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**LABOUR RELATIONS TRENDS IN EMPLOYEE EVALUATIONS:
COUNTRY TO COUNTRY COMPARISON**

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Abstract

The turbulence of the modern economic environment has a destructive impact on the well-being of employees. Companies are increasingly using toxic personnel/HR management practices which poison the organization's environment thus creating unfavourable working conditions for the employees. The aim of this research is to monitor and analyse the changes in labour relations and working conditions in the private sector in five countries. It also identifies those features in labour relations, which we consider to be phenomena resulting from social pollution. The research uses the questionnaire survey method, which contains closed-ended questions as well as some questions with some open-ended questions. We noted and evaluated the changes taking place in labour relations in the Czech Republic, Italy, Latvia, Pakistan, and Russia during the period 2015–2016. Based on the survey results, we argue that the factors of social pollution are indeed having a destructive impact on employees' well-being. These findings cover different categories of employees working under different socio-economic conditions. We have also identified the social pollution factors which influence the formation and spread of the precariat [i.e., proletariat under conditions of precarious working conditions] as a new social class. Monitoring, and in-depth studies carried out on these factors will enable the development of new concepts in, and techniques of, welfare management of human resources in companies and countries.

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Keywords: Labour relations, social pollution, employers, employees, socio-economic conditions, precariat.



1. Introduction

Changes in the sphere of labour relations, which have been observed in recent years, are a consequence of the socio-economic crisis. Labour relations was the sector least well adapted to the new realities of economic life (Doody, et al., 2016). Under the conditions of economic crisis, the problems associated with adverse changes in labour relations came to the forefront. These problems exert a negative influence on labour relations, working conditions and the health of employees (Bazillier, et al., 2016). Researchers have developed a model for estimating the increased mortality rate, as well as the escalating health costs, which are associated with exposure to the ten workplace stressors. They include the following: unemployment, lack of health insurance, exposure to shift work, long working hours, job insecurity, work-family conflict, low job control, high job demands, low social support at work, as well as a low level of organizational justice (Goh, et al., 2016). Company managers are increasingly using toxic personnel/HR management practices as part of their drive to reduce labour costs. The sum total of negative factors in modern working life is considered to be social pollution resulting from the ways in which companies perform their business activities. (Pfeffer, 2010).

Social pollution occurs in the new reality of the sphere of labour relations. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the peculiarities of modern labour relations. Institutions pay special attention to precarious employment, as well as to the flexibility of personnel (Campbell, Price, 2016, Kalleberg, Hewison, 2013). The phenomenon of precarious employment has been growing over several decades, which has given rise to a new social class: the precariat (Standing, 2011). Flexibility in labour relations has led to a reduction of employees' social certainty, as well as an increase in unstable and insecure employment conditions and a deterioration in the quality of working lives (Bleses, 2016). Toxic personnel/HR management practices are harmful to the physical and psychosocial well-being of the workers (Sarti, Zella, 2016, Scott-Marshall, Tompa, 2011). Over the long term this situation could affect the quality of the national labour resources, resulting in deficiencies in the economic growth processes of a country (Siegmann, Schiphorst, 2016). Hence, the choice of variants in socio-economic policy must begin with the monitoring and assessment of changes in the labour sphere. In turn, this monitoring is an indicator, as well as a catalyst for the necessary changes to be made in social policy.

2. Problem Statement

The aim of this research is to monitor and analyse the changes occurring in labour relations and working conditions in the private sector in five countries. It also identifies the differences and common features in labour relations, which we believe to be phenomena stemming from social pollution.

2.1. Work under verbal agreement and short-term labour contracts

There are several types of precarious employment contracts. However, we believe that special attention should be paid to the fact that a growing number of workers are forced to work without the protection of any written agreement. The absence of a written contract of employment is fraught with danger for workers. Employers can refuse to comply with their obligations; e.g.: by not paying workers for work done, as well as not accepting the result of the work, and unilaterally changing the terms of the

verbal agreement, and so on. In this case, obviously, workers do not have any social or legal protection. In times of economic crisis, enterprises make widespread use of short-term contracts, thereby removing a lot of the difficulties involved in sacking an employee. This use of short-term contracts by companies make their employees look like job-hoppers, which does not increase their attractiveness to potential employers, who value stability in an employee.

Toxic HRM practices

Another factor contributing to social pollution of the labour relations sphere is the use, by employers, of toxic personnel management practices. By toxic practices we mean those HR decisions and actions that decrease the level of workers' well-being. We define as toxic such HRM practices as hiring new employees on a short-term contract (from 1 to 6 months), employing temporary and seasonal workers, the transfer of some aspects of the work to cheaper parts of the world accompanied by staff reduction, early retirement, massive downsizing of employees, out-staffing [i.e. hiring staff from agencies], etc. All of these practices aim at the reduction of staff costs, but they have a negative effect on employees' welfare.

2.2. Infringements of labour contract conditions by employers

Unscrupulous employers could push their hired staff to work overtime without any compensation, as well as refusing to grant them holiday time, as well as laying them off in unlawful ways. According to occupational medicine specialists, the increasing workload accompanies the growth of tension, fatigue, and stress. Working overtime, as well as not getting holiday time and declining levels of remuneration, all have a negative impact not only on the material welfare of employees, but also their physical health and psychosocial well-being.

2.3. Employees' future threatened at work

Toxicity of the organization's environment, among other things, results from poor working conditions, stress, the destructive behaviour of managers and other sources of anxiety and negative emotions in the workplace. Psychosocial well-being at work also depends on the confidence of the personnel in the future of their field of professional activity. If the future is uncertain, and its planning becomes difficult due to the instability of the situation, both in the company and in the external labour market, workers may feel depressed.

3. Research Questions

The research questions are posed in the questionnaire and divided into six parts according to the problem area under investigation. So, we monitor forms of employment relationship and wages, changes in the organizations' personnel policy, types of infringement committed by employers, leadership decisions which are detrimental to employees' well-being and personality, as well as sources of anxiety and threats at work (Fedorova, Dvorakova, et al., 2016).

3.1. Forms of employment relationship

One of the factors of social pollution of the labour relations sphere is the precarious form of employment contract between employers and employees. Within the given study we highlight the following forms of precarious labour contracts: contract with the employer as a natural person; a verbal agreement with the employer (without any written contract); contract for services (i.e., a contracting agreement); piece work contract and a seasonal employment contract. We also examine the length of employment contracts, because short-term contracts are considered to be a factor of precarious employment.

3.2. Changes in companies' personnel policy

Monitoring allows us to clarify what changes in the personnel policy of companies have a negative impact on the well-being of workers. For this purpose, we look at the overall prevalence of the following acts which are implemented by companies in respect of their staff. They include: hiring new employees only on a short term basis; employing temporary and seasonal workers; sending the employees to early retirement; massive downsizing and partial reduction of the number of employees, the use of out-staffing instead of engaging full-time employees, etc.

3.3. Forms of infringement committed by employers

Among the infringements committed by employers in the discharge of their obligations towards their employees, we have placed: 1) direct infringements of labour legislation, and 2) improper observance of the provisions of labour legislation. As part of this monitoring we will examine the different forms of non-payment of salaries/wages, as well as the unjustified reduction of remuneration, failure to grant holiday time, wrongful dismissal, etc.

3.4. Sources of anxiety and threats at work

There is a multiplicity of reasons for anxiety and threats at the workplace. But the main focus of our study are the causal relationships between the toxic working environment and the decline in the psychosocial well-being of employees. For example, in this paper we note six main worries about the future. They are the following: job loss due to the economic crisis; the decline in wages/salaries/ non-pecuniary benefits; the absence of professional development; worsening physical health in the workplace; psychological loss of balance; the decline in job satisfaction.

4. Purpose of the Study

4.1. Long-term monitoring of the changes in labour relations

The aim of this project is to ensure the long-term scientific and practical activities of the monitoring, and evaluation of the transformation processes in the labour sphere, as well as the factors of social pollution stemming from the performance of companies' business activities; all of which have a negative impact on the well-being of the labour resources. This goal is achieved by a synthesis of studies of changes in the labour relations sphere, as well as in working conditions in different countries. This

research is a part of an ongoing, long-term cooperation undertaken by the International Research Team (Fedorova, Dvorakova, et al., 2016).

4.2. Cross-national comparative analysis

Cross-national comparative analysis of the results of the monitoring study will allow us to create a new knowledge system about the social pollution phenomenon, which overcomes the limitations connected with the specifics of a separate national economy. This paper presents the results of a survey conducted by the members of an international research network in five countries, and it focuses on the significant differences in the socio-economic systems.

5. Research Methods

5.1. Pilot study in Russian companies

The monitoring project, presented here, was started in 2013 when a pilot sociological research project was carried out in Russian enterprises. At this stage, the sociological tools have been developed, based on a poll of experts using a semi-structured interview. The interviewees were managers as well as specialists in the field of human resource management.

5.2. Testing of the sociological tools in Russia and the Czech Republic

According to the results of the expert poll, we have elaborated a structured questionnaire with dichotomous, scale and multi-variant questions. Approbation of the sociological tools was given in 2014 with the participation in the survey of the employees of Russian and Czech companies. Comparative analysis of the results obtained in these countries has allowed us to refine the methodology.

5.3. First stage of monitoring

Adapted to a multi-country survey questionnaires were drawn up for monitoring the research in countries with different socio-economic systems. In 2015, workers from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Italy, Latvia, Pakistan, and Russia participated in the survey, which consisted of some questions in a set format. The questionnaire includes ordinal-polytomous and dichotomous closed-ended questions, as well as with open-ended options in some of them.

The first cross-country survey conducted in April 2015, with the participation of 458 employees of companies from different sectors of the economy (Fedorova, Dvorakova, et al., 2016). Of the participating workers, the majority of them work in services (50.4%); with the others in manufacturing (15.0%) and energy production (12.0%), trade (10.3%), construction (6.6%) and other miscellaneous sectors (5.7%). The aggregate sample of the respondents by personnel categories includes 37.2% specialists; 24.1% manual workers; 16.2% line personnel; 15.8% middle managers; 3.7% top managers and 3.1% trainees. 42.8% of men and 57.2% of women participated in the survey. The age structure of the respondents was divided into two age groups consisting of people up to 35 years of age (55.9%), and the rest were in the 36-50 age group (44.1%).

5.4. Second stage of monitoring

The next survey was carried out in the period May-June, 2016 in cooperation with 668 employees from companies in the Czech Republic; –104, Italy; – 90, Latvia; – 100, Pakistan; – 120, Russia; – 155 and Poland; – 99 employees (Fedorova, Dvorakova, et al., 2016). The information was collected from random samples of companies from different sectors of the economy. The structure of the respondents by employee category includes 36.3% specialists; 22.3% manual workers; 18.2% line personnel; 10.2% middle managers; 6.0% top managers and 5.1% trainees. 47.9% of men and 52.1% of women participated in this survey. The age structure consisted of three age groups: people up to 35 years old (50.5%), the 36-50 age group (33.2%), and people over 50 (16.3%).

6. Findings

The comparative analysis uses a survey carried out over five countries (the Czech Republic, Italy, Latvia, Pakistan, and Russia) in the period 2015-2016. In addition, the empirical analysis is based on the employees' self-rated levels of well-being at work in all these aforementioned countries.

The first part of our study has shown the unevenness of the situation regarding the precarious form of employment relationships in the different countries (Table 01).

Table 01. [Responses to the question: “How exactly are your work arrangements formalized with your employer?”, % of the respondents]

| Response options | Countries | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|------|----------------|------|--------|------|----------|------|-------|------|
| | Russia | | Czech Republic | | Latvia | | Pakistan | | Italy | |
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Contract with my primary place of employment | 81.5 | 89.7 | 76.6 | 69.2 | 92.0 | 67.0 | 8.5 | 8.0 | 21.7 | 22.2 |
| Contract with the employer as a natural person | 8.1 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 4.8 | 4.0 | 7.0 | 17.0 | 25.0 | 8.7 | 8.9 |
| On the basis of a verbal agreement with the employer (without the agreement being recorded in writing) | 7.1 | 4.5 | 15.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 8.5 | 12.5 | 26.1 | 13.3 |
| Contract for services (i.e., a contracting agreement) | 0.9 | 1.9 | 4.7 | 5.8 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 17.0 | 8.3 | 21.7 | 13.3 |
| Piece work contract | 2.4 | 1.9 | 4.7 | 1.9 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 17.0 | 20.8 | 4.3 | 8.9 |
| Contract of seasonal employment | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.6 | 18.3 | 2.0 | 9.0 | 14.9 | 16.6 | 4.3 | 4.4 |

Source: Authors' Own Research.

The average percentage, in the participating countries, of responses about workers being hired by a verbal agreement with employers was 5.7% in 2015, and 6.9% in 2016. The number of respondents, who work under labour contracts signed for 2-3 months, six months and one year, varies across the participating countries (Table 02).

Table 02. [The responses to the question: “For what period are labour relations between you and your employer formalized?”, % of the respondents]

| Response options | Countries | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|------|----------------|------|--------|------|----------|------|-------|------|
| | Russia | | Czech Republic | | Latvia | | Pakistan | | Italy | |
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Contract for an indefinite term | 85.7 | 86.5 | 53.1 | 44.2 | 90.0 | 69.0 | 12.8 | 12.5 | 26.1 | 26.7 |
| 4-5 years | 2.9 | 3.9 | 17.2 | 8.7 | 0.0 | 8.0 | 14.9 | 13.3 | 21.7 | 17.8 |
| 3 years | 2.4 | 2.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.0 | 25.5 | 11.6 | 4.3 | 2.2 |
| 2 years | 1.0 | 0.6 | 10.9 | 2.9 | 0.0 | 3.0 | 21.3 | 17.5 | 4.3 | 2.2 |
| 1 year | 1.9 | 2.6 | 18.8 | 22.1 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 10.6 | 15.8 | 0.0 | 4.4 |
| 6 months | 1.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 16.3 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 12.8 | 5.8 | 13.0 | 13.3 |
| 2-3 months | 0.0 | 1.3 | 0.0 | 5.8 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 2.1 | 6.6 | 17.4 | 15.6 |
| Contractual term is dependent on the time needed to complete the task[s] which is/are the subject of the contract | 4.3 | 2.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 13.0 | 15.6 |

Source: Authors' Own Research.

We gathered the results of the research which was carried out to discover which of the changes, made over the past year, in a given company's human resource management policies, have had a negative impact upon the respondents. Hiring new employees only for a term ranging from 1 to 6 months was noted by 47.8% of respondents in 2015 in Italy, while in 2016 that number rose to 42.2%. In Bulgaria in 2015 28.6% of respondents noted the same thing. While in Latvia in 2015 and 2016 the numbers were 24% and 22% respectively. The overwhelming majority of respondents from Czech companies (96.9% in 2015 and 77.9% in 2016) reported an increase in the use of temporary and seasonal workers. Downsizing in connection with the transfer of part-time work to outsourcing is more often carried out in Czech companies (50% in 2015 and 33.7% in 2016) as well as in Pakistani companies (23.4% in 2015 and 22.5% in 2016). The respondents from those same countries more often pointed to the use of technology and to early retirement: 29.7% in 2015 and 11.5% in 2016 (Italy), and 17% in 2015 and 15% in 2016 (Pakistan), respectively. Mass dismissals mostly affected the respondents from Italy (17.4% in 2015 and 20% in 2016) and Pakistan (12.8% in 2015 and 15% in 2016), as well as respondents from Russia 15.5%

in 2016. Also, out-staffing is increasingly used: 17.4% in 2015 and 20% in 2016 (Italy), and 10.6% in 2015 and 12.6% in 2016 (Pakistan) respectively (Table 03).

Table 03. [The responses to the question: “What changes in the personnel policy of your organization have occurred over the past year?”, % of the respondents]

| Response options | Countries | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|------|----------------|------|--------|------|----------|------|-------|------|
| | Russia | | Czech Republic | | Latvia | | Pakistan | | Italy | |
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Hiring new employees only on a short term basis (from 1 to 6 months) | 18.6 | 19.4 | 21.9 | 9.6 | 24.0 | 22.0 | 10.6 | 4.1 | 47.8 | 42.2 |
| The use of temporary and seasonal workers provided by other companies | 8.1 | 12.3 | 96.9 | 77.9 | 10.0 | 14.0 | 10.6 | 18.3 | 13.0 | 8.9 |
| Partial reduction of the number of employees due to the transfer some aspects of the work to cheaper parts of the world[i.e., outsourcing] | 8.1 | 10.3 | 50.0 | 33.7 | 4.0 | 5.6 | 23.4 | 22.5 | 4.3 | 8.9 |
| Sending part of the employees to early retirement | 7.6 | 5.8 | 29.7 | 11.5 | 4.0 | 10.0 | 17.0 | 15.0 | 4.3 | 6.7 |
| Permanent reduction of staff every 3-6 months | 10.5 | 10.3 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 17.0 | 12.5 | 8.7 | 6.7 |
| Massive downsizing of employees (more than 50 people during one month; or more than 2 employees per year) | 9.0 | 15.5 | 4.7 | 1.9 | 12.0 | 11.0 | 12.8 | 15.0 | 17.4 | 20.0 |
| Use out-staffing instead of using the services of full-time employees | 8.6 | 7.7 | 1.6 | 9.6 | 4.0 | 6.0 | 10.6 | 12.5 | 17.4 | 20.0 |
| Other variants | 0.0 | 13.0 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 0.0 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.2 |

Source: Authors’ Own Research.

Workers [the respondents] of all the participating countries, reported that they faced breaches of employers’ obligations to employees, often associated with the infringement, or improper implementation of, labour laws (Table 04).

Comparative analysis of the results has revealed that employees most likely suffer as a result of infringements of labour contract conditions are Pakistani workers (70.2% in 2015 and 58.4% in 2016) as well as Italian workers (52.2% in 2015 and 53.3% in 2016). From the averaged figure of the answers given by the respondents in the countries surveyed it can be seen that the types of breaches are a mixture of various practices. They include the following:

- an increase in the workload without a corresponding increase in wages (45.9% in 2015 and 40.9% in 2016),
- non-payment of additional compensation for overtime (29.3% in 2015 and 25.5% in 2016),
- failure to grant holiday time (19% in 2015 and 14.9% in 2016),
- non-payment of the promised remuneration (16.2% in 2015 and 13.2% in 2016),
- unjustified reduction of salary (14.2% in 2015 and 11.1% in 2016),
- unreasonable delay in the payment of salaries/wages (period of up to one month) (2.9% in 2015 and 11.8% in 2016),
- unreasonable delay in the payment of salaries/wages (period of more than one month) (11.4% in 2015 and 7.8% in 2016),
- wrongful dismissal (9.9% in 2015 and 7.6% in 2016).

Table 04. [The responses to the question: “What form of infringement of the terms of your agreement/contract with the employer have ever occurred?”, % of the respondents]

| Response options | Countries | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|------|----------------|------|--------|------|----------|------|-------|------|
| | Russia | | Czech Republic | | Latvia | | Pakistan | | Italy | |
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Increase in the workload without a corresponding increase in wages | 43.3 | 48.8 | 32.0 | 18.8 | 57.1 | 66.7 | 27.3 | 11.4 | 41.7 | 48.0 |
| Non-payment of additional compensation for overtime | 33.3 | 31.7 | 12.0 | 12.5 | 50.0 | 18.2 | 12.1 | 14.2 | 25.0 | 36.0 |
| Failure to grant holiday time | 16.7 | 17.1 | 12.0 | 25.0 | 35.7 | 3.0 | 24.2 | 21.4 | 8.3 | 12.0 |
| Non-payment of the promised remuneration | 30.0 | 9.8 | 4.0 | 25.0 | 21.4 | 6.1 | 0.0 | 7.1 | 33.3 | 20.0 |
| Unjustified reduction of salary | 20.0 | 22.0 | 0.0 | 6.3 | 21.4 | 6.1 | 27.3 | 17.1 | 16.7 | 8.0 |
| Unreasonable delay in the payment of salaries/wages (period of up to 1 month) | 1.7 | 2.4 | 36.0 | 25.0 | 14.3 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 7.1 | 8.3 | 20.0 |
| Unreasonable delay in the payment of salaries/wages (period of more than one month) | 6.7 | 12.2 | 8.0 | 0.0 | 7.1 | 3.0 | 9.1 | 11.4 | 33.3 | 20.0 |
| Wrongful [unlawful] dismissal | 10.0 | 2.4 | 16.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 6.1 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 33.3 | 20.0 |

Source: Authors' Own Research.

Within the framework of the survey, respondents were asked to indicate which of the factors above reduces their levels of well-being at work. Median figures for the surveyed countries reflect the significance of each of the following factors:

- irregular working hours (22.3% in 2015 and 19.7% in 2016),
- high-stress levels in the workplace (21% in 2015 and 19.7% in 2016),

- excessive levels of stress and tension at work (19.4% in 2015 and 17.6 in 2016),
- difficulty in combining work and personal life (19.2% in 2015 and 16.9% in 2016),
- the professional incompetence of the management (15.1% in 2015 and 12.1% in 2016),
- the complete absence, or insufficient levels, of company care for its employees (14.2% in 2015 and 10.9% in 2016),
- negative (destructive) personality traits of the manager (13.8% in 2015 and 11.8% in 2016),
- psychological pressure on the part of management (12.1% in 2015 and 10.4% in 2016),
- bad conditions in the workplace (11.4% in 2015 and 18.8% in 2016),
- high staff turnover in the organization (10.7% in 2015 and 13.5% in 2016).

All the problems identified by the respondents can be divided into organizational (working conditions, work and rest regime, etc.) as well as interpersonal factors (interaction with managers and colleagues).

Nearly a third of respondents in all the surveyed countries are most concerned about the decline in their job satisfaction (29.8% in 2015 and 22.4% in 2016). At the same time, there is a significant gap in the opinions given by the respondents from different countries. For example, in the Czech Republic, the figure reached 60.9% in 2015 and 35.6% in 2016, while in Pakistan, it was only 2.1% in 2015 and 12.5% in 2016. A quarter of the sample population of the respondents points to the lack of professional development (24.7% in 2015 and 21.8% in 2016). The differences between the countries shown in the estimates are within the following ranges: from 34.9% in Bulgaria to 14.1% in the Czech Republic in 2015 and from 42.2% in Italy to 12.5% in Pakistan in 2016. On average, every fifth participant of the survey named the following as a threat to their future in their current jobs. These practices include the reduction of their remuneration (23.6% in 2015 and 17.9% in 2016), job losses due to the economic crisis (21% in 2015 and 25.3% in 2016), and the deterioration of their physical health at work (19.7% in 2015 and 18% in 2016) (Table 05).

Table 05. The responses to the question: “What type of threats to your future exist in your current job?”, % of the respondents]

| Response options | Countries | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|------|----------------|------|--------|------|----------|------|-------|------|
| | Russia | | Czech Republic | | Latvia | | Pakistan | | Italy | |
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Decline in job satisfaction | 24.3 | 25.2 | 60.9 | 35.6 | 36.0 | 12.0 | 2.1 | 12.5 | 34.8 | 26.7 |
| The absence of professional development | 23.8 | 23.9 | 14.1 | 18.3 | 20.0 | 17.0 | 25.5 | 12.5 | 43.5 | 42.2 |
| Reduction of wages/salaries and other, non-pecuniary, benefits | 25.2 | 32.9 | 32.8 | 9.6 | 26.0 | 26.0 | 12.8 | 12.5 | 30.4 | 22.2 |
| Job loss due to the economic crisis | 20.5 | 27.1 | 17.2 | 7.7 | 26.0 | 42.0 | 8.5 | 16.7 | 60.9 | 44.4 |
| Deterioration of one’s physical health in the workplace | 24.8 | 25.2 | 10.9 | 6.7 | 22.0 | 32.0 | 17.0 | 12.5 | 4.3 | 13.3 |
| Loss of psychological equilibrium due to uncertainty about the future | 8.1 | 11.6 | 17.2 | 22.1 | 18.0 | 23.0 | 17.0 | 8.3 | 43.5 | 35.6 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Job loss due to the high level of competition among colleagues | 3.3 | 3.9 | 7.8 | 10.6 | 2.0 | 6.0 | 17.0 | 8.3 | 7.8 | 4.4 |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|

Source: Authors' Own Research.

We strongly believe that forcing workers to perform additional functions, and to take on extra responsibility in order to keep their jobs is a toxic HR management practice. On average, noticeably more than half of the respondents (55.6% in 2015 and 58.4% in 2016) from the surveyed countries reported that they have to carry out orders from their boss, which are in breach of their job description. Respondents had the opportunity to clarify what they have to do to save their jobs. The first thing to note is the need to carry out assignments that are not included in their job descriptions. The median figure of responses from the aggregate of respondents on this option is 50.5% in 2015 and 40.1% in 2016). On average, a third of the workers from the countries surveyed are forced to work overtime without receiving any additional financial compensation (34.6% in 2015 and 35.9% in 2016). A little less than a third of respondents in 2015, and every fifth worker in 2016, pointed to the need for improving their qualifications at their own expense (29% and 19.6%, respectively). Also, it should also be noted that among the other responses, forced overtime featured, but this is paid overtime, and had to be done by 31.6% of the Czech workers; who participated in the survey; in 2015, while 34.8% of them had to do it in 2016.

7. Conclusion

7.1. Limitations and opportunities for research

In conclusion, it should be noted that this study only gives an approximate representation of the changes in employment relationships and working conditions. This reality stems from the perception of different categories of employees working under different socio-economic conditions. Despite the notable differences in the estimates, the long-term monitoring will allow us to identify the factors of social pollution in the labour relations sphere, as well as to develop the tools for assessing its level. This study has shown that the design and methodology of monitoring the factors of social pollution can be used in different socio-cultural and economic systems. The work's contribution to the theory of the science of labour economics is that it confirms the hypothesis of the impact of globalisation on the emergence of social pollution factors in countries with different economic models.

7.2. Directions for future study

Certain directions for our future studies exist in the following areas: 1) evaluation of changes in the level of social pollution in companies; 2) the impact of precarious employment practices on the countries'/companies' social and medical systems, etc.

7.3. Novelty and practical significance of the monitoring

Thus, the novelty of this study determines the development of a new scientific theory of social pollution, as well as the search for ways to overcome the negative impact of the transformation processes;

which are influenced by the economic crisis; on the labour sector, as well as on the welfare of labour resources. Nowadays, researchers and specialists in the field of human resources management need a new level of intellection based on a systematic approach to the totality of the factors of social pollution resulting from the economic activities of businesses. Monitoring and in-depth study of these factors will allow us to develop new concepts and techniques of welfare management in companies and countries.

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