

Bogusława Urbaniak

Polish and UK Experience in Managing an Ageing Workforce

Although Poland and the United Kingdom are similar with respect to demographic trends, Poland has a much lower number of people aged 50+ who are still in employment. Both countries have decided to implement policies encouraging employers to recruit and retain workers aged 50+ in order to support older people on the labor market. One explanation of the relatively high level of employment in this age group in the UK and low level in Poland can be, *inter alia*, different institutional measures that the two countries have adopted to aid the retention of older employees. The aim of the article is to examine how institutional settings, workforce demographics, and the labor market situation of older people shape Polish and British employer practices for retaining their older workforce. The initial hypothesis that stronger labor market regulation has more influence on employer decisions has been confirmed. However, the case of Poland does not show that this increases the number of older people getting jobs as a result. The article is partly based on the results of the Polish “Equal Opportunities on the Labor Market for People Aged 50+” project implemented, among others, by a team from the University of Łódź. The situation of older employees in the UK is presented using the available topical literature.

Keywords: age management, employee retention, employee behaviors, labor market regulation.

Introduction

In Poland, the UK, as well as in many other countries, aging processes affecting populations are clearly observable, but in Poland older people are definitely less active on the labor market. Can it therefore be assumed that with external circumstances being alike, the lower interest of Polish employers in employing people aged 50+ is caused by the implemented institutional solutions? The aim of this article is to examine how institutional settings, workforce demographics, and the labor mar-

ket situation of older people shape Polish and British employer practices for retaining their older workforce. The author's hypothesis is as follows: A higher degree of labor market regulation exerts strong influence on the decisions of employers. Because their interest in older workers is determined by the Human Capital Resources (HCR) they can contribute to the organization, occupational segregation of older workers on the labor market is likely. The analysis presented below is based on the results of a survey on employer attitudes to the institutional settings protecting older employees against redundancy developed as a part the "Equal Opportunities in the Labor Market for People Aged 50+" project, a part of which was a countrywide survey conducted by the University of Łódź in 2012. The presented analysis may be useful for both HRM scholars and practitioners, as it shows which methods help keep older employees in employment and how to retain their employee knowledge for the benefit of the organization.

Theoretical Foundations of Discussions on Employer Interest in Older Workers

Discussions concentrating around the employment of older people are conducted in the context of the resource based theory and diversity management. The first of these assumes that a firm's special resources and mechanisms preventing their dissemination across the economy provide the firm with an opportunity to gain sustainable competitive advantage (e.g., Wernerfelt, 1984; Prahalad and Hamel, 1990; Morawski et. al, 2010). An important factor in this process is Human Capital Resources (HCR). Being a unique internal resource configuration, it can yield extraordinary rent, which makes it a valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable asset (Tomé and Susabowska, 2013; Jamka, 2011, p. 93) and therefore a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Barney and Wright, 1998; Krajeenbrink, 2011). HCR importance is based on the economic value of worker knowledge, skills, abilities, health, commitment, and performance, as well as on their ethical (moral) and behavioral value (Stabryła, 2009, p. 119). To ensure the proper structure and development of human capital, the organization must retain those members of the workforce that contribute to the quality of human capital the most. A tool that can serve this purpose is age management (AM), which is understood as a multi-faceted approach to managing an organization's workforce over the life course of workers, which focuses on the whole of professional life, not only on older employees (Managing..., 2007, p. 5). The AM methods used to invest in human capital and foster it should make sure that the work of employees of all ages is profitable for the firm and personally gratifying for the employees (Lichtarski,

Stańczyk–Hugiet, and Wąsowicz, 2010, p. 31), that HCR is increased, and that the firm's profits and its competitive advantage are improved as a result (Litwiński and Sztanderska, 2010, p. 5).

The notion of unit-level HCR (complementary to HCR) arising from the search for multidimensional HC and its influence on strategic HRM domains is used more and more often in topical literature (Nyberg et. al, 2014). Ployhart and Moliterno (2001) argue, for instance, that unit-level HCR is created by combining and transforming individual human assets and their psychological characteristics.

Another theoretical framework within which employer interest in older workers is discussed is diversity management (DM). The applicability of diversity management to human resources arises from equal opportunity policy, the purpose of which is to handle cases of discrimination in the labor market and to include people who are disadvantaged because of their sex, age, race, etc. But DM is more than a mere attempt to counteract discriminatory practices (Farnham, 2010, p. 195) because it also shows how these personal human characteristics can be used to optimize organizational benefits and therefore enables the attainment of sustainable competitive advantages (Stubert, 2012; KE, 2012). It turns a personal characteristic, such as the age of older workers, into a constituent element of HCR that, under certain circumstances, may bring a firm closer to a competitive advantage.

These theoretical underpinnings of discussions on the employment of older workers imply that employers should work towards creating and fostering the HC of workers aged 50+, as with this approach they can be more effective in maintaining sustainable competitive advantages. A useful tool serving this purpose is age management, which is not only a means of preventing discriminatory practices in the workplace or of creating age-diverse human resources, but also helps the organization create a coherent policy for retaining the most valuable human resources. In order for this goal to be achieved, though, managers must be aware of the unique value of each generation of workers, which of a worker's special competencies increase HCR, and how the most valuable workers can be retained (Kaye and Jordan–Evans, 2012).

The reason for the State to implement policies supporting people aged 50+ on the labor market is to enable a greater number of people to have their own incomes and thereby to decrease the demand for public spending. Institutional measures launched by the State, such as job recruitment, redeployment, and the postponement of retirement, aim to enhance the “acquisition and retention of the HCR” of workers aged 50+. The purpose of AM is to help a firm develop a coherent policy allowing it to retain its most valuable human assets and not merely the elimination

of discriminatory practices in the workplace or the creation of age-diverse human resources.

An explanation of why the State decides to influence the sovereign decisions of organizations can be sought in general system theory. Because organizations are multi-entity systems and constitute an element of the hierarchical structure, their behavior can be rationally regulated by objective contexts; this means that organizations adjust their activities to the regulatory framework defined by the State (Gorynia, 2000, p. 184).

The Demographic Determinants of the Situation of Older Employees on the Labor Market in Poland and the UK

Because of population ageing, people aged 50–79 accounted for more than 30% of the British and Polish populations in 2013. Their calendar ages are also rising. Between 1970 and 2012 the median calendar age in the two countries rose by 5.5 and 10.1 years, respectively. Poland is predicted to experience much deeper demographic changes than the UK in light of the fact that its 2060 old age dependency ratio is estimated at 64.59, compared with 42.07 in the UK (Table No. 1). At the same time, however, this ageing society seems to be more active on the labor market in Britain than in Poland, where the 2013Q4 employment rate for people aged 55–64 was only 42% vis-à-vis 60.7% in the UK. The UK percentage of working people in the 65–74 age group more than doubled that in Poland (Table No. 2).

Table No. 1. Basic Demographic Data on Poland and the UK, years 2002–2060

Country	Life expectancy in years in 2012				People by age group (as a percentage of total population)				Old age dependency ratio		
	at birth		at age 60		50–64		65–79		2013	2040	2060
	male	fe-male	male	fe-male	2002	2013	2002	2013			
EU-27	77.5	83.1	21.5	25.4	17.5	19.7	12.4	13.1	27.5	45.52	52.55
Poland	72.7	81.1	18.6	23.9	15.9	21.3	10.5	10.5	20.1	39.89	64.59
UK	79.1	82.8	22.5	25.1	17.5	18.1	11.7	12.5	26.4	38.86	42.07

Source: Based on data available at <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu> – lfsa.

Table No. 2. Basic Information on the 2013 Situation of Older Employees on the Labor Markets in Poland and the UK

Country	2013Q4 employment rate for people aged		2013Q4 employment rate for people aged 55–64	2013Q4 change in the level of employment against 2012Q4 (percentage points; age groups)		2013 unemployment rate for people aged	
	50–64	65–74		20–64	55–65	20–64	55–64
EU–27	60.0	8.6	51.1	0.2	1.6	10.5	7.6
Poland	51.1	7.1	42.0	0.6	2.2	10.2	7.7
UK	68.5	15.9	60.7	0.7	2.0	6.7	4.8

Source: Based on data available at <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu> – lfsq; lfsa.

Employer-oriented Measures Aimed at Increasing the Occupational Activity of People Aged 50+ in Poland and the UK

Over time, Poland and the UK started to realize that special programs were necessary to make people aged 50+ more active on the labor market. Both countries have the same mandatory retirement age for men (65 years). However, British women retire at age 65 while the retirement age for Polish women is 60, where the mandatory female retirement age in Poland has been scheduled to increase by one month every quarter starting with 2013. In both Poland and the UK the retirement age will increase. In Poland, it will be 67 years for males and females (in 2020 and 2040, respectively). The UK government has announced that by the mid–2030s the retirement age will be 68 for both males and females and 69 by the end of the successive decade. The ultimate target is 70 years.

The range of programs initiated by the State includes measures that directly and indirectly affect the decisions of employers who ultimately have the final word on matters concerning their employees. The programs are expected to bring about positive effects such as higher employment in the 50+ age group (because of the relatively low income replacement ratio in the UK, the British programs also target people at retirement age¹). The programs try, above all, to encourage people to work as long as they can and to win employer support for this direction of State policy.

1 As predicted, because of a low income replacement ratio, social security retirement benefits may not suffice to secure the needs of ageing generations; in the UK the problem may affect as many as 10.7 million people (Portes, 2013).

Polish programs concentrate on making employers retain or recruit older employees for periods long enough for the employees to become eligible for their pensions. According to data, the occupational activity of old-age pensioners is a secondary and rather unimportant target.

What programs do Poland and the UK operate to support employers considering the employment of people aged 50+ and what factors make these programs less effective? (Table No. 3)

Table No. 3. Major Measures Addressed Directly to Polish and UK Employers to Encourage the Employment of People Aged 50+

Type of measure	UK	Poland
Ban on the automatic retirement of employees who become eligible for pensions	Yes, 2011	Yes, Act amending some other acts following the retirement age increase, 2012
Ban on discriminatory practices, including ageism, in employment and training	Yes	Yes
Referring employees aged 50+ to occupational training and subsidies for their jobs	Yes, the “New Deal 50 Plus” program	Yes, Act on the promotion of employment and labor market institutions
Popularization of employer knowledge regarding the benefits of having older workers	Yes, the “Age Positive” campaign	Yes, under programs co-funded by the EU, e.g., the “Equal Opportunities on the Labor Market for People Aged 50+” project
Partial reimbursement of labor costs incurred by employers	Special allowance paid to people returning to work on top of their wages	Scholarships for people in internship and vocational training programs for adults
Supporting employers in employing older employees and making flexible forms of employment available to them	“Flexible New Deal”	The “Solidarity of Generations: Measures to Increase the Occupational Activity of People Aged 50+” program
Special protection against the termination of older employees	No	Yes, special protection against the termination of employment contracts for employees within four years of their retirement age

Source: Based on Urbaniak and Wiktorowicz (2011) as well as Kryńska and Szukalski (2013).

It is a paradox that the flexible employment arrangements that were intended to increase job opportunities for older adults may actually reduce employment in the 50+ age group in both countries. Poland has a problem with the excessive use of civil law contracts in the labor market (in 2013, such contracts accounted for

13% of total employment). People with such contracts are neither protected by the Labor Law nor, in most cases, covered by social security premiums (only old-age, disability, and health insurance premiums are sometimes paid for them). This arrangement substantially decreases employer costs compared with those they would have had to incur if they entered into regular employment relations. Younger workers accept this situation and the related career uncertainty, but people in the 50+ age group who have experienced the stability of regular employment feel exploited and deprived of a chance to work until retirement.

In Britain, a flexible work arrangement that is also addressed to people aged 50+ is called “zero-hour contracts.” Its formal definition is not provided in legislation, however. It is a special type of contract between the worker and the employer where “the employer is not obliged to provide the worker with any minimum working hours, and the worker is not obliged to accept any of the hours offered” (ACAS). Notwithstanding its characteristics, this type of employment contract is considered important, because it nominally increases the number of people employed, even though some of them may not do any work at all. The number of people in Britain with these contracts is estimated to be approximately one million. Those of them who only work for short periods inflate the rate of employment just like the holders of civil law contracts in Poland.

A conclusion that can be drawn from the above discussion is that the liberalization of the labor market may bring the above threats with it, even though it was undertaken to stimulate the expansion of flexible work arrangements to increase job opportunities, including for people aged 50+.

UK Employer Treatment of Employees Aged 50+

British programs promoting the employment of people aged 50+ are characterized by the wide involvement of nongovernmental organizations. In contrast, Polish civic organizations that work to strengthen the labor market position of older people are few and they do not target this area of employer activity. One of the British NGOs that significantly contributes to the creation of conditions conducive to the employment of people aged 50+ is TAEN (The Age and Employment Network), an independent organization “promoting an effective labor market that serves the needs of people in mid and later life, employers and the economy.” Its members are employers, trade unions, professional bodies, and other organizations focused on the labor market (www.taen.org.uk). Other organizations in the same range are EFA (Employers’ Forum on Age), “an independent network of leading employers who recognize the need to attract and retain valuable employees whatever their age”

(www.efa.org.uk), which associates 200 large companies and ENEI (Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion), which has partnered with Age Inclusive and The Positive Ageing Company. ENEI members include organizations such as the Employers Forum on Age, Employers Forum on Belief, and Employers 4 Fathers. The British practice of using AM to shape HCR is different than that applied in Poland. This is not only because Britain has more experience in this area, having understood the need to take a pro-active attitude in handling the impact of demographic changes on the labor market earlier than Poland, but also because it has programs to keep older employees in employment by offering them solutions that meet their expectations.

What aspects of AM do the British HR specialists deem important (O'Donnovan, 2014)? To develop employee HCR over their life course, following the rule of "employment being about ability, not age," job specifications must be modified in accordance with the changing work abilities of ageing people. Workplaces might need to change because of increasing numbers of ageing employees who suffer from conditions typical of older age, such as musculoskeletal problems. Moreover, the ageing of societies makes it necessary to take care of frail and elderly parents or other family members. This problem is likely to increase as people work into their late 60s and 70s. Among programs aimed to improve the retention rates of ageing employees by addressing their vital needs, preventive health measures are important. A good example of this is the Partnership for Prevention designed by Glaxo-SmithKline. It is part of wider activities that the corporation has launched in order to keep experienced older employees who continue to be a valuable asset (Betteley, 2013).

Older workers considering continued employment can be supported by appropriately targeted benefits financed by employers. The most frequent examples of such benefits are information, educational, and health-promoting programs adapted to the needs of older workers and motivating them to stay as a part of the labor force, etc., such as:

- Workplace financial education – Programs to make older workers aware of the importance of being prudent in life and of accumulating sufficient resources to live the life they desire after they retire.

- Healthcare benefits, e.g., health screening, optical and dental check-ups, physiotherapy.

British employers are intent on retaining workers called "top talents." All firms focus on these workers because their human capital is, by definition, unique and non-replicable. Retaining these workers is important for firms that want to cut labor costs while remaining competitive in the long term based on their workers'

HCR, but also because firms are increasingly affected by the growing deficit of workers, particularly those possessing valuable human capital. For instance, 86% of US employers were found to have problems recruiting the type of workers they needed and 58% struggled to retain employees (Ramlall, 2003, p. 63).

What measures can be implemented to improve job embeddedness in the group of most desirable workers aged 50+? According to job embeddedness theory (Mitchell et al., 2001, pp. 8–9) three aspects need to be considered, i.e. links (between individuals and groups), fits (employee perception of how they fit in with the organization and its setting), and sacrifice (the material and psychological losses an employee leaving the organization may incur, where the greater the sacrifice the more difficult the decision to quit). Furthermore, a greater number of years worked in the organization means stronger bonds with its workforce and a higher probability that an employee will positively evaluate their fit with the organization. The results of Young's research have confirmed that job embeddedness and retention indicators are related to each other and performed regression analysis has shown that job embeddedness and indicators are significantly correlated (Young J. A. et al., 2013).

Employer Attitudes towards the Retention of Older Workers: The Findings of a Field Survey

An Outline of the Research Method

This article is based on the results of a countrywide survey carried out on Poland as part of a project undertaken by a team from the University of Łódź within its component called “Diagnosis of the Current Situation of Women and Men Aged 50+ on the Labor Market in Poland”² (the author of this article was one of the team members). The survey of the labor market situation of people 50+ in Poland involved questionnaire interviews with individuals aged 45+ (CAPI; N=3200) and employers (CATI; N=1011, and IDI; N=50). Employers were selected using a random sampling method, stratified by the number of employees and ownership

2 The research carried out as a part of the “Equal Opportunities on the Labor Market for People Aged 50+” project was aimed at obtaining a wide spectrum of views from a countrywide survey (quantitative and qualitative) spanning the years 2010–2013. Its findings make an important contribution to the debate on increasing the economic activity of the older generation in Poland. The project-related research was carried out by the Center for Human Resource Development, established by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, and financed by the EFS. As a partner in the project, the University of Łódź was responsible for designing and conducting a countrywide survey.

sector. Other surveyed objects were labor market institutions, social welfare units, and NGOs. Because of the purpose of this article, focus will be given to employers. The surveyed employers were the owners, managers, or HR specialists in organizations ranging in size from micro firms with no more than nine workers to large organizations employing over 250 people, in both the public sector (N=418) and the non-public sector (N=593). The survey concentrated on three groups of Polish districts that were formed of 379 units as a result of a cluster analysis that took account of their demographic characteristics, the situation on the local labor market, and the degree of urbanization. Correlation coefficients were also created for the purposes of analysis.

Employer Interest in Retaining Older Workers

Polish employers are cautious in their attitude towards older workers. In their opinion, many of them dream about retirement and only a few would like to stay occupationally active. There is some truth to this. Our survey has showed that 59% of working women aged 50–59 and 54% of men aged 50–64 wanted to retire as soon as possible. Quite naturally, this situation makes employers less interested in the possibilities of keeping older employees. A common attitude of Polish employers is that if older workers want to keep their jobs, they should be “the same” as all other people on the workforce. This actually means that they expect worker performance not to vary with age (96.5% of 1,011 surveyed employers). This expectation can be fulfilled only when jobs are designed to take account of age-induced deterioration in work abilities. For the performance of workers at different ages to be comparable, there must be a match between job requirements and age-specific work abilities. Are Polish employers ready to introduce changes making it easier for people aged 50+ to perform their duties, particularly organizational modifications, to improve the ergonomics of jobs to allow for worker’s age, for instance? Responses were not promising. A total of 41.8% of respondents in private companies stated that such changes were not possible and only 5.8% would adapt jobs to make them suitable for older workers. Apparently, the main reason for these responses was employer concern about the additional costs such changes might entail. As a result of such an attitude, jobs are offered to workers who can perform as well as their colleagues, but do not involve higher than average costs.

An analysis of Polish employer interest in the retention of older employees showed their generally reluctant attitude. As much as 86.2% of employers were of the view that workers reaching the retirement age should leave the company. The few employers who would extend employment relations on the same terms and conditions (13.8%) can be divided into two categories: employers driven by emo-

tions (e.g., by loyalty to workers who have been with them for many years and still want to work) and a small group of employers who were aware of the unique qualifications of older workers that cannot be replaced by recruiting another person. The latter position prevails in firms where managers understand the importance of knowledge management for maintaining their firm’s market position and realize the validity of capital theory (e.g., Becker, 1964), which underscores a strong positive relationship between an employee’s knowledge and his or her skills and performance (Wright and McMahan, 2011; Crocker, Eckardt, 2013). Most of these firms are based in big urban agglomerations. Although awareness of AM is generally low among employers (according to the qualitative survey results), this aspect of HRM was best understood by firms perceiving knowledge management as a major pillar of their competitiveness.

The above findings show that Polish employers have little interest in the possibility of retaining employees who enter the pre-retirement period. Because Polish employment indicators for people aged 55+ are among the lowest in EU-27 and because the gradually increasing retirement age will cause large numbers of ageing workers to remain in employment, the Polish Parliament has extended the period during which people approaching the retirement age are protected against the termination of their employment from two to four years preceding the date when they become eligible for retirement (Article 39 of the Labor Code) (Urbaniak and Wiktorowicz, 2011, p. 37). Employers and older employees evaluate the effectiveness of this forced retention of older employees differently (Table No. 4). Employer opinion certainly arises from the behavior of older workers as well as from a realistic assessment of possibilities for adapting workplace conditions to meet worker abilities.

Table No. 4. Opinions on whether the Four-Year Pre-Retirement Period in which Employees Are Protected against Redundancy will Improve the Situation of Older Employees on the Labor Market (% of Responses Pointing to Improvement)

Employer (p=0.001)	%	People at age 50+ (p=0.296)	%
Total (N=1011)	27.5	Total	62.3
Public sector (N=418)	43.2	Men	63.5
Non-public sector (N=593)	26.7	Women	62.3

Source: Based on Kryńska, Krzyszkowski, Urbaniak, and Wiktorowicz (2013), pp. 246–249.

Most employers have a low opinion of the four-year protection period as an institutional approach to improving the situation of older workers on the labor market. This forced retention of older employees was strongly objected to by employers in the private sector, but employers in the public sector were somewhat less critical (the differences are statistically significant at $p=0.001$). Older workers, both men and women, were similar in their opinions: Forced retention was relatively effective as a measure improving their situation on the labor market.

Employer attitudes to workers approaching their retirement age depend on worker “strategy for survival,” which determines behavior. The data in Table No. 5 do not allow for a conclusion that workers change their behavior to the disadvantage of the employer once they realize that the protection period makes it impossible for them to be dismissed.

The performance of most of them does not change. While reprehensible behavior such as decreased productivity or sick leave abuses can be observed in some cases (by less than 13% of employers), the fact that most employers have positive opinions of older workers should considerably change their generally reluctant attitude to the mandatory four-year protection period. A more serious problem is the obligatory adaptation of working conditions to the abilities of ageing workers. In this case, the assistance of the State seems necessary, in the form of tax exemptions for employers forced to make investments in order to improve the ergonomics of the work areas where older workers are employed, for instance. The importance of such modifications was revealed by the responses of older workers who were asked to indicate the most important measures that might encourage them to continue employment. The unskilled workers ranked “a transfer to a less physically demanding position” first, considering it to be more important than higher wages. For skilled workers, “a transfer to a less physically demanding position” was secondary in importance, probably because of smaller exposure to difficult working conditions.

Employer fears instilled by the protection period law are well illustrated by the following opinion that was recorded during the qualitative survey: “(...) it is good to give protection to a person who has worked efficiently for 20–30 years and it is good to (...) let them retire peacefully. But this causes various problems for employers. For me it’s not a problem, because I have so many different jobs to offer that I can take care of these older people, for instance, by giving them poorer paying, but also less responsible jobs, so I can cope with this problem. I can imagine, however, that many companies will not be able to tackle it.” [Kryńska, Krzyszkowski, Urbaniak, and Wiktorowicz, 2013, p. 249].

Table No. 5. Employer Opinions on the Behavior of Male (M) and Female (F) Workers During the Four-Year Period before Retirement Providing Them with Protection against Redundancy (% of “Yes” Answers N=1011)

Specification	Public sector		Non-public sector		p		Big city setting		Small town setting		Rural and small town setting		P	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
	Employees are ready to end their professional career as soon as possible	51.5	46.2	51.9	36.8	0.979	0.404	58.2	41.8	58.2	47.4	55.8	35.3	0.751
Employees abuse sick leave	0.7	4.8	9.5	7.2	0.044	0.845	6.5	9.3	12.8	12.4	10.6	4.9	0.099	0.001
Employees become less productive because they cannot be dismissed	4.8	9.7	7.9	9.5	0.241	0.756	6.3	12.9	4.7	10.9	12.1	9.6	0.002	0.458
Employees perform at the same level as before	87.3	79.7	77.2	77.1	0.353	0.869	85.3	79.5	87.2	86.2	83.5	85.9	0.399	0.083

Source: Kryńska, Krzyszkowski, Urbaniak, and Wiktorowicz (2013), p. 126.

The overall evaluation of the likely impact of the mandatory four-year period in which workers approaching retirement are protected against dismissal is negative. It discourages employers from recruiting older unemployed people and from forming a long-term employment relationship with their older workforce. Paradoxically, the law may also provoke employers to get rid of older workers before they become eligible for protection. Some of those dismissed may find new jobs, but this time under flexible working arrangements to which the four-year protection period does not apply. The protection that the labor law was meant to offer to older workers will prove illusory then.

Conclusion

Many older people are intrinsically work-oriented. For example, two-fifths of Americans aged 65+ work for the pleasure of working, regardless of the job's financial aspects. Because the retirement age is being increased in both Poland and the UK, the group of older workers will also grow bigger. Considering that employers show limited interest in this category of workers, a gap between job offers and workers' ability to function in the workplace that deteriorates as people age may appear. Taylor and Walker (1994) as well as Lain (2012) expect a distinct segmentation of jobs available to older workers on both the external and internal labor markets. A solution to this situation can be sought in resource based theory and diversity management. Apart from people who do well in the primary labor market and who, because of their unique competencies, determination to develop themselves, and high motivation for work will be appreciated by employers for their human capital whether or not the State implements mandatory retention policies, there will also be a definitely bigger group of older workers in the secondary labor market, forced to work long years as a result of increased retirement age or a low income replacement ratio. This group will consist of people doing precarious jobs (the term usually refers to uncertain, unstable jobs involving dangerous, risky elements, done on terms fixed by other entities), but also of those who, because of the scale of demand for labor, will do odd or part-time jobs offering lower incomes, such as cashiers or cleaners. Lain calls them "lopaq occupations," a succinct term summarizing the category of low paid occupations requiring few qualifications that are often part-time [Lain, 2012, p. 79]. Can institutional measures initiated by the State decrease the group of older workers on the secondary labor market? The first factor to be considered in trying to answer this question is the intense rivalry that takes place on this market between younger workers who, either by choice (students) or out of necessity (long-term unemployed), compete with older workers for jobs. The

hypothesis that a higher degree of labor market regulation exerts strong influence on employer decisions is true. However, the case of Poland does not show that this results in an increase in the number of older people getting jobs. The results of the present regulatory framework in which Polish employers make their decisions, additionally suggests that the economic incentives for increasing the number of older people in employment could be much more effective than administrative control over demand for this group of workers. The incentives should primarily aid employers in adapting jobs to meet worker functional abilities that are deteriorated by aging processes.

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Polskie i brytyjskie doświadczenia w zarządzaniu starzejącymi się zasobami pracy

Streszczenie

W Polsce i w UK występują podobne trendy demograficzne, lecz zatrudnienie wśród osób, które ukończyły 50 rok życia jest w Polsce znacznie niższe. Oba kraje realizują politykę wsparcia aktywności zawodowej osób starszych, która ma zachęcić pracodawców do zatrudnienia osób 50+. Stosunkowo duży poziom zatrudnienia tej kategorii osób w UK i niski w Polsce można między innymi wiązać z odmiennym podejściem do instytucjonalnego wsparcia retencji starszych pracowników. Celem artykułu jest analiza wpływu regulacji instytucjonalnych, charakterystyki demograficznej zasobów pracy i sytuacji starszych pracobiorców na rynku pracy na praktyki podejmowane przez polskich i brytyjskich pracodawców, mające na celu

retencję starszych pracowników. Potwierdzona została hipoteza zakładająca, iż wysoki poziom regulacji rynku pracy wywiera silny wpływ na decyzje pracodawców. Jednakże nie zauważono, aby dzięki temu dochodziło do wzrostu zatrudnienia starszych pracowników, czego ilustracją jest przykład Polski. Artykuł jest oparty na wynikach polskiego projektu badawczego Wyrównywanie szans na rynku pracy dla osób 50+ realizowanego częściowo przez zespół z Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego. Sytuację starszych pracobiorców w UK przedstawiono na podstawie dostępnej literatury przedmiotu.

Bogusława Urbaniak – Ph.D. in economics, Doctor Habil., Professor of the University of Łódź, Head of the Department of Labor and Social Policy at the Faculty of Economics and Sociology at the University of Łódź. Author and co-author of numerous publications in the area of human resource management, for many years involved in the preparing of reports on the Leader in Human Resource Management annual competition. Participated in international research projects associated with the professional activity of an ageing workforce. Received an individual grant of the ERSTE Foundation as a part of the “Generations in Dialog” project. A member of the Employment Expert Group of AGE Platform Europe, author of expert reports as part of EU programs, expert for the Forum 50+: Seniors of the Twenty First Century.