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Generational differentiation of the unemployed and their civilisational competences level in Ruda Śląska²

Summary

The article presents partial results of empirical research carried out by the public employment services from Ruda Śląska. The study was an attempt to show to what extent generational differentiation affects, among others on the level of civilisation competences possessed. These competences include: computer skills and Internet usage, adaptability to the changing labour market conditions, category B driving licence, spatial mobility or communicative knowledge of at least one foreign language, best confirmed by an appropriate certificate. Having these competences at a sufficiently high level makes it easier to start work, maintain it and change it if necessary. The research, the results of which were presented in the article, were carried out based on the standardised interview technique on a representative sample of 430 unemployed selected in a quantitative manner. The research results were aggregated into four age (generational) categories of

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² Partial research results on issues of generational diversity of the unemployed have been published by the author of this article in: "Wiek bezrobotnych jako czynnik różnicujący gotowość podjęcia pracy i uczestnictwa w działaniach z zakresu aktywizacji zawodowej" (*Polityka Społeczna* 5–6/2019), "Pokoleniowe zróżnicowanie osób bezrobotnych a oczekiwania wobec pracodawców w świetle badań empirycznych" (*Humanizacja Pracy*, 2/2019).

respondents: “baby boomers” (born before 1965), “X” (born in 1965–1979), “Y” (born in 1980–1989) and “Z” (born after 1989). The analysis carried out clearly showed the growing problem of the deficit of civilisational competences with the older unemployed, which can significantly hamper their effective professional insertion. The results of the conducted research have an application dimension and can be used in the policy of reinserting human resources to the local labour markets.

Key words: civilisational competences, unemployed, professional insertion, generations on the labour market

Introduction

Clearly decreasing rates of registered unemployment in recent years and a significant inflow of economic migrants—mainly of Ukrainian nationality—do not mean that the problem of unemployment on the domestic labour market does not exist. Still, according to official statistics, almost 900 thousand people in Poland are unemployed. Admittedly, there is currently talk of employee shortage, of employers’ problems with obtaining personnel. However, practically no issues are raised in relationship to the problems of some people in obtaining appropriate employment (cf. Muster, 2019a, p. 39). This problem is hardly noticeable in public debates at the moment. Meanwhile, changes in labour demand in recent years and the increasingly frequent search for workers via the Internet are exacerbating the problem of distance from the labour market for some of the unemployed. One of the factors influencing staying in the registers of the unemployed is a low level of civilisational competences of those remaining outside the employment sphere. First of all, we can point to the problem of digital exclusion, which consists of the lack of computer skills and the ability to search for information (also on job offers) in virtual space. Other civilisational competences, especially useful in the modern labour market, include the practical skills of driving a car, a high level of spatial mobility or using a foreign language—preferably English.

The lack of these competences—especially those related to computer use or moving around in virtual space—is a factor that excludes and deepens the marginalisation of an individual in the modern labour market. This is related not only to the fact that the job market is moving to the “net” and companies are looking for new employees via the Internet, but also to the ongoing automation of the process of manufacturing material goods and services. This paper presents partial results of the survey conducted in 2017 by the public employment services from Ruda Śląska on a representative sample of 430 unemployed³ people. The research concerned the issue of generational diversification

³ The survey among the unemployed was conducted by the Poviát Labour Office (PLO) in Ruda Śląska from August to September 2017 and concerned the analysis of the phenomenon of generational diversity of both the unemployed and employed persons. The author of this article

of human resources on the local labour market—also in terms of showing the level of civilisational competences of those remaining outside employment.

The aim of the article is to answer the question to what extent is the age of the unemployed a variable differentiating the level of civilisational competences. The following main hypothesis was put forward: the higher the age of the unemployed, the lower the level of civilisational competences. The extent to which the age criterion is related to computer skills, use of the Internet, possession of a B category driving licence, the declared knowledge of foreign languages.

Ruda Śląska, with a population of almost 140 thousand, where empirical research on the problem of generational diversification of the unemployed was carried out, is a specific city. First of all, from the perspective of the labour market, we should pay attention to a very high percentage of persons employed in industry and construction, which is at 50%. In comparison, in the Silesian voivodeship, the percentage of population working in industry and construction amounts to 37%, and to 27% in Poland. Such a high share of industrial workers in Ruda Śląska is due to the fact that six coal mines are still in operation in the city. Unemployment in Ruda Śląska at the time of conducting the research (2017) was at the level of 4.1% and was lower than the unemployment rate in the Silesian voivodeship (5.1%) and in Poland (6.6%). Over the next year (2018), the dynamics of unemployment decline in Ruda Śląska was higher than in Silesia and the country. In Ruda Śląska, at the end of 2018, the official unemployment rate amounted to 3.0%, while in the Silesian voivodeship and in Poland, it was 4.3% and 5.8%, respectively. One characteristic of the demographic structure of local unemployment is the high share of women (61%), compared to 58% at the voivodeship level and 56% in the country. Moreover, in Ruda Śląska, people with at most basic vocational education constitute a higher percentage of the unemployed, 56%. In Śląskie voivodeship and in the country, the share of these persons in the unemployment structure amounts to 52% (<https://bdl.stat.gov.pl>). The research undertaken was worthwhile in Ruda Śląska thanks to the industrial nature of the city, dominated by hard coal mining. It can be expected that within the next few years, the local labour market will undergo transformations and an increasing percentage of professionally active people will take up employment in the service sector, in which civilisational competences become particularly important.

Concepts of competence and civilisational competences in the state-of-the art

The term “competence” is interdisciplinary and is used by representatives of various scientific disciplines. This term is used in pedagogy, psychology, sociology and management sciences. The word is derived from Latin, Wincenty Okoń notes that: “The notion of *competentia* meant responsibility, authority to act. Nowadays, it means the ability to self-

was the manager and coordinator of the research. The research project was financed by the Ruda Śląska PLO.

fulfil, the result of the learning process, the basic condition of upbringing” (Okoń, 1996, p. 129). In the *Dictionary of Polish* we read that the term competence means, among others, “the scope of someone’s knowledge, skills” (1978, vol. 1, p. 977). In management science, the following definition of competence can be found—these are predispositions: “in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes, ensuring that professional tasks are performed at an effective and/or distinctive level, in accordance with the standards set by the organisation for the post in question” (Król, 2006, p. 82). Aleksy Poczowski understands competences as: “all the permanent characteristics and features of employees that are directly linked to their performance” (Poczowski, 2003, p. 98). Therefore, which should be emphasised, for A. Poczowski, the term “competences” is “a broader concept than qualifications, covering all permanent human properties, forming a cause–effect relationship with high and/or above-average work effects achieved by this person, which have a measurable dimension” (Poczowski, 2003, p. 153). Thus, the possession of certain qualifications—as noted by Ryszard Walkowiak—can only be a necessary condition for certain posts. Meanwhile, competences relate to practical actions in specific situations and organisational contexts. Competences have the property that they update in the work process and, as a dynamic structure, evolve under the influence of changes in the economy and in human life (cf. Walkowiak, 2004, p. 20). A similar property of competence is pointed out by Wiesława Załoga, who claims that: “Competences are a coherent set, i.e. where a change in one element results in a change in the other components” (Załoga, 2013, p. 457).

One of the types of competences—increasingly useful in the modern labour market—are the so-called civilisational competences. In the literature on the subject we can read that they include (Szczepański, 2006, p. 22): participation in the “net” and virtual world, knowledge of foreign languages, confirmed by certificates, driving licence category B, spatial mobility, a high level of functional literacy, adaptability.

Some of the civilisational competences mentioned above require clarification. By spatial mobility, the author understands the readiness of the unemployed to take up a job if it would involve the necessity of daily commuting to the place where it is performed. The research analysed how much time the respondents could devote to commuting. The willingness of the unemployed to take up employment if it would involve the necessity to move to another city in the country or abroad was also studied. By making an explication of the term “functional literacy”, one can conclude that it is: “The ability to process information in reading, writing and calculations necessary to use printed materials commonly found at home, at work and in social life” (Gulczyńska, Świerzbowska-Kowalik, 1996, p. 46). In defining the term “functional literacy”, Janusz Skwarek adds to the ability to use printed materials the understanding of graphic presentations, icons, charts and diagrams (cf. Skwarek, 2013, p. 161). Therefore, it can be stated that functional literacy is understanding the information received by an individual, it is a practical skill of using information.

Adaptive abilities should be understood as an individual’s flexibility and readiness to raise and complement qualifications to the current needs of the labour market.

Having civilisational competences is particularly useful for a professionally active individual, and their deficit—mainly related to computer literacy and Internet use—will be an increasingly important determinant of marginalisation on the labour market and petrification of the unemployment structure. The problem of the deficit of these competences can be particularly clearly observed in people over 50, which in case of the unemployed hinders the processes of effective professional insertion. An appropriate level of civilisational competences also allows an individual to function efficiently in the contemporary society. All the more so because, as we read in the literature: “In recent years, the electronic equivalents of administrative, educational, financial and social services (*eGovernment*, *eLearning*, *eCommerce*, *eHealth*) have been developing dynamically. Those who do not have access to the Internet, or otherwise do not use it, are completely deprived of the benefits of the dynamic development in this area” (Borkowski, 2007, pp. 330–331). Sometimes the term *N Generation* is used to describe people who are able to operate a computer efficiently and use the Internet. Marek S. Szczepański points out that: “The name is derived from the English word *Network*. The N’s are supposed to be an implication of the ongoing IT revolution. Well-educated people are aware of the value of information and knowledge resources that are calculated economically and prestigiously, and the computer symbolises the technical medium of these values” (Szczepański, 2003, p. 7). On the other hand, people with these competences have “a chance not to fall off the track of modernity, speeding through fibre-optic cables” (Gawron, Muster, 2008, p. 30). A high level of civilisational competences undoubtedly facilitates taking up and maintaining a job, its possible change, or obtaining additional income opportunities. Especially in the times of dynamic changes on the labour market (Industry 4.0), development of the service sector and information technologies, ways of sending information.

Having civilisational competences reduces the level of fear of constant changes—both in modern organisations and in their environment. A person who has acquired the appropriate level of civilisational competences is more ready to accept the inevitably happening changes in a conscious manner. Unfortunately, which should be clearly emphasised, the deficit in digital literacy is a key determinant of an individual’s exclusion not only at the labour market level (greater risk of unemployment or low-paid jobs), but also is a factor of social marginalisation—which may be manifested by difficult access to services where online registration is required (cf. Muster, 2010, p. 49). Thus, we can talk about the deepening digital divide phenomenon, i.e. the division into those who use and those who do not use the Internet. In the literature, we read that the social costs of this division will be high and felt by everyone—regardless of whether they are users of virtual space or not. As Edwin Bendyk emphasises: “According to the law formulated by Ernest J. Wilson, the social cost of exclusion increases in proportion to the intensity of the use of the Network by those plugged into it. This means that the larger the digital gap, the more we as the whole society pay for it. Therefore, the problem of the digital divide is not a purely technical one, but a socio-political one” (Bendyk, 2007, p. 210). This division is a new form of social stratification and a growing problem of exclusion of those who do not acquire civilisational competences, in particular those related to computer use and the

use of virtual space. Digital exclusion and the general deficit of civilisational competences correlates with the processes of income marginalisation, and also affects greater problems of effective economic activation of the unemployed.

This article is a case study for Ruda Śląska. It will be justified to ask the question to what extent civilisational competences are desired by employers in this local labour market. On the basis of the analysis of job offers appearing on the local labour market in Ruda Śląska (data for 2018), it can be observed that employment offers for the following large groups of occupations⁴ dominate:

- craft and related trades workers (2388 offers),
- workers performing simple jobs (2289 offers),
- plant and machine operators and assemblers (1151 offers),
- service and sales workers (765 offers),
- office workers (521 offers),
- specialists (456 offers),
- technicians and other associate professionals (455 offers).

In these occupational groups, 99.5% of job offers appearing in Ruda Śląska were recorded. Six active hard coal mines and numerous entities related to the mining industry determine the situation on the local labour market. At the same time, there has been an increase in job offers in this industrial city in recent years for: specialists, technicians, machine operators and assemblers (see *Monitoring zawodów deficytowych i nadwyżkowych...*, 2019, p. 15). It is difficult for representatives of these professional groups to function in the space of the labour market without civilisational competences, in particular those related to computer services, using the Internet, having a driving licence, knowing a foreign language or even adapting their qualifications to the needs of employers. It can be assumed that the progressing globalisation and the technological revolution will increasingly influence the increase in the importance of civilisational competences for employers, also in the industrial labour markets, where particularly important transformations will take place, resulting in a departure from industry and an increasing importance of services.

Methodological issues of studying the unemployed

During the research initiated and carried out by the Powiat Labour Office (PLO; Powiatowy Urząd Pracy—PUP) in Ruda Śląska, an attempt was made to respond to many research problems related to the broadly understood problem of professional insertion of the unemployed.

⁴ Based on the *Monitoring zawodów deficytowych i nadwyżkowych w Rudzie Śląskiej w 2018 roku* (2019) [*Monitoring of deficit and surplus occupations in Ruda Śląska in 2018*], Ruda Śląska PLO, June 2019, p. 15. The presented list includes offers which were made public and available to potential employment candidates in the Powiat Labour Office in Ruda Śląska, the Voluntary Labour Corps, or appeared on Internet portals.

The literature stresses that in sociology, a ‘generation’ is understood as ‘all persons of approximately equal age who, on the basis of a common historical and social situation, share similar attitudes, motivations, expectations, attitudes towards the world and value systems’ (Wiktorowicz, Warwas, 2016, p. 19). According to Anthony Giddens, a generation is all individuals born and living at the same time. Belonging to a generation is determined not only by the year of birth, but also by the community of experiences shaped by a specific society (Giddens, 2012, p. 1084). Thus, not only the date of birth, but also important events taking place in the social space experienced by individuals affect their belonging to a specific generation.

At the stage of sample selection, the age differentiation of the unemployed was made due to four basic age categories coexisting in the labour market (Wiktorowicz, Warwas, 2016, p. 22):

- born before 1965 (“baby boomers” generation),
- born in the years 1965–1979 (generation X),
- born in the years 1980–1989 (generation Y),
- born after 1989 (generation Z).

However, it should be stressed that “the distinction between the generations is a matter for the convention and may be questionable in individual cases. (...) Therefore, in literature one can find different classifications of generations, which differ not only in the individual generations’ adopted nomenclature of, but also in the dates signifying the given generation’s coming to the world (Cewińska, Striker, Wojtaszczyk, 2009, p. 118). It considers the youngest generation in particular. In the state-of-the-art, we will also find information that generation Z includes people born after 1995 (cf. Hysa, 2016, p. 387) or after 1996 (cf. Jabłońska, Billewicz, 2016, p. 86). At the stage of designing the research, it was assumed that people born after 1989 will be included in the generation Z⁵ representatives category.

Thanks to aggregating the collected empirical data at the level of four age categories, a unique portrait was created showing the phenomenon of generational differentiation, among other things, because of the level of civilisational competences. The obtained empirical material may be the basis for undertaking activities in professional insertion dedicated to age-differentiated categories of the unemployed. The research covered 430 inhabitants of Ruda Śląska, who at the time of the research had the unemployed status. This constituted 22.2% of all unemployed persons registered in the Poviát Labour Office in Ruda Śląska. The research used a standardised interview questionnaire and trained interviewers guarded the confidentiality of the collected empirical material. Most of the questions were closed and semi-open. Some of the questions were asked in the form of tables. The unemployed persons answered the questionnaire during a visit to the Poviát

⁵ There were two main reasons for this. Firstly, it is a year commonly regarded as the beginning of economic transformation in Poland, and secondly, if this category included persons born after 1996, there would be a sampling problem. The research was conducted in 2017, and the unemployed status can be acquired from the age of 18. Moreover, there would be no persons with higher education in this cohort.

Labour Office seat in Ruda Śląska. The selected research sample was representative. The sample was selected on the basis of the following variables: age, gender, education and duration of unemployment. Thanks to this, it is possible to extrapolate research results to a wider population of unemployed people in Ruda Śląska.

Socio-demographic features of the analysed unemployed persons

The analysis of socio-demographic features of the unemployed who participated in the research carried out by the public employment services in Ruda Śląska was based on the following data: year of birth, gender, education level, unemployment period. In addition, people born after 1980 indicated whether they still lived with their parents. Taking into account the age criterion, 23.0% of respondents were born before 1965 (the “baby boomers” generation), 25.6% were born between 1965 and 1979 (generation X), 30.0% were unemployed born between 1980 and 1989 (generation Y) and 21.4% were the youngest, born after 1989 (generation Z)—see Table 1.

Table 1. Year of birth of the unemployed participating in the survey

Year of birth	N	%
Before 1965 (the “baby boomers” generation)	99	23.0
1965–1979 (generation X)	110	25.6
1980–1989 (generation Y)	129	30.0
After 1989 (generation Z)	92	21.4
Total	430	100.0

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

The empirical data analysis demonstrated that 15.5% of unemployed people born in 1980–1989 still live with their parents. For people born after 1989, the percentage rose to 48.9%. Another important variable to differentiate the subjects is gender. A detailed distribution of the respondents’ genders is presented in Table 2, where a certain over-representation of women can be observed—it results from the selected research sample, which reflects the structure of the unemployed in the analysed age groups.

Table 3, in turn, presents the structure of the unemployed according to education.

The survey was dominated by people with at most basic vocational education, whom, in the case of the “baby boomers” generation representatives constituted 69.7% of respondents, and in the case of the generation X representatives, 66.4% of respondents. On the other hand, in case of the generations Y and Z, the share of people with at most basic vocational education was at the level of 51.9% and 52.2%, respectively. The share of the unemployed with tertiary education among the representatives of the “baby boomers” generation amounted to 4.0%, while the share of the respondents of the generation X amounted to 5.4%. In the case of the generations Y and Z, it was 15.5% and 10.9%, respectively.

Table 2. Gender of the unemployed participating in the survey

Gender	Year of birth							
	Before 1965		1965–1979		1980–1989		After 1989	
	The “baby boomers” generation		Generation X		Generation Y		Generation Z	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	52	52.5	78	70.9	93	72.1	61	66.3
Male	45	45.5	32	29.1	36	27.9	31	33.7
No answer	2	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	99	100.0	110	100.0	129	100.0	92	100.0

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

Table 3. Educational level of the unemployed participating in the survey

Educational level	Year of birth							
	Before 1965		1965–1979		1980–1989		After 1989	
	The “baby boomers” generation		Generation X		Generation Y		Generation Z	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Incomplete primary/incomplete junior high school	4	4.0	3	2.7	11	8.5	8	8.7
Primary/junior high school	22	22.2	30	27.3	26	20.2	26	28.3
Basic vocational	43	43.5	40	36.4	30	23.2	14	15.2
Secondary, general	8	8.1	6	5.5	13	10.1	11	12.0
Secondary, vocational	15	15.2	13	11.8	16	12.4	21	22.7
Post-secondary, non-tertiary	3	3.0	11	10.0	9	7.0	2	2.2
Tertiary, vocational	2	2.0	1	0.9	6	4.7	3	3.3
Master’s degree	2	2.0	5	4.5	14	10.8	7	7.6
Not stated	0	0.0	1	0.9	4	3.1	0	0.0
Total	99	100.0	110	100.0	129	100.0	92	100.0

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

Civilisational competences of the unemployed in the light of empirical research

One of the important elements of the research carried out by public employment services in Ruda Śląska was an attempt to diagnose the level of civilisational competences of the unemployed. The following were analysed for the respondents, separately for four age categories, for example: knowledge of at least one foreign language, possession of a B category driving licence and car driving skills in urban traffic, computer and Internet skills, or improving one's professional qualifications.

The analysis of the collected empirical material showed that the vast majority of the interviewed unemployed people are not able to communicate in a foreign language. The younger the age of the unemployed, the more often the ability to communicate in a foreign language was indicated. In the case of the oldest surveyed unemployed persons (representatives of the "baby boomers" generation) as many as 84.8% indicated that they do not speak a foreign language; in the case of the generation X, the percentage declaring that they do not know a foreign language was at a similar level—82.7%. However, in the case of representatives of generation Y the share of these persons decreases to 62.8%, and in the case of respondents of generation Z it reaches the level of 60.9%. Unemployed people from the "baby boomers" generation reported that they know the following foreign languages: Russian (N = 6), English (N = 1), German (N = 1). The representatives of the generation X pointed to the knowledge of: German (N = 5), English (N = 3), Roma (N = 2), Russian (N = 2), Czech (N = 1). The unemployed from generation Y stated that they can communicate in the following foreign languages: English (N = 25), German (N = 5), one respondent each said that they speak Serbian, Czech, Slovak and Italian. Representatives of the generation Z said that they are able to communicate in the following foreign languages: English (N = 24), German (N = 2), Dutch (N = 1). However, the aforementioned opinions of the unemployed are based only on the subjective indications of the respondents—they are not supported by appropriate certificates. Therefore, it can be assumed with high probability that the actual level of foreign language skills of the unemployed is at a lower than declared communicative level.

Next, the unemployed were asked whether they could operate a computer (e.g. Word, Excel application programs) and whether they were using the Internet. Statistical analysis showed two following dependencies: the higher the age of the unemployed, the smaller percentage of them can use a computer⁶ (Figure 1), and the higher the age of the unemployed, the less often they are able to use the Internet⁷ (Figure 2).

⁶ The Pearson contingency coefficient $C_{\text{Pearson}} = 0.45$ was used to investigate statistical dependencies. The relationship is statistically significant with a confidence level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (chi-square test was used). The relationship is moderately strong.

⁷ The Pearson contingency coefficient has been used to examine the statistical dependence $C_{\text{Pearson}} = 0.68$. The relationship is statistically significant with a confidence level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (chi-square test was used). The relationship is strong.

In the case of the unemployed from generation Z, the percentage of people who declare computer literacy amounted to 81.5%, while in the “baby boomers” generation, the percentage of those who declare computer literacy decreased to 32.3%.

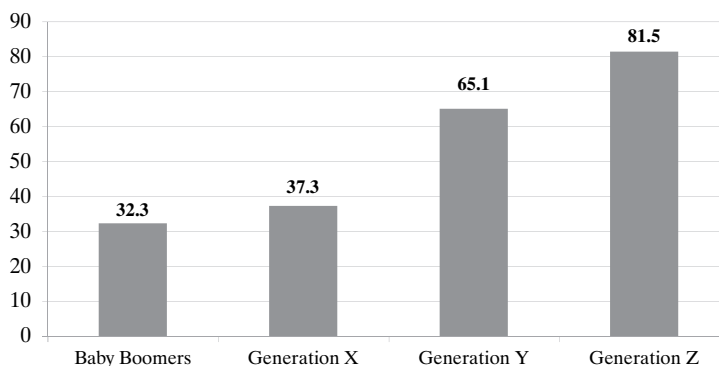


Figure 1. Share of the surveyed unemployed people from particular age categories who declare computer skills (in %)

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

A similar dependence occurred in the case of the unemployed in the context of their Internet use (Figure 2). The oldest respondents—representatives of the “baby boomers” generation—rarely indicated (36.4%) that they are users of virtual space. The share of younger unemployed people using the Internet is systematically increasing, to reach the level of 94.4% among the generation Z.

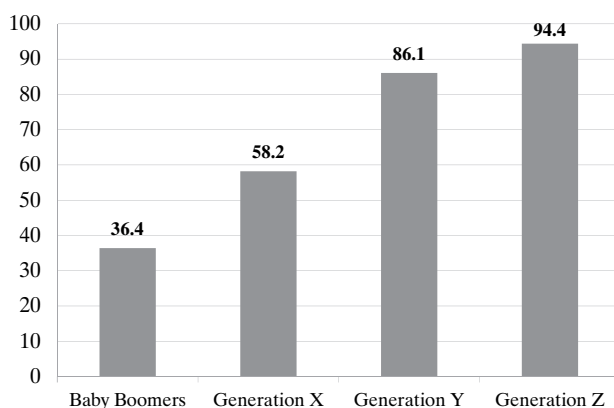


Figure 2. Share of the surveyed unemployed people from particular age categories who are able to use the Internet (in %)

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

As the analysis of empirical evidence showed, significant differences in computer skills and Internet use were also observed between the representatives of generations X (born 1965–1979) and Y (born 1980–1989). In the case of the unemployed from generation X, the percentage of people declaring computer skills was 37.3%, and the share of Internet users amounted to 58.2%. On the other hand, the share of persons with these competences in the Y generation amounted to 65.1% and 86.1%, respectively.

The job offer market, which has already been stressed, is moving to the Internet, and this trend is clearly confirmed by empirical research. Based on Robert Pater's analysis, it can be concluded that: "in the first three months of 2017 as many as 590 thousand job advertisements were published online, which is 21% more than in the previous year" (Błaszczak, 2018). Moreover, working from home using modern information transmission technologies is becoming more and more common. As observed by Tomasz Galewski, "the increased mobility of workers and equipment in modern telecommunications equipment makes the place of residence of workers less important. More and more companies are choosing to hire employees who will work outside the company's premises and send their results via telecommunication links" (Galewski, 2009, p. 93). The literature even emphasises that teleworking may be a chance for effective job market insertion for the unemployed—especially the youth, women after childbirth, the disabled with reduced mobility or living in rural areas (Spytek-Bandurska, 2013, pp. 145–148). At this point it is worth mentioning that in the Polish legislation the issues related to the employment of employees in the form of telework are regulated in detail by the provisions of Article 67⁵⁻¹⁷ of the Labour Code. Analysing the processes taking place on the modern labour market, it is very likely that this phenomenon will increase in strength. The implication of this will be the deepening problems of exclusion from the labour market of people who are unable to use Internet resources while searching for a job. Lack of online job search skills will result in increasing problems in finding suitable employment.

The respondents who declared their willingness to take up a job were asked about the ways of searching for job offers. The analysis of the collected research material showed a very clear dependence—the younger the respondents, the more often the Internet is used in job search. In turn the older part of respondents more often used more traditional ways of seeking a job, e.g. by means of press advertisements. The survey also showed that the youngest respondents (generation Z) most often (81.5%) of the representatives of all four generations indicated the daily smartphone use. The relationship between age and the use of a portable telephone and multimedia device is the same as in the case of correlation between age and Internet use or computer use, which should not be surprising given the interest of young people in modern information technologies.

The next Figure—No. 3—presents the division of the respondents according to the possession of a driving licence, category B. The analysis of empirical results showed that the higher the age of respondents, the fewer of them have a driving licence. However, it should be stressed that the proportion of those who hold a driving licence was generally not

very high.⁸ In the case of the youngest part of the respondents it was 39.1%, while in the case of the oldest respondents, it was only 25.3%. The research showed a small difference between the representatives of generations X and Y in terms of legitimacy to drive a car.

The lack of a driving licence, despite a well-developed transport network in the Upper Silesian agglomeration, has a negative impact on the spatial mobility level, which in turn is a factor hindering finding a suitable job. The more so as employers often require candidates for employees to have a driving licence and an active ability to drive a car in urban traffic.

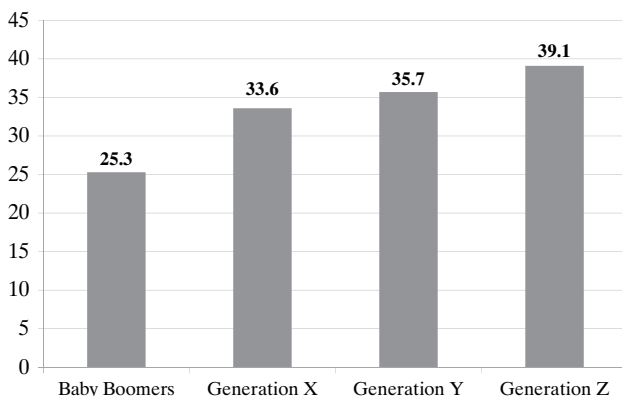


Figure 3. Share of the surveyed unemployed persons in particular age categories who hold a B category driving licence (in %)

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

During the study, spatial mobility of unemployed people was also analysed, asking them about the time they can devote to daily commuting to work.

On the basis of the collected research material, it can be stated that the vast majority of respondents declare the possibility of daily commuting. However, it should be stressed that the respondents, regardless of their age, most often indicated that the time they could spend commuting from their place of residence to work should not exceed 40 minutes (Table 4). Regardless of their age category, the unemployed tend to look for a job near their place of residence, all the more so because some respondents declared the possibility of daily commuting to work if it does not exceed 20 minutes.⁹ This attitude of some of the unemployed is a factor hindering their effective professional activation. All the more so as it is expected that circular migration will intensify in the urbanised area of Upper

⁸ The Pearson coefficient $C_{\text{Pearson}} = 0.15$ was used to investigate statistical dependencies. The relationship is statistically significant with a confidence level of $\alpha = 0.05$ (chi-square test was used). The relationship is weak.

⁹ The Act of 20th April 2004 on employment promotion and labour market institutions (consolidated text: Journal of Laws [Dziennik Ustaw] of 2019, item 1482) defines “relevant work”. The legislator notes that the total travel time to and from the workplace by public transport may not exceed 3 hours (Article 2, paragraph 1, point 16).

Silesia, which is related to the so-called employment suburbanisation (Muster, 2018). This phenomenon is associated with the job concentration in specific districts of industrial or service and administrative character (Rakowska, 2014, p. 49). On the other hand, lack of acceptance of longer commuting to work may result in long-term unemployment among those who seek appropriate employment close to their place of residence.

Table 4. Distribution of the surveyed unemployed persons by the time they can spend on daily commuting to work

Responses	Year of birth							
	Before 1965		1965–1979		1980–1989		After 1989	
	The “baby boomers” generation		Generation X		Generation Y		Generation Z	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Up to 20 minutes	21	40.5	33	41.3	36	40.0	27	41.6
21–40 minutes	15	28.8	33	41.3	32	35.6	22	33.8
41–60 minutes	6	11.5	10	12.4	17	18.9	6	9.2
Over 60 minutes	5	9.6	0	0.0	2	2.2	2	3.1
No possibility to commute daily	4	7.7	0	0.0	2	2.2	3	4.6
Hard to say	1	1.9	4	5.0	1	1.1	5	7.7
Total	52	100.0	80	100.0	90	100.0	65	100.0

Note: The above table presents answers from only those respondents who have previously indicated that they are looking for a job. Respondents who indicated that they were not interested in providing work, if it came with everyday commuting, pointed to the lack of a car and childcare as the reasons for this.

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

The literature on the subject points out that today’s employees should be prepared not only to change their job, but also the place of work; this also applies to another city or country (cf. Diec, 2010, p. 65). Therefore, the question was asked whether the unemployed were considering the possibility of taking up employment if it would involve the necessity of changing their place of residence: moving to another place in Poland or abroad.¹⁰ The analysis showed that there are no significant differences between the

¹⁰ The mere willingness to take up employment outside the place of residence is not considered a civilisational competence. However, this competence will be the spatial mobility of the individual for daily commuting. During the survey in Ruda Śląska, this analytical category was extended to include a survey of respondents’ willingness to take up employment in a hypothetical situation of moving to another city in the country and abroad.

different age categories of the unemployed in terms of possible moving to another location in the country to take up employment. The share of these respondents was at a similar level—from 16.3% for generation X representatives to 19.2% for “baby boomers” representatives, so intergenerational differences are small (Table 5).

Table 5. Distribution of the surveyed unemployed due to the declared possibility of moving to another city in the country to take up a job

Responses	Year of birth							
	Before 1965		1965–1979		1980–1989		After 1989	
	The “baby boomers” generation		Generation X		Generation Y		Generation Z	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	10	19.2	13	16.3	15	16.7	12	18.5
No	36	69.3	48	60.0	62	68.9	41	63.0
Hard to say	6	11.5	19	23.7	13	14.4	12	18.5
Total	52	100.0	80	100.0	90	100.0	65	100.0

Note: The above table presents answers from only those respondents who have previously indicated that they are looking for a job.

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

During the study, the readiness of the unemployed from various age categories to work abroad was also analysed. It turned out that regardless of the age criterion, the vast majority of the unemployed are not interested in going to work outside Poland. Among the surveyed representatives of the “baby boomers” generation, only 6.1% said that they could take up a job in another country (mainly in Germany and the Netherlands). Among the generation X representatives, 8.2% of respondents declared their willingness to start working abroad. In their case, Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands led the way. A similar percentage of respondents (8.5%) from generation Y declared that they could take up a job if it were connected with the necessity to move to another country (mainly Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom). However, among the youngest respondents—representatives of the generation Z—only 3.3% consider the possibility of working abroad, pointing to two countries—Germany and the United Kingdom.

In today’s labour market it is extremely important to constantly adapt one’s competences to the changes. For the unemployed, this undoubtedly helps them to obtain appropriate employment, while for those who work, it helps them to maintain their jobs, obtain additional orders, be promoted or change their employer if necessary. The ability to flexibly adapt and adapt to changing conditions in the internal and external environment of enterprises can also be classified as civilisational competence. The analysis of the collected research material showed that in the next 12 months the representatives of the

generation Z, that is, the youngest respondents, most often declared their willingness to improve their professional qualifications. Almost half of the respondents (48.9%) from this population want to increase their level of professional competences, so almost four times more often than the oldest respondents (13.1%)—representatives of the “baby boomers” generation (Muster, 2019b). Lack of interest in participation in courses that may help to adjust qualifications to the needs of the labour market may indicate a low level of motivation to take up employment. Therefore, it would be advisable to consider measures in the field of vocational guidance aimed at increasing the motivation—especially of the elderly—to participate in measures in the field of integration with the labour market.

Gender of the generationally differentiated unemployed and the level of their civilisational competences

A detailed analysis of the results of the research carried out in Ruda Śląska shows that the gender of the unemployed is a factor that significantly differentiates the possession of civilisational competences—Tables 6–10. It turned out that the surveyed unemployed women—practically regardless of age—more often than men are able to use computers (Table 6) and use the Internet (Table 7). The fact that women are more able to use computers and the Internet than men is most probably due to the fact that they have a higher level of formal education than men, which in turn translates into a smaller problem of digital exclusion. At the same time, attention should be paid to the deficit in computer skills and the lack of use of virtual space in some of the youngest generation of the unemployed—representatives of the generation Z. As in other age categories, this problem was more common for men in the generation Z. A detailed analysis of the collected empirical material showed that the unemployed who do not use the Internet and cannot use the computer are mainly people with a low level of education, who have been unemployed for a long time.

Table 6. Share of the unemployed able to use computers by gender and generation

Generations of the unemployed	Gender	
	Women (in %)	Men (in %)
“baby boomers”	40.4	22.2
X	41.0	28.1
Y	67.0	58.3
Z	83.6	77.0

Note: The comparison of the proportions of columns, for each generation separately, using the Bonferroni method (significance level $\alpha = 0.05$) shows that the differences between individual generations of women and men in terms of computer skills are not statistically significant.

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

Table 7. Share of the unemployed using the Internet by gender and generation

Generations of the unemployed	Gender	
	Women (in %)	Men (in %)
“baby boomers”	42.1	28.0
X	62.0	47.2
Y	92.1	69.3
Z	95.4	87.1

Note: The comparison of the proportions of columns, for each generation separately, using the Bonferroni method (significance level $\alpha = 0.05$) indicates that the differences between the individual generations of women and men in terms of Internet use skills are not statistically significant.

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

However, as the research has demonstrated, in each of the analysed age categories, men more often than women have a category B driving licence (Table 8) and declare their knowledge of a foreign language (Table 9). Moreover, in the three analysed age categories (generations X, Y and Z), men more often than women declared their willingness to improve their professional qualifications (Table 10).

It should not come as a surprise that men more often have the B driving licence. It can be assumed that men were more often obliged to drive a car while performing their professional duties before becoming unemployed. Moreover, in the population of adult Poles, men are also more often in possession of a B category driving licence.

Table 8. Share of the unemployed by gender and generational affiliation holding a driving licence B

Generations of the unemployed	Gender	
	Women (in %)	Men (in %)
“baby boomers”	17.3	33.3
X	30.8	40.6
Y	34.4	43.3
Z	29.5	58.1

Note: The comparison of the proportions of columns, for each generation separately, using the Bonferroni method (significance level $\alpha = 0.05$) shows that the differences between the individual generations of women and men in terms of the possession of a B category driving licence are not statistically significant.

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

On the other hand, the results of the research indicated that men more often than women declared their knowledge of at least one foreign language—despite the fact that it is women who have a higher level of education. This may be due to the fact that men more often take up employment abroad, but it is difficult to relate to it at this point due to the lack of relevant data, as the research discussed in the text does not address this issue.

Table 9. Share of the unemployed according to gender and generational affiliation, declaring their knowledge of foreign language

Generations of the unemployed	Gender	
	Women (in %)	Men (in %)
“baby boomers”	7.7	17.8
X	12.8	25.0
Y	35.5	38.8
Z	31.0	48.4

Note: The comparison of the proportions of columns, for each generation separately, using the Bonferroni method (significance level $\alpha = 0.05$) indicates that the differences between individual generations of women and men in terms of declarations of foreign language skills are not statistically significant.

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

More frequent willingness of unemployed men to improve their professional qualifications may prove their greater determination to find employment. The place of residence of respondents may be an important factor influencing this state of affairs. The research was carried out among the inhabitants of Ruda Śląska. For over 200 years, the city has been associated with the mining industry. This, in turn, determines not only a specific demand for employees, but also (although to a lesser extent) is related to the functioning of the traditional family model, in which a man works and a woman takes care of the household.

Table 10. Share of the unemployed according to gender and generational affiliation interested in improving professional qualifications

Generations of the unemployed	Gender	
	Women (in %)	Men (in %)
“baby boomers”	17.3	8.8
X	24.4	40.6
Y	25.8	41.7
Z	45.9	54.8

Note: The comparison of the proportions of columns, for each generation separately, using the Bonferroni method (significance level $\alpha = 0.05$) indicates that the differences between individual generations of women and men in terms of the desire to improve their professional qualifications are not statistically significant.

Source: own work, Ruda Śląska PLO.

The level of civilisation competence of unemployed respondents, which should be clearly emphasised, is strongly related to the level of education—the lower the level of education, the lower the percentage of respondents declares their willingness to improve their professional qualifications and knowledge of a foreign language, as well as having a driving licence, being able to work with a computer or using the Internet. Moreover, it turned out that the long-term unemployed, especially those staying outside employment for more than two years, are much less likely to have the analysed civilisational competences in comparison to the unemployed registered for no longer than one year in a poviát labour office.

Conclusion

The capital of civilisational competences is becoming increasingly important in the modern labour market. What is more, in the next few years, we can expect their significance to grow, which is a result not only of the progressing IT revolution, but also of the changing expectations of employers towards their employees. The employees' flexibility, related to the need to adapt to the expectations of employers, is becoming more and more important. The presented research results confirm a clear regularity—the higher the age, the lower the level of civilisational competences. Age turns out to be an important determinant of the differentiation of the degree of civilisational competences. Younger part of respondents—representatives of generations Z (born after 1989) and Y (born in 1980–1989)—declare their knowledge of foreign languages, ability to work with a computer and use virtual space much more frequently in comparison to representatives of “baby boomers” (born before 1965) and generation X (born in 1965–1979). These persons also more often hold a driving licence and declare their willingness to improve their professional qualifications. This is related, inter alia, to the higher level of their formal education and greater awareness of the importance of these competences in the modern labour market. However, it also turns out that in the space of the modern labour market, we are also dealing with the young unemployed who have a low competence level; this applies mainly to people with a low level of formal education.

Unemployed people who acquire the appropriate level of civilisational competences undoubtedly increase their chances for effective professional insertion. The lack of these competences, in turn, is a factor in the exclusion of the unemployed not only from the labour market, but also affects their social marginalisation.

The research carried out among the unemployed from Ruda Śląska has an application dimension. On their basis, a number of practically useful conclusions can be formulated—possible to be used not only by public employment services, but also by other entities dealing with the issue of professional activation. The research showed the need to implement programs dedicated to people threatened by digital exclusion from the scope of not only computer use, but also using the Internet—among others, in the scope of searching for job offers and methods of communication with potential employers. In particular, the unemployed of the oldest analysed generation, “baby boomers”, require this

support. It is recommended to provide unemployed people with computer workstations or the so-called info-kiosks, through which they will be able to search for information about vacancies, potential employers, or send their application documents. Moreover, it will be justified to organize workshops not only for the unemployed, but also for people institutionally engaged in professional insertion in the scope of the importance of civilisational competences on the modern labour market. It is also possible to conclude that tools for diagnosing the level of civilisational competences should be developed, which could be used, inter alia, among the unemployed, job seekers, students/students, migrants. Professional diagnosis of the deficit of these competences would help in the implementation of later actions dedicated to particular social groups.

The presented results of empirical research may also be a good contribution to further reflections on the importance of civilisational competences in the contemporary labour market.

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Pokoleniowe zróżnicowanie osób bezrobotnych a poziom ich kompetencji cywilizacyjnych w świetle badań empirycznych w Rudzie Śląskiej

Streszczenie

W artykule zaprezentowano częściowe wyniki badań empirycznych przeprowadzonych przez publiczne służby zatrudnienia z Rudy Śląskiej. W badaniach tych podjęto próbę ukazania, w jakim stopniu pokoleniowe zróżnicowanie wiąże się z poziomem posiadanych kompetencji cywilizacyjnych. Do tych kompetencji można zaliczyć m.in.: umiejętność obsługi komputera i korzystania z Internetu, zdolność adaptacji do zmieniających się warunków rynku pracy, posiadanie prawa jazdy kategorii B, mobilność przestrzenną oraz komunikatywną znajomość co najmniej jednego języka obcego. Posiadanie tych kompetencji na odpowiednio wysokim poziomie ułatwia podjęcie pracy, a także jej utrzymanie oraz ewentualną zmianę. Badania, których wyniki przedstawiono w artykule, zostały przeprowadzone za pomocą techniki standaryzowanego wywiadu na reprezentatywnej próbie 430 bezrobotnych dobranych w sposób kwotowy. Przy ustaleniu struktury próby badawczej pod uwagę wzięto następujące zmienne: wiek, płeć, poziom wykształcenia, czas pozostawania bez pracy osób bezrobotnych. Uzyskane wyniki badań były następnie agregowane w cztery kategorie wiekowe (pokolenia) respondentów: „baby boomers” (urodzeni przed 1965 rokiem), „X” (urodzeni w latach 1965–1979), „Y” (urodzeni w latach 1980–1989) i „Z” (urodzeni po 1989 roku). Przeprowadzona analiza jednoznacznie wykazała narastający problem deficytu kompetencji cywilizacyjnych u osób bezrobotnych starszych wiekiem, co w istotny sposób może utrudniać ich efektywną aktywizację zawodową. Wyniki badań mają wymiar aplikacyjny i mogą zostać wykorzystane w polityce aktywizacji zasobów ludzkich na lokalnych rynkach pracy.

Słowa kluczowe: kompetencje cywilizacyjne, bezrobotny, aktywizacja zawodowa, pokolenia na rynku pracy