

THE STUDY OF PRECARIOUS JOBS AS THE BASIS FOR THE UNSTABLE EMPLOYMENT IDENTIFICATION

Svetlana Lobova – Aleksei Bogoviz

Abstract

Current employment precariousness is not a subject of Russian statistical monitoring. Employment precariousness can be determined empirically only. The Russian labor market has from 15 to 30% of unstable employment (variation in empirical estimates is due to the discrepancy in the definition of precarious work). The unique methodology of its evaluation has not been worked out yet.

The author's approach to the determinancy of employment precariousness is based on detecting precarious sings. We think that employed people with the jobs which have precarious sings may be considered as precariats. Aggregated list with the precarious sings includes ten indicators. We divided the sings in two lines: (i) employment precariousness and (ii) work precariousness. We diagnosed these sings in the quadrants of the coordinate system "stability / instability", "security / insecurity".

The study shows quantification of the extent of precarious employment on the labor market of a particular Russian region - Altai Krai. It is based on the assessment of meters which are presented in the public sources.

Key words: employment precariousness, precarious sings, Altai Kari

JEL Code: J21, J46, J71

Introduction

At the present stage of social and economical development, employment precariousness (in the following text - EP) is an integral part of the labor market. Its appearance is determined by the desire of employers to transfer several types of risks, the costs and the part of social responsibility to employees. The problem of EP was discussed by researchers such as Conick (the conceptualization of the term “unstable employment” and its empirical analysis) (Conick, 2011), Standing (analysis of the phenomenon of precariat) (Standing, 2014), Fudge and Owens (analysis of gender aspects of unstable employment and its theoretical analysis) (Fudge, &

Owens, 2006), Campbell and Price (conceptualization of terms “precarious work” and “precarious workers”) (Campbell, & Price, 2016), Dolzhenko and Ginieva (interaction of employees under different forms of labor relations is studied) (Dolzhenko, & Ginieva, 2015) and others.

Employment precariousness is characterized by instability, low wages, lack of social protection for workers, workers’ limited control over the labor process. Science has a pool of studies demonstrating the existence of this phenomenon in the labor markets already. “How many precarious workers are there in the labor market?” - this question does not have a statistically unambiguous answer. “Employment precariousness” is used today only in academic texts but not official. Therefore EP can be determined empirically only. The unique methodology of its evaluation has not been worked out yet.

Our study includes: (1) what are the determinants for the employment of precariousness on the regional labor market, (2) which jobs have precarious signs and (3) which are the statistical precarious components of the labor market in Altai Krai? The object of the study is the labour force of Altai Krai, the subject is EP in Altai Krai in the period 2013 - Q1 2016. The conclusions of the study are based on the analysis of data from the Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat) and the Territorial Federal State Statistics Service of the Altai Krai (Altaikraistat).

Altai Krai is a Russian region, located in the south of Western Siberia. The gross regional product is formed by the expense of agriculture and forestry, manufacturing industries, wholesale and retail trade, transport and communications. In 2015 the population of the region was 2376.8 thousand people, the able-bodied population - 1344.8 thousand people. (1.6% of the able-bodied population of Russia). The number of the labour force in 2015 was 1180.4 thousand people, the level of employment in 2015 was 60.5%.

1 What are the determinants for employment precariousness on regional labor market?

There are two versions of the origin of the term “precariousness”. According to the first version, it is believed that it originated from the term “precarite”, which was introduced by Pierre Bourdieu from *le Collège de France* and was used to refer to the social phenomenon associated with poverty. According to another version, the concept was put into the scientific revolution by Ulrich Beck, who is the professor of sociology at the *Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München* and *The London School of Economics and Political Science*. In Russian academic

texts, the term “employment precariousness” is synonymous with “unstable employment”. It is associated with uncertainty or irregularity of the employment concerning the duration of working time and the amount of remuneration for labor (Barling, & Frone, 2004). EP is an intermediate state of the labor market between stable employment and unemployment, which is accompanied by a violation of labor and social guarantees of the employee. EP is accompanied by a violation of the social and labor guarantees and shows the instability and / or insecurity of labor relations for the employee.

Dan Cunniah, Director Bureau for Workers’ Activities International Labour Office, writes: “In a world of globalized supply chains where employers seek to do away with their responsibilities in the name of “exibility” and “competitiveness” and where governments have all but given up on the objective of full and decent employment, workers have found themselves increasingly reduced to accepting forms of work arrangements that afford lower pay, less security, less favourable working conditions and make it ever more difficult to access the right to collective bargaining” (Cunniah, 2013). As indicated by Fedorova, Dvorzhakova and Katashinskikh, this trend which characterized by instability, low wages, lack of social protection, limited control of workers in labor processes has already become the norm (Fyodorova, Katashinskikh & Dvorakova, 2016).

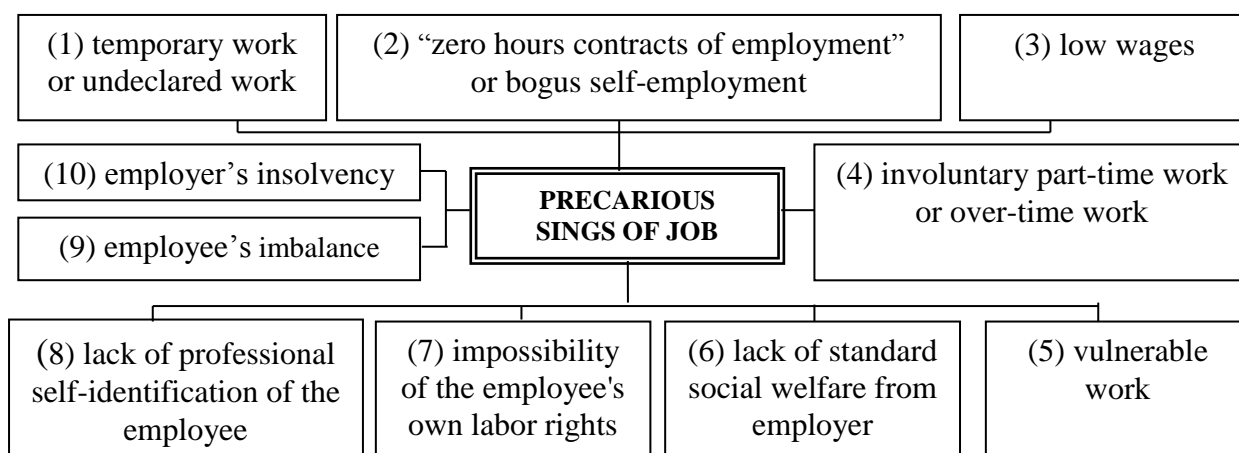
If the “employment standard” is considered as full legal employment with respect for the social rights and guarantees of workers, EP is a kind of unstable employment.

2 Which jobs have precarious signs?

The approach to the determinancy of employment precariousness is based on detecting precarious signs. The study of the concept of “good” and “bad” jobs, which was discussed in the works of Atkinson (Atkinson, 1984) and Kalleberg (Kalleberg, 2013) allows us as the dominant reason for identifying the EP, to accept a “poor quality” job or low-quality job. We think that employed people with the jobs which have precarious signs may be considered as precariats. Aggregated list with the precarious signs includes ten indicators (Fig. 1).

Issues related to the relationship between EP and human instability was discussed in particular in article of Benach and Muntaner (Benach, & Muntaner, 2007). Employee’s balance is characterized by the preservation of his physiological, psychological, labor and professional qualities and the ability to adapt to the changing conditions of the external and internal environment of the company without damage to the quality of life. For example, if the employment is accompanied by mobbing, bossing or bullying, then for a particular employee his job should be considered as low-quality and the employment has the character of latent EP.

Fig. 1: Signs of a low-quality job



Source: compiled by the authors

If the employer is recognized as insolvent, is in bankruptcy procedures, then all labor relations will be terminated with employees in the visible future. The workers do not have permanent employment, their jobs are low-quality.

To a concrete job can be applied both all precarious signs and only some of them. The last condition allows you to talk about the employee's job as a job with precarious signs. But you should be extremely cautious in your judgments. Thus, it is impossible to draw a conclusion an employee is a precariat by only one sign "low wages" or "over-time work" or "part-time work". EP and the named phenomenas can have different socio-economic grounds (for example, part-time employment can be a manifestation of the rational use of working time by an employee).

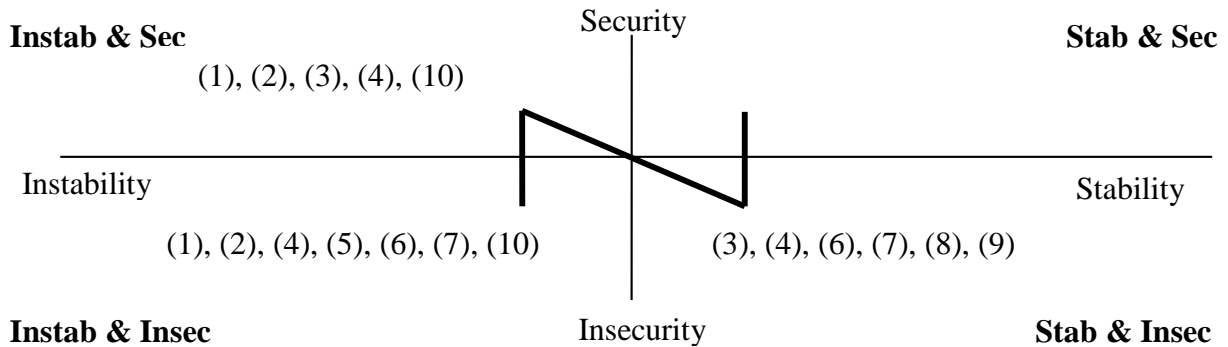
Considering that precariousness is an instability and (or) insecurity of labor relations for an employee, the signs of job precondition should be evaluated through the prism of the dual criteria "stability / instability" and "security / insecurity".

Fig. 2 reflects the author's idea of the conformity of the signs of a low-quality job with the precarious criteria "stability / instability" and "security / insecurity". The "stability-security" quadrant will be a priori empty, because the job with these criteria can not be considered low-quality.

The presence of the same indicators of the prevalence of the job in different quadrants is due to the unequal degree of their manifestation in relation to the specific job, which predetermines their "decline" in one direction or in the other in the coordinates "stability / instability" and "security / insecurity". In addition, the boundaries between stable and unstable employment as well as secure and insecure employment are not fixed. Under different

conditions, one species may pass into another. The broken curve in the figure reflects the author's vision of the trajectory of the change in the quality of the job from "good" to "bad".

Fig. 2: Signs of a low-quality job (Fig.1) in the coordinates "stability / instability" and "security / insecurity" and the trajectory of changing the quality job towards the low-quality job



Source: compiled by the authors

We divided the signs in two lines which were offered by Paugam: (i) the relationship to employment – or to one’s job, *précarité de l’emploi* (‘employment precariousness’) and (ii) the relationship to work - *précarité du travail* (‘work precariousness’) (Paugam, 2000). The signs of a low-quality job from Fig. 1 are qualified in two groups: indicators of work precariousness – (1), (3), (4), (5), (6) & (9); indicators of employment precariousness – (2), (7), (8) & (10).

3 Which are the statistical precarious components of the labor market in Altai Krai?

We will evaluate the jobs of Altai Krai for the presence of precarious signs. To do this, let us turn to the data of official statistical observation carried out by the Rosstat authorities in the period 2013 - Q1 2016 (Tab. 1). Fully, these data can not be regarded as indicators of EP, but analyzing the dynamics and magnitude of the data we can formulate several hypotheses about the state and trends of the phenomenon being studied. Due to the lack of special monitoring EP data for all ten signs of the precariousness the job could not be found. Tab. 1 reflects only a part of the signs of the presence of EP in the labor market of Altai Krai. Due to the impossibility of obtaining data we do not evaluate the employees in the shadow economy of the region.

Tab.1: Statistical EP indicators in the labor market of Altai Krai in the period of 2013 - Q1 2016, thousand people

<i>Indicators</i>	The position of the indicator in the quadrant from Fig. 2	2013	2014	2015	Q1 2016
Indicators of work precariousness					
The number of departures employees on various grounds, including:		137,2	130,7	127,6	24,4
- by agreement between the employee and the employer		13,9	15,1	15,1	2,9
- due to the reduction in the number of staff	Instab & Insec	2,4	4,9	7,2	1,3
- at the employee's own request		120,9	110,7	105,3	20,2
The number of employees who have part-time work, including:		169,1	176,4	190,7	45,7
- have a part-time work on the employer's initiative	Instab & Insec	7,9	9,7	10,1	2,7
- have a part-time work by agreement between the employee and the employer	Instab & Sec	34,9	29,5	37,3	10,9
- they are idle due to the employer's fault and for reasons beyond the control of the employer and the employee	Instab & Insec	7,3	11,4	23,7	5,9
- have zero hours contracts of employment	Stab & Insec	119,0	125,8	119,6	26,2
Indicators of employment precariousness					
The number of employees who work for hire and have temporary or casual work, including:		67,7	61,0	92,3	*
- have a temporary work	Instab & Sec	24,3	21,4	33,7	*
- work is carried out under a contract for the performance of a certain volume or provision of services	Instab & Sec	33,8	32,1	39,1	*
- have a chance job	Instab & Insec	11,6	7,5	19,5	*
The number of employed in the informal sector of the economy, including:		244	228	198	323
- have only an informal work	Instab & Insec	212	193	166	279
- have a formal and informal work, of which:	Instab & Sec	32	35	32	45
- have basic informal work	Instab & Insec	0,1	*	*	1
- have additional informal work	Instab & Sec	32	35	32	44
The number of employees who have full school, incomplete school education and also have no education at all, including:		343,1	341,4	293,0	*
- have a full school education	Instab & Insec	287,8	288,8	240,2	*
- have incomplete school education	Instab & Insec	51,0	48,3	50,1	*

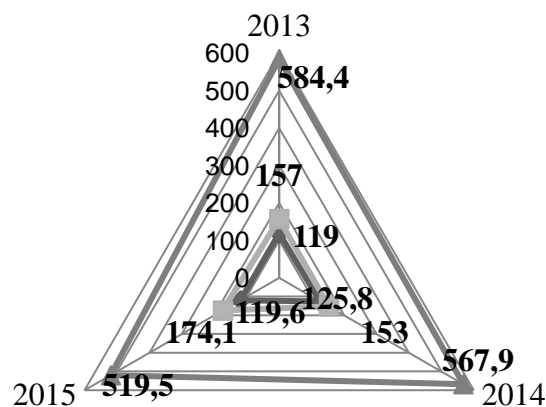
<i>Indicators</i>	The position of the indicator in the quadrant from Fig. 2	2013	2014	2015	Q1 2016
- have no education at all	Instab & Insec	4,3	4,3	2,7	*

Source: Data of Rosstat bodies

Tab. 1 presents the quantitative data of the precarious sings of jobs in the labor market of Altai Krai, as well as the position of the indicator in the coordinates from Fig. 2.

The analysis of the data in Tab. 1 allows us to conclude that the largest number of jobs of Altai Krai have the features of "Instab & Insec", the smallest - "Stab & Insec" (Fig. 3). We can talk about the emerging negative trends in the transformation of labor relations in the labor market of Altai Krai - the subject to statistical observations. In 2015 there was a significant increase in the number of jobs with precarious sings qualified as "Stab & Sec", while the number of hires, whose employment is characterized as "Instab & Insec" reduced, which can be regarded as a positive trend.

Fig. 3: The distribution of the statistical indicators of the labor market of Altai Krai characterizing precariousness along the quadrants "stability / instability" and "security / insecurity"



Source: Compiled by the authors based at data of Rosstat bodies

Conclusion

Unstable employment could be properly quantified, which would allow state bodies to work out measures to regulate EP positions for obtaining maximum effects for both the employee and the employer.

In this article we wanted to show that EP has many aspects to study. Each aspect can be the basis for forming an approach to qualitative and quantitative measurement of EP. We say that the potency of EP is determined by the quality of jobs. If job has precarious signs then in the near future the worker will be a precariate. To reduce the level of precariousness in the labor market, it is necessary to improve the quality of jobs and to correct the precarious signs.

In Altai Krai the research of statistical meters of the labor market showed that in 2015 the number of precarious jobs which are unstable and secure increased, while the number of the jobs which are classified as instable and insecure reduced. If in the future in the Altai Krai the number of jobs with precarious signs will increase, it will be necessary to develop comprehensive measures to reduce the negative impact of threats to instability and unhappiness on the lives of workers.

References

- Atkinson J. (1984). Manpower Strategies for Flexible Organizations // Personnel Management, August.
- Barling, J., & Frone, M. R. (2004). The psychology of workplace safety. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Benach, J., & Muntaner, C. (2007). Precarious employment and health: developing a research agenda. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 61(4), 276-277. doi:10.1136/jech.2005.045237
- Campbell, I., & Price, R. (2016). Precarious work and precarious workers: Towards an improved conceptualisation. *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 27(3), 314-332. doi:10.1177/1035304616652074
- Conick, C. (2011, May 1). Precarious Labour. *Canadian Dimension*.
- Cunniah, D (2013). Foreword, "Meeting the Challenge of Precarious Work: A Workers' Agenda". *International Journal of Labour Research*, 5 (1), 5-7.
- Dolzhenko, R., & Ginieva, S. (2015). Employee engagement as an indicator of staff attitude to the changes in organization. In 9th International Days of Statistics and Economics. Prague: Melandrium, Czech Republic, 359-369.
- Fudge, J., & Owens, R. J. (2006). Precarious work, women and the new economy: the challenge to legal norms. Oxford: Hart Publishing.
- Fyodorova, A., Katashinskikh, V., & Dvorakova, Z. (2016). Precarious Labour Relations as a Factor of Social Pollution. *Economy of Region*, 802-814. doi:10.17059/2016-3-16

Kalleberg, A. L. (2013). Good jobs, bad jobs the rise of polarized and precarious employment systems in the United States, 1970s to 2000s. New York, NY: Russel Sage Foundation.

Paugam, S. (2000). Le salarié de la précarité: les nouvelles formes de l'intégration professionnelle. Paris: PUF.

Standing, G. (2014). The Precariat: the New Dangerous Class. London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.

Contact

Svetlana Lobova

Altai State University, Barnaul, Russia

barnaulhome@mail.ru

Aleksei Bogoviz

All-Russia Research Institute of Agricultural Economics, Federal Agency of Scientific Organizations, Moscow, Russia

aleksei.bogoviz@gmail.com