NCN Preludium " IT specialists in outsourcing centers for business services in Poland. Sociological study of experience of work ", principal investigator Szymon Pilch, MA, amount of funding: 151 607 PLN, period of research: 26.11.2021 - 25. 11. 2024, funding: National Science Centre, No. DEC-2021/41/N/HS6/00557.

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The project "IT specialists in outsourcing centers for business services in Poland. Sociological study of experience of work" led by Szymon Pilch, M.A. (Ph.D. student in the Department of General Sociology, Institute of Sociology, University of Wrocław) received funding from the Preludium (edition 20) competition organized by the Polish National Science Centre. The scientific supervision over the project is provided by Adam Mrozowicki, PhD, Associate Prof. UWr. The project will be realised in the years 2021-2024. It also envisages cooperation with, i. a., Associate Prof. Bertil Rolandsson from the Department of Sociology and Work Science at the University of Gothenburg. The amount of funding is over PLN 150 thousand.

**About the project**

The contemporary world of work is in a state of constant social, economic and cultural transformation, taking into account aspects related to the organisation, management and culture of work, but also the global and local distribution of work structures and institutions. Another key context for the transformation of the world of work is the ongoing processes of digital transformation, such as robotisation and automation. This is particularly evident for industries related to the broadly defined IT sector - one of the most important parts of the Polish and global economy - where the number of employed people is constantly growing, more and more investments are being financed by domestic and foreign capital, and wages are among the highest in the whole national (Polish) economy. The project will analyse experiences of IT specialists working in Polish and international centres providing services for business in Poland.

The project aims at answering the research question which is articulated as follows: what meanings do IT professionals in business service centres in Poland attribute to their work, taking into account specific conditions of digital transformation of the Polish economy, changes in work organisation and management methods, as well as biographical experiences and career patterns? How are these meanings assigned? For example, is high salary the most important for IT specialists, or maybe stable employment and the possibility of promotion in the company? Or perhaps more important are modern technologies used in projects or good atmosphere in the company? In the planned study these issues will be analysed on four levels of social reality. Firstly, based on the analysis of the relationship between assigning meanings to the sphere of work of IT professionals and other spheres of life related to the biographical experiences of the interviewees, their social identities, career paths and life strategies they employ. Secondly, on the basis of an analysis of aspects related to the organisation and management of work at the company level, on the basis of an analysis of elements of managerial ideologies and the impact of the latter on the behaviour of IT professionals at work and outside work, and on the basis of an analysis of the impact of the digitisation of work on the meanings of the latter. Thirdly, in relation to legal regulations that create - together with social norms - the institutional context for the development of business services in Poland, in relation to the analysis of labour ideologies in the context of the Polish variant of "cultures of capitalism". Fourthly, in relation to the global flow of capital, knowledge, technology and labour in the structures of the world economy, based on the relationship between the organisational culture of (global/local) companies and the globalisation processes of the world of work, as well as in relation to the outsourcing of business processes from economically developed countries to economically less advanced countries.

Within the framework of this project, the empirical research will be carried out. Firstly, secondary data will be used during the desk research analysis. Secondly, in order to reconstruct the experience of IT specialists’ work and learn about the meanings attributed by the former to working in business service centres in Poland, 30 biographical narrative interviews will be conducted in three cities: Cracow, Lodz, Warsaw. In order to analyse issues related to the organisation, management and digitalisation of work in business service centres in Poland, an additional 15 expert interviews will be conducted with employees of IT recruitment departments in the researched companies, employees of Provincial Labour Offices in the three cities and their regions, and trade unionists operating in Poland. The research will also include a critical discourse analysis of the the image of IT professionals created by employers in the business services sector. Such an analysis will aim to reconstruct elements of the ideology of work in this industry. The final element of the research will be carrying out the case studies of 6 selected companies (3 with Polish and 3 with foreign capital) in order to reconstruct categories of experience of work in business service centres in “natural” social conditions.