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The Unemploed of "Baby-Boomers" Generation in Contemporary Labour Market in Poland - Issues of Professional Insertion and Expectations towards Employers

By Rafal Muster
University of Silesia in Katowice

Abstract- The article attempts to characterize the unemployed belonging of the post-war baby boom generation, referred to as Baby-boomers' (born before 1965). Their problems of professional activation on the contemporary, dynamically changing labor market were presented. It turns out that despite, a significant reduction in the issue of unemployment on the domestic labor market, not all age groups of the unemployed are the beneficiaries of these favorable changes. What's more – the statistics indicate a deterioration of the situation of people over 55 on the labor market. In recent years, their share in the unemployment structure has increased threefold. The phenomenon of the "Baby-boomers" generation is not only described in the literature, but it is also object of scientific reflection. However, this problem is virtually unnoticeable in the public discourse. Rapid changes taking place in the internal and external environment of modern organizations (automation, robotization, Internet development) are factors making the eldest unemployed reintegration into the labor market even more difficult.

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The Unemploed of "Baby-Boomers" Generation in Contemporary Labour Market in Poland - Issues of Professional Insertion and Expectations towards Employers

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Abstract- The article attempts to characterize the unemployed belonging of the post-war baby boom generation, referred to as Baby-boomers' (born before 1965). Their problems of professional activation on the contemporary, dynamically changing labor market were presented. It turns out that despite, a significant reduction in the issue of unemployment on the domestic labor market, not all age groups of the unemployed are the beneficiaries of these favorable changes. What's more – the statistics indicate a deterioration of the situation of people over 55 on the labor market. In recent years, their share in the unemployment structure has increased threefold. The phenomenon of the "Baby-boomers" generation is not only described in the literature, but it is also object of scientific reflection. However, this problem is virtually unnoticeable in the public discourse. Rapid changes taking place in the internal and external environment of modern organizations (automation, robotization, Internet development) are factors making the eldest unemployed reintegration into the labor market even more difficult. These changes may affect professional marginalization, but also the progressive social exclusion of people of retirement age. This is also confirmed by the results of empirical research cited in the article. In addition to paying attention to the problems of professional activation of the "Baby-boomers", the article also describes their expectations of potential employers. Demographic changes will limit the supply of labor resources (low fertility rate, aging), employers will increasingly be forced to reorient their employment strategies and more often employ the jobless from the "Baby-boomers" generation.

Keywords: "baby-boomers" generation, unemployment, labor market, professional activation.

I. Introduction

Demographic processes related to society's aging shall influence the accessibility of workforce resources in our country to an ever greater extent. Demographic models clarity indicate considerable growth of the number of postproduction age individuals in our population, but also of the amount of those in pre-retirement age (compare Jóźwiak, 2013). The increase of the percentage of those in professionally immobile age (45-59 for women and 45-64 for men) in the population and particularly the growth in the number of individuals aged 55 and more alongside the increasing problems in obtaining employees shall lead to the necessity to redirect the employers' recruitment strategies for their vacancies. This shall result in more frequent hiring of employees in pre-retirement age also with the use of human resources reserves registered in regional labor agencies as unemployed.

Despite the considerable improvement of the situation in the domestic labor market observed in several last years, not all age groups of the unemployed benefit from these favorable changes. It is a fact that unemployment problem has been reduced significantly among those aged between 18 and 24. Still, simultaneously the percentage of those aged 55 and more in the unemployment structure has trebled. In the period between 2006 and 2021 the officially recorded unemployment rate was reduced from the level of 14.8% to 5.4% (www.gus.pl). In this period, the number of individuals officially registered as unemployed by regional labor agencies was reduced by 1 414 207 individuals (from the level of 2 309 410 to 895 203 unemployed). However, taking into consideration the age criterion of unemployed we may conclude that individuals aged above 55 do not benefit from the strong trend of unemployment reduction in Poland. Statistical data indicate a growing percentage of individuals belonging to this age group in the structure of registered unemployment. It has been determined that the presence of those aged 55 and more in the system of unemployed has nearly trebled – from 6.7% to 17,5% between 2006 and 2021. Simultaneously it needs to be stated that due to the process of society aging, the percentage of the population in old age shall grow systematically. As has been remarked by M. Zrałek: "Society aging constitutes a global phenomenon, but in Poland, it shall progress very dynamically (Zrałek, 2015: 201). Estimates of the Main Statistical Office (GUS) leave no room for speculations. The age median[1] for Polish population, which currently equals 41.9 years (respectively 43.6 for women and 40.3 for men), shall increase by nearly ten years, and in the year 2050 reached 52.5 – with 54.8 for females and 50.1 for males (compare GUS 2014: 127). Additionally, the percentage of individuals above 55 years of age in the population shall also grow from 31.2% to 47% (compare www.stat.gov.pl) - a fact that shall coincide with the

Author: Faculty of Sociology, University of Silesia in Katowice.
e-mail: rafal.muster@us.edu.pl

[1] Age median – according the definition of MSO, defines the average age of individuals within a given social group (e.g., inhabiting a specific region). The median value determines the period that has been exceeded by half of the individuals belonging to a given society, and the other half has not reached yet (www.stat.gov.pl).

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systematic growth of the average lifespan. In 2050 the average lifespan for males shall equal 82.1 and for females 87.5 (compare Chomątkowska, Żarczyńska-Dobiesz, 2018: 37). Demographic trends indicate the growing availability of potential employees aged 55 or more (reach Kawka 2018: 117; Lewandowski, Rutkowski 2017: 11; Jamka 2009: 44; Chomątkowska, Żarczyńska-Dobiesz, 2018: 38). It is also worth noting the rapid aging of Europe's population. In 2018, the population of Baby-boomers numbered 150 million people, representing 22.2% of Europe's total population (Kaczmarek 2019).

The low level of professional activity of individuals belonging to this age group has been emphasised in the literature on the subject (Sadowska-Snarska, 2001), which is visible in the statistical data illustrating the economic activity indicators for various age groups. According to the calculations of the Main Statistical Office, the economic activity indicator[2] for Poles aged between 55 and 64 equalled 52.2 % in 2018 with 39.3% for females and 62.8% for males. The employment factor[3] for individuals of this age group reached 50.4% - with 38.5 % for females and 60.6% for males (GUS 2019: 110-113). Demographic changes connected with society's aging shall continue to influence the labor market to an ever-growing extent – particularly in the scope of workforce accessibility. The growing percentage of individuals in pre-retirement and retirement age with a simultaneous decline in the number of youngsters entering the labor market shall lead to redirecting of employers' recruitment strategies. At the same time a risk exists that in the face of a crisis, the amount of the unemployed aged above 55 manifesting difficulties with professional reintegration shall increase as well.

Unfortunately, the issue of unemployment has been practically ignored in the media discourse. The growing percentage of individuals above 55 has not been mentioned in the public debate.

Scientific literature has been emphasizing the problematic position of older citizens in the labor market connected with the high dynamics of changes occurring both inside and outside companies for years. "The status of the elderly has been diminishing with the occurrence of new technologies, professions and organizational solutions and also with the progress of common education and mass media which replaced older generations in providing the youth with knowledge on common achievements of the society" (Klimczuk, 2010: 135).

[2] Professional activity indicator signifies the percentage of professionally active individuals in a given category within the total amount of individuals in this category (www.stat.gov.pl).

[3] The employment factor is defined as the percentage of the employed within a given category in relations to the total number of individuals in this category (www.stat.gov.pl).

Grażyna Spytek-Bandurska has stressed three main groups of factors reducing the employment of older individuals. Firstly, the individual features have been mentioned (relatively low level of education, problems with adaptation to new conditions, poor health); secondly – work organization and new technologies (necessity to obtain new skills and qualifications, dynamic changes both in the internal and external surroundings of companies, fast pace of work) and thirdly, economic and social conditions (unemployment, age discrimination, family demand for appoitment of the elderly – e.g., connected with childcare) (Spytek-Bandurska, 2012: 92).

The problem of generation diversification of employees constitutes the subject of various studies and discussions (see, for example: Rogozińska-Pawełczyk, 2014, Wiktorowicz, Warwas, et al. 2016). One may also encounter the term of age management within an organization which relies on: the "realization of various activities which allow for more rational and effective management of human resources by companies thanks to taking into consideration various needs and abilities of employees belonging to different age groups" (Liwiński, Sztanderska, 2010: 3).

Generational diversification may also be referred to as the unemployed, particularly in the context of the presentation of professional insertion of representatives of various generations. However, in this area of research regarding the generation diversification of the unemployed, the lack of analysis is visible. Different needs, ambitions, or motives for seeking employment are manifested by the young entering the labor market and other by those nearing their retirement age.

The purpose of this article is constituted by the attempt to characterize the unemployed belonging to the oldest generation in the labor market – namely the "Baby-boomers"- particularly in the context of the feasibility of initiation of activities aimed at professional insertion in this age group. The hereby article also aims at depicting the expectations of this age group towards their potential employers. The latter is crucial due to the fact that such activities result in a humanization of work relations by emphasising the subjectivism of those without employment who possess specific expectations towards a workplace, which should also be taken into account by employers.

II. "Baby Boomers" Generation – Characteristics Attempt

The term 'generation' was first used in academic discourse in the 19th century by the German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey, who proposed the term 'humanist generation' as a group of people who live at the same time, are influenced by the same events, and

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through this have a similar perception of reality (Dolińska-Weryńska 2016).

A generation - as it has been emphasized in the literature on the subject on numerous occasions – is "a group of individuals born at approximately the same time, sharing common historical experiences. Based on of these similar, unique experiences, representatives of a given generation manifest certain similarities in their mode of operation and ideology which differentiates them both from the previous and subsequent generations" (Marschall, 2004: 240). A. Giddens, when defining the term of a generation stresses that fact that these are "(…) all individuals born and living in the same period. It is not only the year of birth that determines belonging to a given generation but also everyday experiences shaped by the specific society (Giddens 2012: 1084; see also Karmolińska-Jagodzik 2012: 191-193). J. Wiktorowicz and I. Warwas Focus their attention on similar issues when they describe a generation as "(…) all individuals belonging to a given culture group of more or less the same age characterized by similar attitudes, motivations, expectations, approach to the world and system of values stemming from their common historical and social situation" (Wiktorowicz, Warwas, 2016: 19). Thus the definitions of the term "generation" do not solely stress the time borderlines of the date of birth, but they also strongly emphasize the commonness of experiences resulting from the fact of having witnessed definite events and social and economic processes. It is also worth mentioning that, as remarked by R.Seweryn: "the scientific approach to a term of generation is relatively new" (Seweryn, 2017: 105). In Poland, the issue of generations - from the perspective of labor market functioning has only been the subject of empirical research for a few years (Kopertyńska, Kmiotek 2014:41). Simultaneously, the topics connected with generational diversification constitute a constantly more popular subject of scientific exploration – particularly in the aspect of presentation of specific manner of functioning of individuals of considerably different age groups. T. Kawka, when analyzing the term of generation from the perspective of the labor market, claims that "it is a group of individuals possessing similar social identity, professional goals, and values which join all these individuals into one coherent group. These people are characterized by a similar attitude to life that is to the place and importance of crucial aspects of life such as family, friendship, love, interests, or work itself. Every generation shapes their shared approach to authorities, organizations, autonomy, sense of freedom, belonging to groups and societies – including companies, expectations in the scope of obtaining motivation and reaching satisfaction from work." (Kawka, 2018: 123). At times the determination of specific borderline dates defining belonging to a given generation may prove difficult. As stated in the literature on the subject: "differentiation of generations remains the issue of the assumed pattern and in specific cases may arise doubts. Hence in the literature, one may encounter various classifications of generations which differ not only in the scope of names for individual generations but also the dates of birth defining a given generation." (Czerwińska, Striker, Wojtaszczyk, 2009: 118). Certain doubts and discussions concentrate mainly on the dates defining the categorization of the younger generations. Nevertheless, in case the Baby-boomers generation, there are no significant differences in the definition of the time determining belonging to this age category. It is commonly assumed that individuals born within the period of twenty years following the end of the II World War, which is in the period between 1946 and 1964, belong to this generation. However, when studying literature we may encounter various terms used to describe the representatives of this generation, such as Mc Generation, Baboo, Love Generation, Sandwich Generation and Woodstock Generation (Seweryn, 2017: 106). Still, the term "Baby Boomers" is the most frequently used description of those born between 1946 and 1964, and that is why this same term is used in the hereby article (see: Howard et al. 2008; Cromartie, Nelson, 2009; Seweryn 2017; Bejtkovský 2016; Zhang 2019; Leach et al., 2013: 2).

Individuals born in the period of the post-war demographic peak were socialized for work in the conditions of the socialist, centrally managed labor market. Representatives of the Baby- boomers generation began their professional careers in the 1970s and 1980s. Those entering labor market in the period of the People's Republic of Poland possessed a high sense of professional stability, job security, and a high social benefits – also for their family members. As observed by R. Drozdowski, "Amongst all specific features of the real-socialist labor market the rule of full employment, as well as the rule of state ownership of production means always possessed a privileged status" (Drozdowski, 2002: 51).

The political and economic transformation that commenced at the end of the 1980s altered the rules of functioning of employees in the labor market completely. A certain number of these individuals lost their jobs mostly due to restructuring processes and very frequently subsequently experienced difficulties with re-entering the labour market. Currently unemployed representatives of the Baby-boomers generation gained their professional experience before 1989. This fact proved to be a stigmatizing factor for employees in the eyes of some employers, mainly in the 1990s.

Entrepreneurs perceived habits gained by employees in the conditions of socialist labor market negatively, and this hindered reintegration with the labor market for those who had lost their jobs as a consequence of restructuring processes.

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What is essential, representatives of the Baby Boomers generation possess numerous advantages in comparison to individuals belonging in younger generations, and these advantages should be viewed positively by employers. The Baby Boomers are generally unwilling to change their jobs. They respect their superiors, remain loyal to their co-workers and employers, and usually feel good in hierarchic structures with clear management rules. Simultaneously individuals of this age group expect stability and job security (see: Kim 2021: 156; Wiktorowicz, Warwas, 2016: 27-28). The Baby-boomers generation perceives career success through the lens of hard work leading to a set goal (Opalińska 2018: 144).

Unfortunately, despite of their multiple virtues crucial from the perspective of an employer, the literature on the subject places great emphasis on the fact that in case of losing their jobs, the older candidates encounter particularly significant obstacles in obtaining proper employment (Muster, 2019:29). Despite the statutory prohibition of among others age discrimination[4] in the recruitment process, studies indicate the disfavouring such individuals in the recruitment process and in the course of selection for vacancies (compare e.g., Muster, 2010a, 2014).

The literature emphasises that „Older job applicants (aged 50 and older), are treated diferently than younger applicants. A younger worker is more than 40% more likely to be called back for an interview compared to an older worker" (Axelrad et al., 2018: 2).

The latter is to a considerable extent, connected with a lower level of spatial mobility – in comparison with younger age groups of employees. As stressed by Elzbieta Krysńka: "individuals belonging to older age groups are predominantly characterized by low mobility (professional, educational, spatial and intercompany), which results in their reduced ability to respond flexibly to changes occurring in modern economies and contemporary labor markets" (Kryńska, 2012:14-15). Representatives of the older generation are particularly at risk of digital exclusion (compare Kryńska, Arendt, 2010, Muster 2010b). Moreover, as the age of those unemployed progresses their activity in job search diminishes (compare Chirkowska-Smolak, 2000: 150). The Human Capital Balance also hints at an advanced age as one of the critical barriers hindering employment by the unemployed (Turek, 2013: 85).

The rapid changes in the internal and external environment of organizations (legal, organisational, technological changes) may constitute factors of professional marginalization and social exclusion of persons from the Baby-boomers generation. Without additional institutional support in the professional reintegration of the Baby Boomers representatives, their problems with effective entry into the labor market will intensify. Recognition of the needs of this group of unemployed will allow a better definition of the catalogue of activities supporting them on the labour market (see: Muster 2022: 16).

Generations are internally differentiated, and it is not possible to attribute the same characteristics to all representatives of a generation. However, in an attempt to make some generalization from a labour market perspective, it can be said that people from the Baby-boomers generation are characterized by a high level of loyalty to employers and colleagues. They are reluctant to change jobs, are stability-oriented, and feel comfortable in a hierarchical organisational structure. Representatives of this generation have a lower level of education compared to younger generations. Their weakness is the use of modern information technologies.

III. Methodology of Research

Public employment services of the city of Ruda Śląska (industrial city in Poland) realized multi-dimensional research on the issue of generation diversification of human resources in the local labour market in the period between July and September 2017. The said research was conducted among the unemployed, the employed, and employers[5]. The article hereby provides a detailed analysis of the results of the research conducted among the unemployed with a particular focus on the eldest group of respondents classified as Baby-boomers.

In the course of research into the issue of generational diversification of the unemployed initiated by the District Employment Agency in Ruda Śląska, an attempt was made to answer numerous research problems – mainly those related to professional activation.

At the stage of sample selection, the unemployed were divided according to their age diversification into four main age groups (compare:

[4] For instance, we may list the following legal acts: Article 32, section 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which states that: "No one shall be discriminated in political, social or economic life for whatever reason"; art. 11^3 of the Labour Code says that: "Any discrimination in employment, either direct or indirect, particularly connected with sex, age, disability, race, religion, nationality, political views, trade union membership, ethnic origin, beliefs, sexual orientation, definite or indefinite period of employment - is unacceptable"; and article 36 section 4 point 3 of Employment Promotion Act and Labour Market Institutions stipulates that employment assistance services for the unemployed and those searching for employment and for employers provided by the district and regional employment agencies shall be free of charge in compliance with the rule of equality without any form of discrimination, among others related to age".

[5] The author of this article held the position of the head of research. The research was conducted among the unemployed (N=430, standardized interview technique), the employed (N=310, standardized survey technique), and employers (N=28, three integrated focus interviews).

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Warwas, Wiktorowicz, 2016): those born before 1965 (The baby-boomers generation), those born in the period between 1965 and 1979 (generation "X"), individuals born in the period between 1980-1989 (generation "Y") and finally those born after 1989 (generation "Z"). Nowadays, representatives of four generations co-exist in the labor market: Baby-boomers, X, Y, and Z (Zaleśna 2018: 46).

For each age category, a separate representative research group was selected according to the rules of quota sampling. For the needs of research group selection, the following variables were taken into consideration: age, sex, level of education, and period of unemployment. Based on the standardized interview technique, 430 unemployed were interviewed, including 99 representatives of the baby-boomers generation. In the course of this research, a standardized interview form was used containing 37 questions and a personal data section. The majority of questions were of closed or semi-open type. Certain questions were formulated in the form of charts. The unemployed provided their answers to the survey questions when visiting the offices of the District Employment Agency in Ruda Śląska.

The researched issues were focused on the following themes: a reason for registering at the district employment agency, the importance of work in a personal system of values, opinions on the advantages of the labor market, level of civilizational competencies, methods of searching for employment, plans for professional development, expectations towards employers.

Thanks to this approach, a detailed portrait of four generationally diversified groups of the unemployed was created, a picture of applicational value and potential to be used in the practice of human resources activation conducted by both the public and commercial employment agencies. Additionally, results of research conducted among the unemployed constitute a valuable source of information for employers because the unemployed were providing precise answers regarding the fundamental aspects of work relationships from their perspective, also in the element of the creation of the desired motivation system.

Social and Demographic Features of Studied Unemployed Representatives of Baby Boomers Generation

A total number of 430 inhabitants of Ruda Śląska participated in the study, all of whom possessed the status of an undeployed in the period when the study was conducted (August - September 2017), including 99 representatives of the baby-boomers generation (those born before 1965). Due to a large number of the selected sample of representatives of the eldest generation of the unemployed (N=99), the absolute numbers calculated into percentages provided the same value. Hence solely, percentage values have been used in the article.

The social and demographic analysis of individuals who participated in the research realized by public employment agencies in the city of Ruda Śląska was conducted based on the following data: sex, level of education, and period of remaining unemployed. The sample selected for this research was of quote character. It accounted for the actual social and demographic structure of the unemployed born before 1965 and registered at the District Employment Agency in Ruda Śląska. Taking into consideration the sex of respondents, 52.5 of the representatives of this generation were females. The percentage of males in the selected group equaled 45.5, but 2% of respondents failed to provide information concerning their sex. Another crucial variable diversifying the studied population is the level of education (Table 1).

Table 1: Level of education of the unemployed representatives of Baby-boomers generation participating in the research

Education level	%
Incomplete primary education/ incomplete lower secondary	4.0
Primary/lower secondary	22.2
Basic vocational	43.5
Secondary general education	8.1
Secondary vocational education	15.2
Post- secondary education	3.0
Higher vocational education	2.0
Higher engineering education	2.0
Total	100.0

Source: Research of DEA Ruda Śląska. Own calculations.

In the sample group which reflects the actual demographic structure of representatives of the baby-boomers generation in the local labor market in Ruda Śląska, individuals possessing primary vocational education constituted the largest group (43.5%) followed by those with primary or lower secondary education (22.2%). Thus we may conclude that nearly 70% of the studied unemployed representatives of Baby

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boomers generation possessed at least primary vocational education. The percentage of individuals with general and vocational secondary education reached respectively 8.1% and 15.2%. Among the research group, there were also specific individuals with post-secondary (3%) and higher (4%) education. The following Table (no 2) presents the division of respondents due to their actual period of remaining unemployed.

Table 2: Period of remaining unemployed of studied representatives of Baby-boomers generation

Period of remaining unemployed	%
Less than 3 months	12.1
From 3 to 6 months	23.2
From 7 to 12 months	10.1
From one to two years	13.1
From three to four years	7.1
More than four years	33.4
Not stated	1.0
Total	100.0

Source: Research of DEA Ruda Śląska. Own calculations.

When analyzing the answers provided by respondents, we may notice the dominating position of the long-term unemployed representatives of the baby-boomers generation. They have been without employment for at least one year (53.6%). Moreover, we need to stress that every third individual among representatives of this age group (i.e., 33.4%) has been unemployed for longer than four years. In the personal data section of the survey, respondents were asked about a diagnosed assistance profile – detailed findings have been gathered in Table 3.

Table 3: Assigned assistance profile of unemployed respondents representing the baby-boomers generation

Assistance profile	N	%
I	2	2.0
II	39	39.4
III	37	37.4
No profile	19	19.2
Not stated	2	2.0
Total	99	100.0

Source: Research of DEA Ruda Śląska. Own calculations.

Public employment agencies have been profiling the unemployed for five years (2014-2019) based on methodological assumptions[6] recommended by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The unemployed were providing answers to standardized survey questions focused on their motivation and readiness to undertake employment, and also on the competencies they possessed. Subsequently, a computer application assigned the unemployed to one of the three profiles, which resulted in offering them specific services and instruments of professional insertion.

Individuals assigned to profile I due to their high level of motivation to commence work, their proactivity, and mobility, as well as possessed qualifications are adjusted to the needs of the labor market and ready to begin work. Those assigned to profile II are moderately estranged from the labour market. They possess qualifications which rarely coincide with employers' expectations, and they lack impulses motivating them to search for employment. Finally, individuals assigned to the III assistance profile have wholly lost motivation to search for and start work or consciously avoid these activities for fear of losing social benefits. The unemployed with this profile frequently do not possess professional qualifications (compare Profiling Assistance for the Unemployed, 2014: 14-24).

As depicted by the conducted analysis, individuals assigned to the I profile of assistance

[6] Constitutional Tribunal, in the verdict of the 6th of June 2018, ruled that the rules of profiling the unemployed were not compliant with the Constitution. Formally, profiling was abandoned in June 2018. The following institutions have voiced their critical opinion of profiling: The Ombudsman, Supreme Chamber of Control but also district employment agencies. Those critical remarks included, among others: excessive bureaucracy when initiating the profiling procedure or limitation of the possibility to benefit from the statutory services and instruments of proactive labor market policy for those assigned to profile III or the unemployed withdrawn from the labor market. However, beacouse the studies among the unemployed inhabitants of the city of Ruda Ślaska were conducted in 2017 – that is in the period when employees of district employment agencies performed tasks related to profiling this article includes information on the classification of respondents into the diagnosed profiles treating this information as a significant variable diversifying the studied population. The profiling of the unemployed influenced the undertaking of different job activation depending on the profile.

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constituted a tiny percentage (2%) of respondents. The amounts of unemployed posted to the II and III profiles were at a similar level equalling respectively 39.4% and 37.45. One in five respondents (19.2%) had no diagnosed profile at the time of performance of this research, and 2% failed to provide any answer regarding their diagnosed profile.

Thus in the case of the baby-boomers generation – if we consider the assigned profile of assistance – individuals with the most favorable situation from the perspective of obtaining employment constituted the smallest group; solely 2% of respondents had been given to the first profile.

Motives for Obtaining Status of an Unemployed Declared by Representatives of Baby-Boomers Generation and their Potential Participation in Professional Insertion Activities

The unemployed who participated in the research were asked about the most important reasons for registering in the District Employment Agency. The analysis of the gathered research material has proven that the leading cause listed by the respondents was health insurance (62.6%), followed by expected assistance of public employment services in obtaining work (51.5%) – Table 4.

Table 4: Motives for obtaining the status of an unemployed listed by representatives of the baby-boomers generation (in %)

Responses	%
Health insurance	62.6
Assistance of the agency in finding a job	51.5
Entitlement to unemployment benefit	16.2
Use of services of professional advisers	16.2
Social care benefits	15.2
Willingness to participate in trainings	10.1
Agency assistance in obtaining paid internship	5.0
Obtaining funds for commencing own business	1.0

Significant: respondents could have selected the maximum number of 3 answers.
Source: Research of DEA Ruda Śląska. Own calculations

Generally speaking, the motives for registering at the district employment agency may be divided into two main categories. The first category is connected with the model of active labor market policy. It relates to the willingness to use the services and instruments of this market – such as employment agencies, professional counselling, or other subsidized forms of support. The other category is related to the passive policy model and focuses on activities connected with benefiting from social transfers (benefits, insurance). As shown by the analysis of the gathered empiric material, respondents from the baby-boomers generation more frequently listed reasons connected with the passive labor market policy model as their motives for obtaining the status of an unemployed. This attitude – more passive and reluctant in the aspect of potential functioning in the labor market shall constitute a severe hindrance to their professional reintegration. Most probably, this attitude results from their previous, inefficient attempts of professional insertion or unfavorable relations with employers which might have led to their reluctant approach to search for employment and drive these individuals to withdraw from the labor market.

Representatives of the baby-boomers generation declaring their willingness to search for employment listed the Internet as a source of information on job offers most frequently. However, solely 42.3% of those expressing their desire to find work have listed the virtual space as the space to look for job offers. The other respondents mentioned "traditional" forms of job-seeking such as: press advertisements (38.5%), district employment agency (32.7%), acquaintances (32.7%), but their other responses also included personal visits to companies (30.8%), and sending CVs to potential employers (28.8%). Only 3.8% of respondents mentioned private employment agencies as a sources of information concerning possible job offers. The research has also shown that respondents representing the baby-boomers generation are practically not interested in starting their own business – only 3 % consider such an option.

In course of identification of factors influencing remaining unemployed (Table 5), respondents most often mentioned issues related to their advanced age (60.6%). Other reasons included poor health (40.1%), lack of proper qualifications (20.1%), and too long a period without employment (15.1%) (Muster, 2022).

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Table 5: Factors contributing to remaining unemployed according to the unemployed representatives of Baby-boomers generation (in %)

Responses	%
Advanced age	60.6
Poor health	40.1
Lack of proper education	20.1
Too long period of unemployment	15.1
Lack of proper job offers	14.1
Lack of experience	8.1
Lack of availability	5.1
Childcare	2.0

Significant: respondents could have selected the maximum number of 3 answers.
Source: Research of DEA Ruda Śląska. Own calculations

Simultaneously – a fact that requires emphasizing – the conducted research has proven that every fourth unemployed representative of "Baby-boomers" generation had resigned from commencing work within a year preceding the realization of the said research. The main listed factors contributing to the resignation from job included: low salaries (17%), hard work (15%), too long distance to commute (11%), inappropriate working hours/too long working hours (11%), wrong opinion on the employer (7.1%), lack of opportunities for professional development (6.1%), lack of perspectives for stability (5.1%) (Muster, 2022).

The unemployed participating in the research listed their critical advantages from the labor market perspective. The analysis of the gathered research material had indicated that respondents belonging to the Baby-boomers generation (those born before 1965) mentioned the following features as their critical assets: professional experience, willingness to work hard, punctuality, timeliness, diligence and precisions as well as communicativeness, and flexibility. Thus in the opinions of the eldest group of unemployed, their advantages are largely focused mainly on the notion of work ethic. However, when identifying their strengths, this group of respondents has not mentioned any skills related to their ability to use advanced technologies, especially in the scope of information technology. This is connected with the fact that, as has been shown by the performed research – only a tiny proportion of this group of unemployed is computer literate (32.3%) or able to use the Internet (36.4%). The apparent deficit in civilizational competencies connected with operating computers or functioning in virtual space implies a problem of digital exclusion of the unemployed representatives of the Baby-boomers generation. Undoubtedly, dynamic development of technology, automation, and robotization have all led to the change of competencies desired by employers in the contemporary labor market. Moreover, the revolutionary expansion of the Internet, changes in the methods of transferring and searching for information have resulted in the transfer of job offers into the virtual space as well. Lack of civilizational competencies in the scope of the search for information on vacancies as well as the deficit of skills adjusted to the transformation of the labor market may lead to the petrification of the unemployment structure and intensification of problems related to the effective professional insertion of the unemployed belonging to "Baby-boomers" generation. The latter is especially disturbing as 13.1% of respondents representing this generation declared willingness to improve their qualifications during the following year.

Expectations of the Unemployed Representatives of the "Baby-Boomers" Generation toward Employers

The partnership between the labor supply and employers within the labor market should rely on the analyzing the needs of the unemployed – particularly in the context of their expectations towards the potential workplace or desired motivation instilling factors. However, it may be concluded that these types of activity, namely those related to the analysis of expectations of both the unemployed and employed towards employers, are still missing in the current labor market. Despite the significant decline in the problem of registered unemployment, employers still constitute the dominating party within the labor market space, and the statement that we are dealing with the employee's need is not reflected in practice.

The studied unemployed representing the "Baby-boomers" generation (i.e., individuals born before 1965) mentioned factors that are particularly unfavorable for them in searching for a potential employer. Two responses among those listed in the proposed cafeteria list were selected most frequently: proximity of the place of living (65.4%) and the possibility of obtaining a regular contract of employment (63.5%). Surprisingly, good financial conditions were ranked as the third most important factor (40.4% of responses) (Muster, 2022) – see Table 6.

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The analysis of the collected research material has shown that the unemployed representatives of the "Baby- boomers" generation expected their net salary for full-time employment with the regular contract of work to reach the level of 1200-1600 PLN (260-348 USD) (38.5%) or of 1601-2000 PLN (349-434 USD). The higher range of expected salary was selected much less frequently. Amounts from 2001 to 2400 PLN (435-521 USD) and above 2400 PLN (521 USD) were mentioned respectively by 15.4% and 9.6 % of respondents.

Table 6: Factors of particular importance for the unemployed Baby-boomers when searching for employment (in %)

Responses	%
Proximity to the place of residence	65.4
Possibility of obtaining contract of employment	63.5
Good financial conditions	40.4
Proper working hours	32.7
Good company image	19.2
Opportunities for promotion	5.8
Additional social benefits	5.8
Possibility of obtaining a company car	0.0

Significant: respondents could have selected the maximum number of 3 answers.
Source: Research of DEA Ruda Śląska. Own calculations

During the analysis of expectations of the unemployed towards potential employers, the former were questioned about expected material (Table 7) and non-material factors (Table 8) of their motivation. The fact that the most desirable factor of material motivation is the one related to a potential increase in the basic salary is hardly a surprise. A pay rise is permanent and does not depend on subsequent performance of employees. On the other hand, in the analysis of financial expectations, it was concluded that the unemployed representatives of this age group do not manifest high material aspirations – 75% of respondents were willing to be satisfied with the net amount of 2000 PLN (434 USD) for their full-time employment. It should be noted that the research was conducted in 2017. Currently (2022), the lowest salary for a job in Poland is PLN 3010 (USD 654).

Table 7: Factors of material motivation of particular importance to the studied unemployed (in %)

Responses	%
Grant a higher basic salary	75,8
Grant higher performance bonuses	39,4
Finance insurance system and pension programme	37,4
Finance medical care	34,4
Finance holidays	9,1
Fund scholarships for children of the best employees	5,1
Grant low-interest loans	5,1
Allow participation in company's profit	5,1
Provide with a company car	4,0
Organise trainings and conferences for employees	4,0
Distribute part of company's shares free of charge	3,0

Source: Research of DEA Ruda Śląska. Own calculations.
Significant: respondents could have selected the maximum number of 3 answers.

A fact that should be stressed here is the relatively frequently mentioned expectations towards the employer to finance medical care (34.4%) and the insurance system and pension plan (37.4%). Respondents belonging to the eldest age group expect easy access to medical services to be funded by their potential employers. What is more, the issue related to expected financing of the insurance program and retirement plan by employers were also frequently mentioned.

Apart from material impulses, employers should also use non-material factors (Table 8) based on a wide

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range of potential activities. Thanks to the application of both material and non-material impulses for motivation adjusted to the needs of the workforce, strengthening of employees' loyalty towards employers shall be enhanced (Muster, 2022). This should translate into a reduction in personnel fluctuation and increase the level of employees identification with their workplace.

Table 8: Non-material motivation factors of particular importance for the studied unemployed (in %)

Responses	%
Civil and respectful treatment of employees	75.8
Opportunities for promotion	36.4
Frequently praise employees and appreciate their knowledge	36.4
Allow employees to organise work themselves	31.3
Warnings and reprimands for careless workers	9.1
Sense of stability and job security	7.1
Efficient channels of communication with management	6.1
Assigning more complicated tasks to employees	4.0
Systematic evaluation of performed work	3.0
Increase participation of employees in company management	2.0
Build awareness of being employed by a renowned company	1.0

Source: Research of DEA Ruda Śląska. Own calculations.
Significant: respondents could have selected the maximum number of 3 answers.

The unemployed who participated in the research most often listed civil and respectful treatment of employees in the course of identification of the most desirable factors of non-material motivation. The majority of respondents expect respectful treatment from their direct superiors. Such distribution of responses may also indicate to a deficit of this type of behavior manifested by the managerial personnel in former workplaces. On the other hand, respondents proved to be practically uninterested in increasing their share in company management or in developing their conviction of being employed in a renowned, prestigious company.

IV. Conclusion

The situation of the unemployed representatives of the "Baby-boomers" generation in the labor market is becoming increasingly more difficult. The change in labour market status from active to unemployed is particularly acute for people who have been economically active for a long time. It is necessary to stress that despite a considerable reduction in the level of unemployment in Poland, not all age groups have benefited from this trend. The most significant decline in the percentage of unemployed individuals has been observed among younger generations. Sadly, the portion of the eldest unemployed has nearly trebled in the unemployment structure. Currently almost every fifth individual remaining unemployed, according to official statistics, is 55 years old or older. Under to binding legal regulations, the unemployed of this age group are classified as those in a specific position in the labor market (article 49 of The Promotion of Employment Act.). Thanks to this, they benefit from various instruments of the proactive labor market. However, what is missing is comprehensive, system of support for the elderly in the area of activities aimed at their effective reintegration into the labor market. Programs initiated so far by the legislator, which should have provided benefits for individuals of pre-retirement age returning to the labor market, have failed to fulfill their role.

Local institutions do manifest a certain levels of initiative in the scope of initiation of activities aimed at the professional insertion of the eldest unemployed (e.g., state employment agencies, non-governmental organizations) but more often than not the territory covered by such projects is somewhat limited and such is the number of beneficiaries.

Additionally, dynamic changes occurring in the labor market, particularly those related to the implementation of up-to-date modern technological solutions may constitute another factor hindering effective professional insertion of representatives of the "Baby-boomers" generation. These individuals very frequently experience the problem of digital exclusion (Muster, 2010), but they also find it harder to adapt to changes occurring both in the internal and external surroundings of companies than the younger generations. The technological modifications determine a definite level and type of competences required from the potential candidates in a particular way. This fact may constitute a reason for disfavouring of the elderly by potential employees. Low level of civilizational competencies of the unemployed representatives of the "Baby-boomers" generation shall adversely influence

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their position in the labor market to an even more significant extent.

Another aspect discouraging employers from hiring individuals of pre-retirement age, is the stereotype of older employees as those who require sick leaves more frequently. Individuals belonging to younger generations obtain sick leaves much more regularly – this is visible in the statistical data (compare Karczewicz, Sikora, 2019: 28).

Thus the statement that without additional, comprehensive support in the scope of professional reintegration of the unemployed in preretirement age it is hard to talk about their effective professional insertion seems entirely justified.

However, it can be assumed that due to the demographic changes resulting in a decrease in labor supply (low birth rate, aging population), employers will increasingly be forced to reorient their recruitment strategies and also employ unemployed representatives of the "Baby-boomers" generation.

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