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WROCLAW JOB MARKET IN THE PERIOD OF SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

Normally, the situation in the job market reflects demographic, social, economic and political processes. Changes in the conditions and operating principles of economic subjects in Poland during the period of system transformation contributed to the rationalisation of demand for factors of production, including human labour [Józefiak, 1993]. Increasing competition in the product market led to structural transformations in the Polish economy, resulting in a rise of employment in services, mainly at the cost of employment in industry, and partially in agriculture [Kwiatkowska, 2000]. However, it was accompanied by the ascent of mass unemployment on an unprecedented scale. This early unemployment, soon reaching the highest European levels, initially resulted from the fast economic changes, took on a structural character, manifesting in unbalanced demand and supply for jobs both in terms of qualifications and region [Gawrońska-Nowak and Kaczorowski, 2000; Hasińska, 1993, 2000; Muszyńska, 1996; Sekretna, 1994; Unolt, 1999; Witkowski, 1996].

A special place in the Polish job market is occupied by big cities, forming metropolitan areas together with the surrounding areas, and clearly set apart from medium-sized towns and rural areas. Polish metropolises inherited from the previous system an economically diversified social and economic structure, different academic and cultural institutions, as well as rich resources of highly qualified workforce. Thanks to this and other benefits of localization and urbanization, these cities proved good adaptive abilities in the new circumstances [Wysocka, 1995]. They became contact points with world economy and culture, along with other

European cities participating in globalisation processes, positively influencing local development in metropolitan areas [Domański, Guzik and Gwosdz, 2000; Dutkowski, 2000; Gruchman, 1999; Szlachta, 1995; Węclawowicz, 2000].

Wrocław, the subject of market research presented in this article, beside Warszawa, Kraków, Łódź, Trójmiasto and Poznań belongs to the group of 6 largest Polish cities. Because of the concentration of human, material and non-material resources, as well as the attractive location on the crossroads of important communication routes (both longitudinal and latitudinal), on the river Odra and not far from the EU borders, close to Berlin, Prague and Vienna, it is perceived as a significant element of local and European setting [Ciok, Jakubowicz and Łoboda, 1998].

Research on the competitiveness of large Polish cities by numerous authors proves that Wrocław ranks very high in the league table:

- after Warszawa, Poznań and Kraków [Domański, Guzik and Gwosdz, 2000],
- belongs to sub-cores of the Polish environment along with Trójmiasto and Kraków [Gorzelać and Jałowiecki, 2000],
- belongs in class A, beside Warszawa, Gdańsk, Katowice, Kraków, Poznań and Szczecin [Świaniewicz and Dziemianowicz, 1998].

It offers an attractive cultural, academic and educational environment, has an exceptional social infrastructure. It plays the role of a large regional centre in western Poland, brings numerous benefits to the metropolitan area, *i.e.* in the form of foreign production investments. At the same time, it is characterized by a lower level of technological infrastructure, especially in telecommunications and transport, compared with Warszawa, Kraków or Poznań [Ciok, Jakubowicz and Łoboda, 1998; Domański, Guzik, Gwosdz and 2000].

The territorial range of the Wrocław job market as a subject of market research, is contained within administrative borders of the local job market – including the city of Wrocław and the surrounding urban-rural and rural administrative districts. Such a research area is conditioned by the organisational structure of the labour office system in Poland and the respective statistical structure of the unemployed and one of job offers.

The subject of analysis is supply and demand in the job market, or the number of unemployed candidates registered in the Wrocław Labour Office, and the number of job offers placed in this office, mutual relations of demand and supply and market conditions in 1990–2000. The analysis of supply and demand concerns mainly the resources, or end-of-year states, and to a smaller extent – the streams of income and outcome at yearly time intervals.

In the development of the situation in the home job market in the 1990s, four periods can be distinguished, only partly convergent with the changes in Wrocław's market (Table 1):

1. initiation of market transformations and carrying out a stabilisation programme, resulting in a drastic decrease in the demand for jobs and the appearance of mass unemployment, mainly of situational nature (years 1990–1991),

2. decelerating the regress, connected with recovering from economic recession, manifesting itself in lowering the rate at which the numbers of the unemployed were increasing, and the rate at which the level of employment and number of job offers were decreasing (years 1992–1993),

3. reversing the negative tendencies and gradual improvement of market situation as the effect of high dynamics of the economic growth (years 1994–1997),

4. reversing the positive tendencies and gradual deterioration of market situation resulting from lowering the rate of the economic growth,

Table 1. Employment, unemployment and job offer dynamics indices in the Wrocław and national job market in 1990–2000 in %

Year	The employed		The unemployed		Job offers	
	W	P	W	P	W	P
1990	99.5	94.8	—	11,260.0	—	21.3
1991	78.5	95.7	174.1	191.4	32.4	53.8
1992	75.6	97.4	151.7	116.4	54.7	78.7
1993	100.0	98.4	133.1	115.3	241.4	94.7
1994	105.6	101.1	101.5	98.2	125.1	116.1
1995	102.0	101.3	79.1	92.6	242.3	81.3
1995*	81.4	93.9	244.6	233.5	129.6	37.9
1996	99.8	102.3	99.9	89.8	42.4	67.3
1997	100.3	102.4	68.9	77.4	53.5	86.2
1998	100.0	99.7	92.3	100.3	68.9	61.3
1999	100.4	98.4	135.1	128.3	62.2	83.6
2000	92.6	95.2	140.2	115.0	120.8	93.4
2000**	93.7	100.2	120.6	102.8	11.7	27.8
2000*	91.2	92.0	249.9	240.0	15.1	10.5

Legend: W – Wrocław job market; P – national (Polish) job market.

Dynamics indices were calculated taking the previous year as 100%, with the exception of:

* – 1990 = 100% and ** – 1995 = 100%

Source: own research on the basis of GUS yearbooks (GUS – Main Bureau of Statistics) and statistics from the Bureau of Statistics and Regional Labour Office in Wrocław.

accumulation of effects of a demographic explosion of the entire decade, as well as the introduction of government's reforms: of public administration, healthcare and education (years 1998–2000).

Compared to the national job market, tendencies in employment, unemployment and job offers in Wrocław job market feature a slower but deeper and longer reaction to the changing operating conditions of economic subjects, both in the phase of deterioration and in the phase of improvement of the economic situation. This implies that the metropolitan job market is characterized by higher flexibility and dynamism in the period of system transformation. This is connected, among others, with a typically metropolitan employment structure in which the agricultural sector, playing the role of a buffer that takes over the excess workforce from two remaining sectors, mainly industrial – practically does not exist (Tables 2 and 3). At the same time the processes of de-industrialisation of Wrocław economy (in common with other Polish metropolises) [Dutkowski, 2000], is accompanied by its tertialisation, manifested in the development of higher level services, dealing with service of firms and property, financial agency, education, modern information technologies and culture. The development of private sector is carried out with significant contribution from foreign investors who create hypermarket chains, hotels and restaurants in the city and the surrounding area. The administrative reform of the country is a source of employment increase in public administration, mainly in self-government structures.

On the other hand, employment in various areas of the social sphere is decreasing – in education, health care and welfare system, due to demographic and system changes. In education demographic conditions play an important role – the demographic depression in primary and secondary school age groups, and a boom in the age groups of tertiary and higher education age groups. In the healthcare system the key factor is the reform of health services. Also employment in transport services is decreasing, as they are getting adapted to the limited requirements of industry.

The scale of transformations in the socio-economic structure the Wrocław metropolis in 1990–2000 is certified by the indices of employment level dynamics in three sectors of economy: agriculture – 17,9%, industry – 58,1% and services – 133,4%. As a result, the employment structure by sector, characteristic of a metropolitan and industrial centre, has taken on a services-dominated form (Table 2). Basic structural changes occurred in the first half of the 1990s, when the employment in agriculture fell by 75%, in industry by 25% and in services it increased by 30%. In the second half of the 1990s, the 25% fall of employment in

Table 2. Dynamics indices and employment structures by economic sectors in the Wrocław and national job markets in 1990–2000 in %

Specification	1990			1995*			2000**			2000*		
	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
Wrocław job market												
Dynamics	100.0	100.0	100.0	23.8	73.3	130.0	75.2	78.6	103.1	17.9	58.1	133.4
Structure	4.3	41.5	54.2	1.1	37.3	61.6	0.9	31.3	67.8	—	—	—
National job market												
Dynamics	100.0	100.0	100.0	92.3	77.7	104.4	102.6	86.7	108.5	94.6	67.4	113.2
Structure	27.6	35.5	36.9	27.8	30.1	42.1	28.5	26.1	45.4	—	—	—

Legend: I – agriculture; II – industry; III – services.

Dynamics indices were calculated taking the previous year = 100% with the exception of: * – 1990 = 100% i ** – 1995 = 100%

Source: own research on the basis of GUS yearbooks (GUS – Main Bureau of Statistics) and statistics from the Bureau of Statistics in Wrocław.

Table 3. Dynamics indices of employment in sections according to the European Classification of Activities in Wrocław and national job markets in 1995–2000 in %

Job market	Sections of national economy												
	A + B	C + D + E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	Total
W	75.2	74.6	91.5	103.7	108.6	91.7	112.5	151.8	154.6	93.5	86.1	68.2	93.7
P	102.6	84.1	98.4	109.0	121.4	93.0	111.3	148.4	129.2	100.7	90.5	116.6	100.2

Legend: W – Wrocław job market; P – national (Polish) job market.

Names of national economy sectors: A – agriculture, hunting and forestry; B – inland and deep sea fishery; C – coal mining and other types of mining; D – production; E – energy, gas and water supply; F – construction; G – trade and repairs; H – hotels and restaurants; I – transport, storing and telecommunications; J – financial agency; K – property services, renting and business service; L – public administration, national defense and guaranteed social welfare; M – education; N – health care and social cover; O – other services, communal, social and individual activities.

Source: as in Table 2.

agriculture and industry was accompanied by only a slight rise of 3% in services.

The directions and distribution of structural changes in time were similar as regards their scale to those in the entire country, with the exception of the agricultural sector in 1995–2000. The rate of the structural changes was, however, higher than average in the fall of employment level in agriculture and industry in both sub-periods, as well as the rise in services but only during the first five years. The development of services, however, did not compensate fully for the impact of de-industrialisation in terms of employment. As a result, the total number of the employed in the Wrocław job market in the entire research period was falling at a very similar rate to the national average.

Wrocław job market stood out positively during almost all of the research period, in terms of the four main synthetic indices: rate of unemployment W_u , number of job offers W_o , ratio of the number of the unemployed per 1 job offer W_s and job market fluidity W_{fl} (Table 4). The unemployment rate in Wrocław job market was approximately twice lower than the national average with the exception of 1993 and 1994, between 1990 and 1991 and between 1997 and 1998 it was on the level be-

Table 4. Rate of unemployment, number of job offers, job market fluidity and the number of the unemployed per one job offer in Wrocław and national job markets in 1990–2000 in %

Year	W_u		W_o		W_s		W_{fl}	
	W	P	W	P	W	P	W	P
1990	2.5	6.3	0.45	0.29	5	21	—	29.4
1991	4.3	11.8	0.15	0.16	30	74	—	44.2
1992	6.6	13.6	0.08	0.12	82	109	—	70.1
1993	9.4	16.4	0.21	0.12	45	133	66.3	80.7
1994	9.5	16.0	0.26	0.14	37	113	97.9	102.5
1995	7.7	14.9	0.64	0.12	12	128	127.1	108.8
1996	6.6	13.6	0.27	0.08	24	171	114.0	112.3
1997	4.7	10.3	0.15	0.07	32	153	131.3	126.0
1998	4.4	10.4	0.10	0.04	42	251	104.7	99.8
1999	5.5	13.1	0.06	0.03	92	385	84.6	79.5
2000	7.7	15.1	0.07	0.03	107	474	77.4	85.7

Legend: W – Wrocław job market; P – national job market; W_u – rate of unemployment in %; W_o – rate of job offers in %; W_s – number of the unemployed per one job offer as at the end of year; W_{fl} – index of job market fluidity in %, expressing the relation of resource decrease to the increase in unemployment.

Source: as in Table 1.

low 5%, and it reached the maximum value of 9.5% in 1995. For Wrocław job market, values of W_s index were more favourable, from a value by 1.3 times lower than the national average in 1992 to a value by 10 times lower in 1995. This implies that the lower than average rate of unemployment was accompanied by a relatively larger number of job offers. This is why the number of job offers, with the exception of 1991 and 1992 was 2–3 times higher than the national average. The above relations of supply and demand for jobs have also been reflected in the market fluidity index, which for the research period and accessible data was higher than the average (but not in the year 2000).

The specific character of Wrocław job market is confirmed by the features of basic unemployment structures: by sex, by age, by time out-of-work, by education and entitlement to unemployment benefit, as well as the proportion of graduates (Tables 5–8).

A characteristic feature of metropolitan unemployment is the high proportion, compared to the national average, of unemployed women, which results from the metropolitan structure of employment by kind of activity. Similarly, because of the lower rate of unemployment and the reduced period of entitlement to unemployment benefit since 1997, in the areas of local job markets with the rate of unemployment not exce-

Table 5. Selected features of unemployment structures in Wrocław and national job markets in 1990–2000 in %

Year	Proportion of women		Proportion of graduates		Proportion of the unemployed not entitled to benefit	
	W	P	W	P	W	P
1990	51.4	52.2	10.4	10.0	—	—
1991	58.7	52.6	11.0	10.3	18.7	21.0
1992	59.7	53.4	8.4	7.4	43.1	47.7
1993	58.0	52.2	7.1	7.1	50.6	51.7
1994	58.7	53.4	4.5	7.4	55.5	54.8
1995	63.8	55.1	5.4	8.3	40.6	41.1
1996	68.3	58.3	3.7	3.6	46.7	48.1
1997	73.1	60.4	4.7	4.7	74.5	69.5
1998	66.1	58.5	5.2	6.0	83.3	77.1
1999	60.8	55.6	6.0	6.4	81.8	76.4
2000	58.9	55.2	7.0	6.2	85.5	79.7

Legend: W – Wrocław job market; P – national job market.
 Source: as in Table 1.

Table 6. Unemployment structure by age groups in Wrocław and national job markets in 1991–2000 in %

Year	Proportion of unemployment in age groups:									
	Up to 24		25–34		35–44		45–54		55 and more	
	W	P	W	P	W	P	W	P	W	P
1991	26.8	35.1	26.7	29.9	29.6	24.6	13.0	8.6	3.9	1.8
1992	26.9	34.6	25.6	29.7	30.9	24.7	12.8	9.2	3.8	1.8
1993	27.9	34.4	24.0	28.5	30.1	25.2	13.8	9.8	4.2	2.1
1994	30.0	36.5	21.8	26.9	28.7	24.5	15.1	10.1	4.4	2.0
1995	29.9	34.6	22.3	26.9	27.5	25.1	16.3	11.3	4.0	2.1
1996	24.6	31.2	22.3	27.3	28.5	25.8	20.0	13.0	4.6	2.4
1997	22.1	30.8	23.5	27.8	29.5	26.3	21.5	13.3	3.4	1.8
1998	21.7	30.9	21.7	27.1	28.3	25.8	24.7	14.4	3.6	1.8
1999	22.7	31.1	21.4	26.5	26.5	25.0	25.8	15.6	3.6	1.8
2000	25.0	30.4	22.8	26.4	23.9	24.3	25.0	17.1	3.3	1.8

Legend and source: as in Table 5.

Table 7. Structure of unemployment by education level in Wrocław and national job markets in 1991–2000 in %

Year	Proportion of the unemployed according to education level									
	Academic		Secondary vocational and college		Secondary comprehensive		Basic vocational		Primary complete and incomplete	
	W	P	W	P	W	P	W	P	W	P
1991	12.0	3.0	30.7	22.4	9.0	7.2	25.4	37.4	22.9	30.0
1992	8.7	2.3	28.3	21.0	9.2	7.1	28.2	38.4	25.6	31.2
1993	6.7	1.8	24.4	20.1	9.3	6.7	30.4	39.1	29.2	32.3
1994	6.0	1.7	24.3	21.0	9.5	7.7	31.9	39.0	28.3	30.6
1995	5.6	1.5	25.1	20.2	9.6	7.2	29.1	39.0	30.6	32.1
1996	5.5	1.3	25.5	20.0	8.8	6.4	27.4	38.5	32.8	33.8
1997	6.7	1.4	27.5	19.9	8.7	6.3	26.2	38.4	30.9	34.0
1998	6.5	1.6	26.8	20.2	8.0	6.1	25.4	38.1	33.3	34.0
1999	6.7	2.0	25.2	20.6	7.2	6.0	25.7	38.2	35.2	33.5
2000	6.7	2.6	24.4	20.8	7.4	6.2	25.6	37.0	35.8	33.4

Legend and source: as in Table 5.

Table 8. Structure of unemployment by out-of-work period in Wrocław and national job markets in 1992–2000 in %

Year	Proportion of the unemployed by out-of-work period in months					
	up to 6		7–12		Over 12	
	W	P	W	P	W	P
1992	40.1	32.9	23.5	21.9	36.4	45.2
1993	36.5	33.2	25.0	21.9	38.5	44.9
1994	36.3	33.2	23.3	21.0	40.4	45.8
1995	40.6	38.2	23.1	24.4	36.3	37.4
1996	35.8	37.6	22.8	21.3	41.3	41.1
1997	38.2	33.6	21.5	22.1	40.3	44.3
1998	52.9	42.9	15.9	16.7	31.2	40.4
1999	51.2	40.0	24.7	21.4	24.1	38.6
2000	48.7	37.4	19.2	17.9	31.6	44.7

Legend and source: as in Table 5.

eding the national average, the proportion of the unemployed without the right to benefit has been higher by several per cent since the beginning of that year. Because of the structure of employment and education level in a metropolis, there is a much higher number of the unemployed with a good level of education, which should be helpful in the process of retraining them to suit their qualifications to the changing requirements of employers.

The more beneficial situation in Wrocław is confirmed in the shorter than the national average period of being out of work (lower proportion of the long-term unemployed, *i.e.* over 12 months), lower proportion of unemployed graduates (in 1994–1995 and 1998–1999) and unemployed youth (aged up to 24), and people in the 25–34 age group.

However, general tendencies in changes of unemployment structures in the Wrocław and national job markets are the same as in the 1990s:

- increase of the proportion of unemployed women up till 1997 and a decrease in 1998–2000,

- a constant, with the exception of 1995, increase in the proportion of the unemployed without a title to unemployment benefit, leading to the loss of social cover of a definite majority (80%) of the unemployed,

- a constant increase in the proportion of the unemployed in a non-mobile age group, leading to the doubling of that group at the end of the research period,

- different fluctuations in other age groups of the unemployed, leading to the stabilisation of the proportion of the oldest unemployed on the initial level, and a slight decrease in the initial proportion of the unemployed to the proportion of age group up to 44,
- the gradual fall in the proportion of unemployed graduates up to 1994, and then a similar increase of this proportion, with a one-off sharp fall in this proportion in 1996,
- the high variability of unemployment structure by the out-of-work period, leading to a rise in the percentage of short-term unemployment, and a decrease in the proportion of medium-length unemployment period as compared to the initial year.
- a clear fall in the percentage of the unemployed with higher education at the beginning of the decade, then a deceleration of the fall, followed by a reversal of this tendency into a rise,
- slight fluctuations of the proportion of groups of the unemployed with secondary comprehensive, secondary vocational and basic vocational education,
- clear and systematic growth in the proportion of the unemployed with primary and incomplete primary education.

Summing up the results of the research, it should be noted that changes in the Wrocław job market in the 1990s were more dynamic than in the national job market and led to more radical structural transformations. Wrocław, as one of the largest cities in Poland, playing the role of a regional social, economic, academic and cultural centre, takes advantage of its attractive localisation and concentration of various resources in order to strengthen its image of a metropolis. This influences the functional, qualifications-oriented and ownership transformations in the employment structures in the process of pro-services transformation, de-industrialisation and privatisation of economy. These processes, however, cannot be evaluated just positively. The violent de-industrialisation of the urban and industrial centre deprived a large group of inhabitants of their income and created an economic barrier to a further development of services.

Bringing back the large Lower Silesian Province (Voivodeship) and the perspective of joining the EU create chances of enhancing and expanding the existing role of Wrocław in the field of culture, science and education, specialized medical services, technological innovation, transport of goods, trading functions and the role of a trade fair, a conference and a sports centre [*Wrocław 2000 Plus*, 1998]. Taking these chances of city development and beneficial influence upon the surrounding area requires an effective realisation of many tasks, especially modernisation of the technical and social infrastructure, as well as preventing

the increase in detrimental social differentiation in the period of system transformation.

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