insight into the devaluation of degrees formerly available only to dominants, then penetrated by other groups. In his other book *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, he sees the process of inflation and devaluation of school titles. This process as in all of Bourdieu's work is correlated with class but also with gender because of the mass entrance of women to education and the professional workforce in recent history. Following his conclusions I want to examine if devaluation of certain positions is because of its feminisation. In the panel, Bourdieu's theory will be compared with the idea of the paradox of the satisfied slave constructed by Catherine Hakim. The gender segmentation of students in various fields is also situated in feminist theory research, it is particularly connected with the idea of false consciousness used by feminists referring to Marxist theory. To complete my analysis, I will refer to the work of academics such as Sylvia Walby and Carole Pateman.

Adrian Prokopczyk, Piotr Woźniak (University of Wrocław): Changes in university infrastructure and its consequences for students

This paper is a part of the closed session by the Student Scientific Circle of Leftist Thought on „How has the labour market turned the University into a student factory?”. In our part of the panel, we will examine how urban infrastructure and its transformations influence the formation and transformation of the student and the university as a specific type of entity. This approach makes it possible, on the one hand, to present the history of the university's transformation by showing the changes in its architectural background, related to the changing state and city political system, the nature of the university and perceptions about studying, and, on the other hand, it allows us to look at how the spatial conditions in which students reside create specific forms and attitudes towards the university, the student and higher education in general. The mutual relationship of creation - of man creating space and space creating man - also allows us to find the modus operandi that drives this relationship and the principles on which it runs. At the same time, it is apparent, both nationally and at the city level, that there is a growing outcry against the current state of the university's facilities - especially the student dormitories and the surrounding infrastructure provided for students. This overlaps with the process, which has been going on for years, of the relocation of faculties and units of universities in Wrocław out of the city centre. But what is driving this process? How can we ensure that the interests of university students and staff are taken into account in decisions of such importance, in addition to economic issues related to the price of real estate? Of what relevance to the creation and reproduction of inequality is the failure of university infrastructure to fulfil the livelihood needs of students? How this changes push students out of spaces previously intended for them?

G16. How the labour market turned the University into a student factory

Room: 27, the Institute of Political Science

Pola Melonowska (University of Warsaw): Celebrations in a student factory: the loss of collective joy and rituals on Juwenalia festivities in Poland

This paper is a part of the closed session by the Student Scientific Circle of Leftist Thought on "How has the labour market turned the University into a student factory?". It will analyze the influence of neoliberalism over higher education on the example of student festivals. Juwenalia is a annual holiday of Polish students, usually celebrated in May and preceding the summer exam session. These festivities have a history dating back to the 15th century and for a long time they were meant to celebrate youth, spring and collectivity through parades, carnival dresses and student contests. In 20th century they have taken form of concerts, dances and open air gatherings. However, the neoliberal influences over academia have gradually reached even the student festivals. In the recent years, students have voiced their disapproval over the presence of corporate representatives and program appropriate rather for a job fairs than the springtime parties. These bold examples should be seen as a culmination of a longer process of gentrification, commodification and privatization of student festivities. It transformed the customs of student's sociability and the image of Juwenalia into more enclosed and sponsored events. The double form of the holiday points to the two radically different ideas of what being a student means. Juwenalia as an open air feast of drinking, dancing and dressing up promotes the notion of a student as a slightly decadent, dreamy, sociable and lacking in material means. He has yet to grow up and would certainly not make a diligent and humble worker. However, the corporations press for the promotion of a new image – the student-worker. He does not socialize – he builds networks, and he looks for ways to boost his career even in the time of spring-break.

The notion of a student-worker is created not only through the economy and schooling, but also in the sphere of leisure and celebration. I will present the figures of a traditional spring-breaker and the newly emerged entrepreneur of the self and illustrate them with retained images of past and present festivities. The first figure of a student will be portrayed through the data from the Polish People's Republic. Firstly, I will reach for amateur student press – Dwukropek, Faktor, Magazyn Studencki and Spojrzenia. Secondly, I will use photographs from national digital archives. In regard to the neoliberal figure, I will examine the official programs of Juwenalia published by universities and compare them with the responses of student associations voiced on the social media. The empirical data will be related to theory through the critical discourse analysis.

Juwenalia is not an extensively studied topic. There are individual articles regarding e.g. the contestation of the communist government by students or the history of the festival on a given university.

Stefan Zaleski (Polish Academy of Sciences): Labor taxation as a source of social inequalities

The ubiquity of digital technology necessitates a nuanced understanding of its impact on individuals' lives. This study examines the life trajectories of micro-influencers, who focus on their particular niche and cultivate smaller but much more engaged audiences, contrary to the most prominent influencers. This paper explores how micro-influencers build their online presence and the role of digital capital in this process. To explore this issue, I will present two life stories from two micro-influencers to illuminate the commonalities and distinctions in their approaches to building their online presence. This paper discusses the preliminary results of a larger research project regarding digital capital accumulation in young adults, during which several young adults aged 23-29 were interviewed using the Biographic-Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM). The analysis will show how interviewees describe their process of digital capital accumulation, which is linked to their educational and career trajectories, involving tensions between structural factors (field in Pierre Bourdieu's terminology) and individual capacities (habitus). Understanding this process sheds light on how micro-influencers leverage resources to build their online presence. Preliminary findings suggest that micro-influencers may not prioritize expanding their accounts, questioning the pursuit of a career solely through influencing. By exploring the experiences of micro-influencers, the research contributes to broader discussions about the digital landscape, including issues related to digital entrepreneurship and career choices.



social boundaries of work

Critical Labour Studies in the Times of a Polycrisis

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