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Implementation of the Concept of Flexicurity in the Selected Countries of Central Eastern Europe

Introduction

The countries centred around the CEE region have made enormous transformations associated with the transition processes of their national economies at the end of the twentieth century. These changes have had an impact on the transformation of the structure of economies and socio-economic systems. The transformation processes took place with different intensities, varying depending on country and period. Some countries in the region, e.g. Poland, adopted the so-called shock model of changes, whereas others, such as Czech Republic, implemented the evolutionary approach. As a result, social and economic costs in individual countries were varied. Besides, even though all the CEE countries engaged in the transformation from centrally planned economic system to a market economy, the situation at the onset of changes also varied depending on country. One example is the participation of the agricultural sector and industry in the GDP or the structure of ownership and employment. The Polish economy was characterized by a large share of the agricultural sector in GDP and employment. The opposite was the Czech economy, with its large share of the industrial sector and much better developed infrastructure. The individual national economies were diverse in terms of economic development, the stage of the reforms progress, and the potential of opportunities for the implementation of changes (Feldmann 2004, Keune 2003).

Introducing market rules in the CEE economies contributed to their greater openness, the commencement of extended cooperation in the international mar-

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ket and establishment of new institutions related to the functioning of economies in free-market reality. At the same time, these countries became included in the system of strong competition, resulting from the processes of integration and globalization. The development of new technologies and manufacturing techniques, as well as capital and labour flows forced the CEE countries to enter the world markets expeditiously, at the same time creating possibilities for such transition.

The transformation of the economies of CEE region committed to the elimination of a number of interferences present in different markets. From the point of view of this study, the implications for the labour market are particularly important (Rozmahel et al. 2013, Stoop and Stamboliev 2006). The dynamic structural changes forming the foundations for the new economic system – the privatization and restructuring of enterprises in the initial period of transformation – led to both negative and positive changes in this market. The negative impacts of implemented reforms, from the point of view of the labour market, include i.a. declining employment, increasing unemployment, reducing the activity of the population and the growth of employment in the informal sector (Romih and Festić 2008). On the other hand, the process of rationalization of the labour resources by adjusting the structure of the resources involved, and the ways of using them in the existing economic conditions was the positive effect of changes. The enterprises began to pay more and more attention to labour productivity (Cazes and Nesporova 2006). The available work equipment generated by the engaged capital required the adaptation of labour input according to the economic calculation.

The process of rationalization of work has a continuous nature, characteristic for market economy. The changes are related only to the causes. One of them is striving to achieve a competitive advantage of enterprises and their further development. The growing international mobility of factors of production necessitates a flexible adaptation of resources to the current needs of the market, which makes it possible to maintain the competitive position in the international scale.

In the initial period of transformation, the labour market policy in the countries of the CEE region focused mainly on the reduction of unemployment and the use of various types of social protection for laid-off workers (e.g. early retirement or severance payments). Significant changes related to increasing the flexibility of the labour market and the introduction of active programs for the unemployed were initiated in the CEE region already in the second half of the 1990s. Some researchers believe that these were the preliminaries, aimed at laying the foundations for the implementation of major reforms in the area of employment, which were launched at the beginning of the 21st century (Keune 2003). For example, numerous changes in the Labour Codes governing non-standard forms of employment were introduced in 2002 in Poland and in 2009 in Hungary. Latvia adopted for the years 2010–2014 a document aimed at reducing informal employment and improving the efficiency of the labour market institutions, including employment services. In 2010, the Czech Republic introduced a programme

aimed at reducing non-wage labour costs. In Estonia, measures were taken to increase the security of workers employed under non-standard forms of employment, in connection with the deregulation of the labour market. It is worth noting that these countries were obliged to develop and implement their own employment policies, which were meant to take into account the main elements of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The CEE countries had to create their own flexicurity policies, which would take into account the employment policy guidelines, cultural traditions and socio-economic development (Cazes and Nesporova 2006). In order to achieve the desired results, it is necessary to monitor the effects of the implemented regulations on the labour market, while taking into account the needs of workers, and employers. In addition, the social dialogue with various representatives of social groups should be aimed at developing a common understanding on the proper functioning of labour markets within the flexicurity model. Attention should also be paid to the need for lifelong learning so that the system includes individuals at risk of losing their jobs, including people with low qualifications, the elderly and the residents of villages and small towns. In relation to these groups actions should be taken in order to improve their professional skills and enable them to adapt their skills to the needs of the labour market. The flexicurity model also requires improving the vocational activation of the unemployed. In this case, an important role should be played by the labour market institutions that will implement the activation programmes aimed at providing temporary or permanent employment.

The aim of this article is to examine and evaluate the implementation of the flexicurity model in the selected CEE countries on the basis of the adopted group of composite indicators. The review of previous research shows that there are no studies which would take into account a wide range of indicators included in the composite index. Moreover, in the case of CEE countries, there are no publications which would compare the degree of flexibility and security of their labour markets or studies that would compare flexicurity indicators for two different moments in time. This article tries to fill this research gap. The study covers 9 countries from the CEE region[1]. The research period covers the years 2007 and 2013. The first of these years refers to the admission of all the studied countries to the European Union, which necessitated many significant reforms related to the functioning of national economies, as well as creating a relatively stable environment for the establishment and development of market economies. The analysis in the year 2013, in turn, is expected to show the extent to which these countries try to reconcile the challenges of the contemporary labour market with greater protection of the public against the adverse effects accompanying these changes in the form of economic inactivity, unemployment, and social exclusion. The analysis and evaluation of the assumptions of the flexicurity model with the use

[1] Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Romania.

of a composite indicator pointed to the large variations in the degree of its implementation in the surveyed CEE countries. Undoubtedly, the labour market in these countries is still characterized by strict employment protection legislation, which adversely affects the outcomes of the labour market. On the other hand, these countries have made great efforts in increasing the role of active labour market policies and non-standard forms of work in the last decade. In most of the countries studied the problem is still related to a small share of individuals engaged in life-long learning and to ensuring the security of those working on non-standard employment contracts.

The article consists of five parts. The first section is this introduction. The second part is devoted to the review of literature related to the implementation of the flexicurity model in CEE countries. In the third part a description of the methodology and data used to construct a composite indicator of flexicurity is provided. The fourth part contains the presentation and discussion of the results. The last part contains a conclusion.

1. Flexicurity model in CEE – literature review

Over the last decades, the number of atypical employment contracts concluded in the CEE countries increased, which in turn enhanced the possibility of adjusting the employment level to the current needs of enterprises. The wider application of flexible forms of employment in many EU countries has contributed to a reduction in the security of the worker's income, which was accompanied by a reduction of employment levels, aimed at reducing labour costs. The emerging gap between the goals of enterprises and the position of employees in the market has led to increased interest in the popularization and implementation of the flexicurity model in the EU member states, the aim of which was combining flexible forms of employment with an effective policy supporting changes in the labour market (Hinrichs and Jessoula 2012, Muffels 2013, Sanchis i Marco 2014, Wilthagen and Rogowski 2002). As a result, the countries which were characterized by favourable labour market conditions and achieved positive results in the implementation of flexible forms of employment, while maintaining the security of employees, have become of interest to many professionals dealing with the labour market (Eamets 2005). Most countries of the CEE region began to change legislation regarding the use of flexible forms of employment only at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The concept of flexicurity is based on the assumption that the flexibility of employment and job security are not contradictory but mutually supportive. The flexicurity model was first introduced in the Netherlands after the reform of labour law in 1991. Wilthagen and Rogowski (2002) recognized flexicurity as a strategy aimed at improving the relations between entrepreneurs and employees regarding the use of flexible forms of employment, wage bargaining and

employment protection for vulnerable groups in the labour market. According to these authors, flexicurity did not preclude the implementation of the Dutch labour market reform strategy, as the problems related to deregulation and job security should be analysed separately. Extending the flexicurity model aspects by elements related to i.a. increasing the competitiveness of enterprises, Wilthagen and Tros (2004) identified four elements of the flexibility dimension:

1) external numerical flexibility, defining the degree of difficulty/ease of hiring and laying off workers, as well as indicating the proportion of fixed term employment contracts;
2) internal numerical flexibility (within one enterprise), which could be reduced to determining the degree of difficulty/ease of changing the level of employment in an enterprise without hiring additional staff or redistributing working time;
3) functional flexibility, defining the degree of difficulty/ ease of making changes in the organization of work and adjusting to new conditions by both workers and employers;
4) wage flexibility, allowing for flexible adaptation of the wage costs to changing economic conditions.

From the point of view of job security, Wilthagen and Tros (2004) identified the following elements:

1) job security defined as the time of holding a specific position;
2) employment security, or employment opportunities, associated with the possibility to remain employed or take up employment with another employer;
3) income security, guaranteeing steady income in case the employee is deprived of a permanent job;
4) combining security, stemming from the possibility of combining work guaranteeing a fixed salary with other occupations.

Gaard (2005) concluded that these elements can be considered to be 'sub-dimensions' of the flexibility and security axes and on that basis proposed to use a matrix as an analytical tool for the classification of the national labour market models in relation to specific groups or collections of countries with common characteristics in terms of employment flexibility and job security.

According to Bredgaard, Larsen, and Madsen (2005), the above approach to the flexicurity model can be considered to be rather an analytical tool for comparing national systems of labour markets than a concept describing the labour markets in Denmark and the Netherlands. It can be concluded that so characterized an approach is in line with EU policy, recommending a balance between flexibility and employment security.

The definition of flexicurity presented in Denmark (Bendyk 2008, Bredgaard et al. 2005) describes this model as the 'golden triangle' formed by:

1) relatively flexible legislation in the field of employment protection,
2) social security for the unemployed, and
3) high spending on active labour market programmes.

The research conducted by Laporsek and Dolenc (2012) shows that the four main elements of the flexicurity concept, i.e. employment law (employment contracts), lifelong learning, active labour market policies and social security, are important for the construction of composite indicators for the assessment of national strategies. The multidimensionality of the concept aids the differentiation of the importance of the different elements of the composite indicator. For example, Leschke, Schmid, and Griga (2006) are of opinion that costs and benefits are not evenly distributed among market participants. In their view, higher costs resulting from the protection of workers are incurred by employers, which may adversely affect the number of new jobs. Kosi and Bojnec (2013) argue that both employers and employees benefit from flexicurity. Employers, as they have a chance to develop their enterprises using the potential of employees, despite the appearance of elements that inhibit the development, such as the burnout of workers. The benefit of employees, in turn, is to invest in themselves in order to maintain employment. This gives rise to the development of human capital. However, most authors are of the opinion that proper assumptions related to the implementation of the concept make it possible to combine flexibility and job security, especially in relation to the proper use of the elements of active labour market policy (Groot and Paul 2010, Bertozzi and Bonoli 2009).

It is worth mentioning that depending on the degree of deregulation, the labour market can be divided into five models of flexibility. According to the classification made by Voss and Dornelas 2011), countries such as Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia use a system prevalent in Eastern Europe, characterized by a moderate (Czech Republic and Slovakia) or higher (Poland and Hungary) level of employment flexibility, small expenditures for labour market programmes and high taxes. Some researchers (Marinaş et al. 2011) presented a slightly modified division of models, highlighting the so-called model for the CEE countries. The Baltic countries that have low social spending (low social protection) could be included in a group of countries using the Anglo-Saxon model (a high degree of flexibility, a low level of expenditure on labour market policies and low levels of fiscal burden), while Hungary and Slovenia in the group of countries similar to the continental European model (moderate or low flexibility of the system, high spending on programmes related to the labour market and high fiscalism); this reflects the high diversity of economies and legislation governing the labour market in CEE countries. The report of Voss and Dornelas (2011) shows that employers, employees and social partners in the countries of the CEE region assess the possibility of implementing flexicurity concept taking into account the specificities of national labour markets. Still, there are some limitations whose negative impact should be gradually eliminated. The most important ones include: guarantees of social security, increased mobility of workers, and the concern about the productivity and quality of labour resources.

Although many changes have been made in the employment policies of the EU countries, the results of research published by Muffels et al. confirm the

need for monitoring the implementation of the flexicurity concept continuously. The changing conditions of functioning of national economies, due in part to the financial crisis or the introduction of social and economic reforms in post-socialist countries, influence the assessment of flexibility and job security. In addition, the specificity of countries – reflecting changes in the level and demographic structure of society or labour mobility – and deregulation of domestic markets confirm the need to improve the concept of flexicurity. In turn, the study conducted by Gawrycka and Nagucka (2014) for the 21 EU countries indicates that none of the analysed countries did fully implement the flexicurity concept. Moreover, as a result of the economic crisis of the years 2007–2008 the average level of flexicurity index (normalised parameters) decreased. The authors also emphasize that each country should find for itself the right model of implementing the flexicurity policy, adjusted to the prevailing social, economic, and cultural factors.

The results of the 2010 study published by the European Foundation (European Foundation, 2010) confirm the need for activation of different social groups, e.g. the young people, older workers or women. This is one of the most important components of flexicurity, as it concerns the increase of economic activity or preventing social exclusion. Promoting good practice related to, i.a. supporting women during their return to the labour market after temporary deactivation associated with raising children, government assistance guaranteeing the security of young people employed under short-term employment contracts, or longer working lives of older people – especially in countries with worsening demographic problems – are becoming an important element of flexicurity. One can even find such examples as changes related to extending the duration of maternity leaves or the introduction of leave for fathers taking care of children in most of the surveyed CEE countries.

2. The methodology of research

The implementation of flexicurity can be considered in terms of quality and quantity. The quantification discussed in this report is done on the basis of the adopted special research methodology. There is no clear way of measuring the implementation of the flexicurity model (Wilthagen 2012). In order to investigate the level of flexicurity and changes that took place in the implementation of the flexicurity model in the countries of CEE, we have used the approach based on the construction of a composite indicator. The composite indicator is a synthetic indicator, allowing for aggregation of dimensions, objectives and individual indicators (OECD, 2008). In this paper, we built the composite index for the years 2007 and 2013. The choice of the research period is related in general to the data availability. Indeed, on the one hand, we tried to use the data which were as current as possible, and on the other, we wanted to show the path followed by CEE

countries since their accession to the European Union. All the data used in the article come from public Internet sources: the Eurostat statistical database and the OECD.

The construction of composite indicators has been extensively described in the subject-matter literature. In our article, we used the concept presented by the European Commission (Manca et al. 2010). According to the proposed methodology, the composite indicator of flexicurity is composed of four dimensions:

1) comprehensive lifelong learning (LLL) strategies, aimed at ensuring the continuity of employment, especially among those at risk;
2) effective active labour market policies (ALMP), the goal of which is to help the people in the context of the rapidly changing conditions, aimed at combating unemployment and finding new jobs;
3) modern social security system, aimed at providing benefit payments, supporting employment and increasing labour market mobility. These practices include social protection provisions like unemployment benefits, pensions and healthcare, the aim of which is to enable the reconciliation of work and family life, including childcare;
4) flexible and reliable contractual arrangements (from the perspective of the employer and the employee, of 'insiders' and 'outsiders'), which manifest themselves through modern legislation, work organization or collective bargaining.

For all four components (dimensions), a rule proposed by OECD (2008) was applied, according to which the process of the composite indicator construction shall consist of the following stages:

1) the structure of composite indicator,
2) the imputation of data,
3) the standardization scheme, and
4) the aggregation rule.

According to the above scheme, we first identified indicators included in the composite indicator, broken down by dimensions. In addition, for each of the indicators it is necessary to determine the direction in which they influence the level of the flexicurity model implementation. The positive direction means that higher levels of indicators contribute to a better implementation of the assumptions of the flexicurity model. The negative direction means that higher levels of indicators decrease the level of implementation of the flexicurity model assumptions. The next step was the normalization of variables, made according to the min-max method described also in OECD (2008). In addition, each indicator has been assigned an appropriate weight, which was used in the aggregation process. When assigning weights to individual indicators, we followed the methodology used in the Manca et al. (2010) study. These authors have postulated the use of equal weights both within respective dimensions

and during the construction of the final composite indicator. In the case of our data set, the only exception are MSSS_D_2, MSSS_D_4, MSSS_D_6 variables, which were assigned higher weights due to their importance in the construction of the composite indicator. Appendix 1 presents the indicators used, together with the directions of their impact and weights assigned within individual dimensions. When selecting the indicators included in the composite indicator, we have adopted the solution proposed by Manca et al. (2010) and made modifications necessary from the point of view of the availability of data for the countries of CEEs. In addition, due to the fact that the subject matter literature often emphasizes that while constructing composite indicators the correlation between the constituent sub-indicators should be avoided, we have analysed the correlations of sub-indicators within the individual dimensions. Despite the fact that pairs of highly correlated variables are visible, we decided to keep them for further analysis, while remembering that these variables describe other dimensions of the flexicurity model. Another problem we faced were gaps in the data. This is a typical problem arising during construction of composite indicators, which can be eliminated by using one of the imputation of missing data methods. Due to the relatively small amount of missing data, we used the single imputation method in this article, in which we replaced the missing data with data from the previous/next year in some cases (substitution) or used an external study (cold check imputation)[2].

3. Results and discussion

As a result of the application of the above-mentioned methodology, four composite indicators have been calculated for each of the dimensions. Table 1 shows the ranking of the selected CEE in 2007 and 2013 according to Flexicurity Composite Indicator (FCI).The country that meets the assumptions of the flexicurity model to the greatest extent is Slovenia, the richest of the CEE countries surveyed. While analysing the case of Slovenia, which had high ranks in all four dimensions of flexicurity, both in 2007 and 2013, attention should be paid to several important characteristics related to its labour market. Slovenia is characterized by a high proportion of adults taking further education (13.5% of men and 16.1% of women in 2007, and 10% of men and 14.5% women in 2013). It is worth noting that the subject matter literature provides a clear position on the positive impact of LLL on the employability of workers and on the reduction of long-term unemployment, particularly in the case of low-skilled workers (Laporsek and Dolenc 2012). The level of social spending, which is close to the OECD countries average, or well-developed family support programmes are certainly factors that

[2] A complete set of data along with the description of the imputation methods used is available on request.

Table 1

Composite Flexicurity Indicator for CEE countries for the years 2007 and 2013

2007	LLLL		ALMP		MSSS		FCA		CI	
Slovenia	1000.00	1	444.82	4	684.48	1	760.18	1	722.37	1
Poland	284.17	5	577.06	1	374.41	9	656.27	2	472.98	2
Latvia	394.28	3	389.02	6	519.52	4	536.65	3	459.87	3
Hungary	171.14	7	546.25	2	616.78	2	417.13	6	437.83	4
Czech Rep.	330.20	4	447.26	3	544.76	3	336.38	8	414.65	5
Slovakia	190.78	6	415.83	5	466.26	6	526.08	4	399.74	6
Estonia	404.42	2	128.39	8	463.37	7	465.11	5	365.13	7
Bulgaria	8.13	8	292.16	7	471.10	5	410.98	7	295.59	8
Romania	3.38	9	119.21	9	456.80	8	–	–	–	–
2013	LLL		ALMP		MSSS		FCA		CI	
Slovenia	974.26	1	570.63	2	620.54	1	674.93	1	710.09	1
Estonia	971.26	2	368.65	5	525.38	2	567.18	2	608.12	2
Czech Rep.	763.31	3	415.07	4	463.99	3	364.39	8	501.69	3
Poland	247.76	5	599.15	1	312.81	9	566.78	3	431.63	4
Latvia	423.34	4	197.10	7	415.39	6	523.59	5	389.86	5
Hungary	126.18	6	508.44	3	377.07	7	431.35	6	360.76	6
Slovakia	124.11	7	214.47	6	423.43	5	539.44	4	325.36	7
Bulgaria	7.35	9	172.97	8	433.78	4	402.94	7	254.26	8
Romania	22.99	8	97.05	9	331.86	8	–	–	–	–

Note: The numbers next to the indicators mean the ranking according to the dimensions and the composite index.

Source: own elaboration based on data from Eurostat.

affect the security and flexibility of the labour market. What is worth noting, is the role in shaping the labour market institutions played in Slovenia by the Economic and Social Council (ESC), which is an important bargaining power related to collective bargaining, wage policy and social policy in the labour market. One of the solutions initiated by the ESC was the introduction of a number of changes within EPL in 2007, the purpose of which was to increase the flexibility of the labour market, including changing the rules of terminating indefinite contracts and liberalization of regulations related to the use of short-term employment contracts (OECD, 2011b).

Another country that is worth a closer look is Estonia, which recorded a significant change in ranking position in 2013, in comparison with 2007. It is

worth noting that as of 2009, Estonia has been introducing a series of reforms aimed at reducing the level of the employment protection legislation and increasing income protection for the unemployed. One of the solutions implemented in 2009 was subsidizing wages for the unemployed (mainly long-term unemployed) taking up employment (Homann 2011, Voss and Dornelas 2011)[3]. Before 2008, the situation in Estonia was highly disturbing (high level of long-term unemployment, lack of skilled labour force, low levels of social spending and the restrictiveness of labour law regulations) (OECD, 2011a). The recovery programmes contained regulations (Estonia 2020, 2013; Republic of Estonia, 2008) whose purpose was to increase flexicurity in the labour market, develop skills by improving the education system, promote lifelong learning and minimize the wage gap. Furthermore, the introduction of the new Employment Contracts Act in 2009 and the conclusion of the tripartite agreement on training for both the employed and the unemployed has enabled the actual implementation of flexicurity principles. In 2009, Estonia reduced the level of employment protection legislation in order to reduce the effects of the recession, while increasing income protection for the unemployed (Brixiova and Egert 2012) after the country entered a severe recession in 2008. While the rate declined relatively rapidly in 2011, it remained high especially for the less educated. In 2009, the Employment Contract Law relaxed employment protection legislation and sought to raise income protection of the unemployed to facilitate transition from less to more productive jobs while mitigating social costs. Utilizing a search model, this paper shows that increasing further labour market flexibility through reducing the tax wedge on labour would facilitate the structural transformation and reduce the long-term unemployment rate. Linking increases in unemployment benefits to participation in job search or training programmes would improve the unemployed workers' incentives to search for jobs or retrain and the medium term labour market outcomes. Social protection schemes for the unemployed should be also strengthened as initially intended to give the unemployed sufficient time to search for adequate jobs or retrain for new opportunities (Brixiova and Egert 2012). The reforms contributed significantly to practical implementation of flexicurity assumptions within the area of flexible and reliable contractual arrangements. The case of Estonia shows the positive changes that may occur due to the use of appropriate labour market instruments.

In the Czech Republic there were some positive changes in the implementation of flexicurity principles (fifth place in the ranking in 2007 and third place in 2013). Even before joining the European Union, the Czech government introduced workfare-oriented programmes for the unemployed. As a result, the Czech Republic has joined the EU with a low level of expenditure on ALMP

[3] The unemployment in Estonia rate rose from 4.1% in December 2007 to 19.8% in June 2010. The unemployment rate in 2013 was 7.9%.

and lifelong learning programmes, short duration of typical unemployment period and low level of unemployment benefits, on the one hand, an on the other, a fairly large restrictive EPL. Thanks to the tripartite mechanisms, the activities of Tripartite Council for Economic and Social Agreement allow for effective dialogue aimed at improving the functioning of labour market instruments (Heyes 2013).

In the case of Poland, the dependencies described below are worth noting. Based on a complex indicator of flexicurity, the position of Poland against the rest of the CEE countries looks good. In 2007, Poland had the second, while in 2013 – the fourth place in the ranking. The first important piece of information is that the positions achieved in these rankings are consistent with the positions of Poland in the FCA CI rankings. As regards the implementation of the objectives of ALMP, Poland remains the leader, as opposed to the MSSS component, where Poland is in the last place. In the LLL module, Poland is invariably in the fifth place, which leads to the conclusion that the assumptions of LLL are not implemented in Poland to a reasonable extent. At the same time, due to the existing mismatch in the labour market, there is a great need for vocational training in Poland (Kałużyńska et al. 2009). The act of 2008 provides funding opportunities for professional training but statistics show that the percentage of adults participating in vocational training is still small[4]. The comparison of the degree of implementation of flexicurity within individual dimensions leads to a conclusion that the pillar associated with an active labour market policy has a dominant influence on the level of implementation of flexicurity in Poland. The expenditures related to ALMP are the highest among the analysed countries (in terms of people willing to take up employment). Since Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004, large emphasis is placed on increasing the share of expenditure for the activation of the unemployed (Nikulin 2014). At the same time, the largest share of GDP is related to expenditure on training but much less attention is paid to the creation of direct jobs, while for example in Slovenia the proportions are reversed. For this reason some experts argue that the Polish active labour market policies have little efficiency, and are often addressed to individuals with better chances in the labour market (Guardiancich 2012). At the same time, a very low level of implementation of the assumptions of the flexicurity model associated with the Modern Social Security System (MSSS CI) in Poland is due to very low level of out-of-work income maintenance expenses and support, a fairly high level of financial incentives to take a job and a low share of children under the care of nurseries and kindergartens. It is significant, therefore, that the labour market flexibility policy conducted in Poland, i.a. through the amendment to the act on employment promotion and labour market institutions of 2008 (Dziennik Ustaw 2009, no. 6, item 33) and through the introduction of the anti-crisis package in

[4] Based on Eurostat data, in 2007 only 4.7% of adult men and 5.5% of adult women benefited from educational services (in 2013 these rates were respectively 3.8% and 4.9%).

2009 (Dziennik Ustaw 2009, no. 125, item 1035), does not translate into flexicurity to the full extent.

In turn, in Latvia the situation in terms of flexicurity has deteriorated. The labour market in Latvia has been heavily affected by the financial crisis of 2007–2008, which resulted in a significant increase in unemployment. In order to prevent negative changes in the labour market, in the years 2007–2009 a number of reforms were introduced aimed at i.a. increasing the flexibility of contracts and modifying the system of benefits for the unemployed. Labour market policy was centred on raising the competitiveness and include the marginalized groups into the workforce (Homann 2011). On the other hand, the economic situation caused by the crisis has forced a significant reduction in spending, including social expenditure (Homann 2011, Kallaste and Woolfson 2013). Despite the new system of intervention work, introduced also in 2009, the components of the composite indicator show deterioration in achieving the objectives of ALMP, which reflected negatively on the activation of the unemployed. The reduced level of expenditure related to the implementation of ALMP in 2013 in comparison to 2007 had a negative impact on ensuring the flexibility and security in the labour market.

Hungary worsened its position in the ranking of flexicurity in 2013 in comparison to 2007 (the fourth rank in 2007 and the sixth rank in 2013). A fairly low level of implementation of the assumptions of the flexicurity model is mainly due to the restrictiveness of EPL and weak financial incentives for taking up employment by the unemployed (e.g. a high replacement rate). In response to the problems existing in the labour market, in 2012 Hungary introduced the new labour code, the main aim of which is increasing the flexibility of the labour market. Due to the fact that the period covered by our analysis ended in 2013, probably too little time has passed for the new revisions to bring the right results. Certainly, the case of Hungary is worth further study, due to the fact that the experts assess the new labour code as the most flexible in Europe (Gyulavari and Hos 2012).

Slovakia occupies the central place in the flexicurity ranking of the CEE countries. The assumptions of flexicurity within the FCA dimension are quite well met. This may be due in part to the fact that in the years 2007–2008, in the context of collective bargaining, emphasis was placed on flexible working hours, overtime or atypical working time schedules (Voss and Dornelas 2011).

The ranking assessing the implementation of the flexicurity model is closed by Bulgaria and Romania. In the case of the latter the composite index was not calculated due to the lack of data on EPL. In the case of Bulgaria the tenets of flexicurity included in all four dimensions are met to an insignificant extent. However, within the MSSS component Bulgaria ranks fifth in 2007 and fourth in 2013. Thus, some positive changes taking place on the Bulgarian labour market can indeed be seen. In 2009, the Bulgarian government introduced the "National agreement for implementation of the flexicurity principles", the aim of which was

to put more emphasis on the implementation of the demands of flexicurity in the field of labour legislation, social dialogue, informal employment, labour conditions, and gender equality (Beleva 2010). Though Romania has been omitted in the ranking of countries according to the composite indicator of flexicurity, it is one of the CEE countries faced with major problems in the labour market, such as high long-term unemployment, low professional activity and low participation in educational programmes. Therefore, the country needs a plan of labour market reforms which would assure its proper functioning. One of the elements that should be considered is undoubtedly the increase in flexibility and security in the labour market (Incaltarau and Maha 2014).

Conclusion

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which have been members of the European Union for a decade, are faced with numerous problems associated with the labour market. At the time of European Union accession, these countries showed different levels of economic development, which in the context of the labour market meant a different degree of maturity of its institutions and instruments. All the CEE countries were obliged to develop and implement their own employment policies, which were meant to take into account the main elements of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

In this article, most attention was devoted to the implementation of one of the assumptions of the contemporary labour market policy, which is the concept of flexicurity. The authors bore in mind that the number of atypical contracts concluded in CEE countries has increased over the last decades, which increases the desired flexibility of employment, but poses a risk of insufficient protection of people working under non-standard contracts of employment, which in turn leads to the segmentation of the labour market. The described cases of the CEE countries indicate some regularities that appear in their way of achieving security and flexibility of employment. Testing and assessment of the assumptions of the flexicurity model in different countries with the use of a composite indicator pointed to large variations in the degree of its implementation. Although a number of reforms related to the functioning of national labour markets were introduced in the countries surveyed in the last decade, the CEE countries are still characterized by very strict employment protection legislation, which adversely affects the outcomes in the labour market. Since the increasing proportion of employees are working under non-standard employment contracts, the excessive strictness of EPL deepens the existing rigidity, thus creating divisions within the labour market.

On the other hand, the CEE countries have made great efforts in increasing the role of active labour market policies and non-standard forms of work in the last decade, which to a large extent was a result of deregulation of the labour mar-

ket and sanctioning non-standard employment contracts. In most of the countries studied, the problem is still related to a small share of individuals engaged in lifelong learning and to the security of those working on non-standard employment contracts. In the context of a comparative analysis of flexicurity indicators for 2007 and 2013, the significance of the economic crisis of 2007–2008 cannot be overlooked. The analysed countries of the CEE region were affected by this crisis in different ways, so the labour market policies had to be adapted to the changing economic realities. Within the analysed group, Estonia was the country which increased most the extent of the implementation of flexicurity in the mentioned period. The positive changes in this country included activities aimed at reducing the severity of the EPL and increasing income protection for the unemployed. In the improvement programmes implemented mainly in 2008–2009 the major emphasis was on increasing the flexicurity in the labour market, skills development by improving the education system, supporting lifelong learning and minimizing the wage gap. The case of Estonia shows therefore the positive changes that may occur with the use of appropriate labour market instruments. In the case of the other CEE countries, the situation in the labour market in terms of flexibility and job security did not change significantly over the years 2007–2013. However, small positive changes can be observed in the Czech Republic where, thanks to the activities of Tripartite Council for Economic and Social Agreement, it was possible to effectively lead a dialogue aimed at improving the functioning of labour market instruments. The case of Poland, where there are large discrepancies between the implementation of flexicurity policies in various dimensions, is also interesting. To a large extent emphasis is put on the introduction of AMLP, although the effectiveness of the instruments used still remains questionable. At the same time, activities in the field of MSS, which include such aspects of the labour market as financial incentives to remain unemployed or financial support for the unemployed, still require modification. Similar changes are also necessary in the field of lifelong learning (due to the structural mismatches occurring in the labour market) and FCA, which will enable the overall realization of the principles of flexicurity.

The analysis confirms the wide differences that exist in the labour markets in the CEE countries. On the one hand, the relatively rich countries, e.g. Slovenia, enjoy well-developed instruments and institutions of their labour markets, thus creating the conditions in which it is possible to meet the demands of flexicurity. On the other hand, some poorer countries. such as Romania and Bulgaria, represent systems where the realization of assumptions about the flexibility and security in the labour market is only in its infancy. Other countries, e.g. Slovakia, Hungary or Latvia, form a group in which the implementation of the flexicurity concept slightly worsened in the period 2007–2013 in relation to the rest of CEE region. In the case of Latvia, the development of the concept of flexicurity was hampered by the financial crisis of the years 2007–2008, the effects of which were felt in the Latvian labour market very strongly. On the other

hand, Hungary introduced important reforms in 2012, so their full effects may not be present yet.

While summing up the progresses in implementation of the concept of flexicurity in CEE countries using the composite indicator, a very important aspect can be indicated, i.e. the need to integrate the protection of employment and job security to the extent adjusted to the situation in the domestic labour markets. In the context of uncertainty in the labour market, caused by i.a. the growing share of non-standard employment contracts, ensuring security and protection of employment for all its participants is a key issue. The analysis enables tracing the paths followed by the selected CEE countries in order to set directions for further development of the labour market instruments used to increase the demands of flexicurity.

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Appendix 1

Sub-indicators used to construct the composite indicator

	Indicator	Description	Short name	Direction	Weight
LLL composite indicator					
A. Lifelong learning	Participation of the adult population aged 25–64 in education and training, male		LLL_m	+	1/2
	Participation of the adult population aged 25–64 in education and training, female		LLL_f.	+	1/2
ALMP composite indicator					
A. Expenditure as percent of GDP	– labour market services	Overall amount of expenditure on the different Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP)	ALMP_A_1	+	1/5
	– training		ALMP_A_2	+	1/5
	– employment incentives		ALMP_A_3	+	1/5
	– direct job creation		ALMP_A_4	+	1/5
	– start-up incentives		ALMP_A_5	+	1/5
B. Spending per participant in millions euros	– training	Intensity of ALMP per participant expenditures (expenditure on activation measures (in millions of euros) per participant, broken down by type of program)	ALMP_B_1	+	1/4
	– employment incentives		ALMP_B_2	+	1/4
	– direct job creation		ALMP_B_3	+	1/4
	– start-up incentives		ALMP_B_4	+	1/4
C. Activation support	– labour market services (PPS per person wanting to work)	Intensity of activation efforts relative to the overall number of people who should be targeted by such efforts	ALMP_C_1	+	1/3
	– total LMP measures (categories 2–7) PPS per person wanting to work		ALMP_C_2	+	1/3
	– total LMP measures (cat. 2–7) as percent of people wanting to work		ALMP_C_3	+	1/3

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Modern Social Security System Composite Indicator					
A. Overall spending and coverage of unemployment benefits	– out-of-work income maintenance and support per 100 persons wanting to work		MSSS_A_1	+	1/3
	– out-of-work income maintenance and support as percrnt of GDP		MSSS_A_2	+	1/3
	– out-of-work income maintenance and support (PPS per person wanting to work)		MSSS_A_3	+	1/3
B. Financial incentives to take a job	– unemployment trap (low-pay jobs, single person)	Measures the part of the additional gross wage that is taxed away in the form of increased taxes and withdrawn benefits such as unemployment benefits, social assistance, housing benefits when a person returns to work from unemployment. The 'trap' indicates that the change in disposable income is small and, conversely, the work-disincentive effect of tax and benefit systems is large.	MSSS_B_1	–	1/5
	– unemployment trap (low-pay jobs, one earner couple with 2 children)		MSSS_B_2	–	1/5
	– inactivity trap (low-pay jobs, single person)		MSSS_B_3	–	1/5
	– inactivity trap (low pay jobs, one earner couple, with 2 children)		MSSS_B_4	–	1/5
	– inactivity trap (low-pay jobs, two earner couple, with 2 children)		MSSS_B_5	–	1/5
C. Amount and duration of individual unemployment benefits	– net replacement rate after 7 months unemployment, single person, previous earnings 67% of the average wage	Relation between income during employment and income during period of unemployment	MSSS_C_1	+	1/6
	– net replacement rate after 13 months unemployment, single person, previous earnings 67% of the average wage		MSSS_C_2	+	1/6
	– net replacement rate after 60 months unemployment, single person, previous earnings 67% of the average wage		MSSS_C_3	+	1/6
	– net replacement rate after 7 months unemployment, one earner couple with 2 children, previous earnings 67% of the average wage		MSSS_C_4	+	1/6

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	– net replacement rate after 13 months unemployment, one earner couple with 2 children, previous earnings 67% of the average wage		MSSS_C_5	+	1/6
	– net replacement rate after 60 months unemployment, one earner couple with 2 children, previous earnings 67% of the average wage		MSSS_C_6	+	1/6
D. childcare services	– formal childcare as % over the population of each age group (less than 3 years, from 1 to 29 hours)	Extent to which national welfare systems facilitate the combination of work with private and family responsibilities by providing comprehensive childcare services	MSSS_D_1	+	1/9
	– formal childcare as % over the population of each age group (less than 3 years, 30 hours or over)		MSSS_D_2	+	2/9
	– formal childcare as % over the population of each age group (from 3 years to minimum compulsory school age, from 1 to 29 hours)		MSSS_D_3	+	1/9
	– formal childcare as % over the population of each age group (from 3 years to minimum compulsory school age, 30 hours or over)		MSSS_D_4	+	2/9
	– formal childcare as % over the population of each age group (from minimum compulsory school age to 12 years, from 1 to 29 hours)		MSSS_D_5	+	1/9
	– formal childcare as % over the population of each age group (from minimum compulsory school age to 12 years, 30 hours or over)		MSSS_D_6	+	2/9
Flexible and Reliable Contractual Arrangement Composite Indicator					
A. Regulations on dismissals and use of flexible contrac-	– share of employees with a contract of limited duration (fixed term contract)		FCA_A_1	+	1/6
	– involuntary temporary employment (who could not find permanent job) as % of total employment		FCA_A_2	–	1/6
	– share of self-employment in total employment		FCA_A_3	+	1/6

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tual forms – external flexibility	– strictness of employment protection – individual dismissals (regular contracts)		FCA_A_4	–	1/6
	– ratio of strictness of rule on temporary contracts vs regular ones' (EPT/EPR)		FCA_A_5	+	1/6
	– strictness of rules on collective dismissals		FCA_A_6	–	1/6
B. Flexibility of working time - internal flexibility	– share of employees in part-time in total employment		FCA_B_1	+	1/7
	– share of part-time employees who cannot find a full-time job		FCA_B_2	–	1/7
	– employed persons working in the evenings as a percentage of the total employment, from 15 to 64 years		FCA_B_3	+	1/7
	– employed persons working at nights as a percentage of the total employment, from 15 to 64 years		FCA_B_4	+	1/7
	– employed persons working on Saturdays as a percentage of the total employment, from 15 to 64 years		FCA_B_5	+	1/7
	– employed persons working on Sundays as a percentage of the total employment, from 15 to 64 years		FCA_B_6	+	1/7
	– employees working shifts as a percentage of the total of employees; from 15 to 64 years)		FCA_B_7	+	1/7
C. Flexibility of work organization to help combine work and family responsibility	– inactive population – Main reason for not seeking employment; looking after children or incapacitated adults		FCA_C_1	–	1/2
	– main reason for part-time employment; Looking after children or incapacitated adults		FCA_C_2	–	1/2

Source: own elaboration.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCEPT OF FLEXICURITY IN THE SELECTED COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE

Summary

The CEE countries have to create their own flexicurity policies which would take into account the employment policy guidelines, cultural traditions and socio-economic development. The aim of this article is to examine and evaluate the implementation of the flexicurity concept on the basis of the adopted set of composite indicators. The study covers 9 countries of the CEE region, and the research period covers the years 2007 and 2013. A review of previous research has demonstrated that there are no studies which would take into account a wide range of indicators included in the composite index of flexicurity. Moreover, in the case of CEE countries there is a lack of publications which would compare the degree of flexibility and security of their labour markets or studies that would compare flexicurity indicators for two different moments in time. This article tries to fill this research gap. The analysis of a composite indicator of flexicurity and its component elements shows large differences in the implementation of the flexicurity concept in the individual CEE countries. The labour market in the CEE countries is still characterized by high strictness of Employment Protection Legislation, which adversely affects the outcomes of the labour market. On the other hand, CEE countries have made great efforts in increasing the role of active labour market policies and non-standard forms of work in the last decade. In most of the countries studied the problem is still related to a relatively small share of individuals engaged in life-long learning and to ensuring the security of those working on non-standard employment contracts.

Keywords: flexicurity, composite indicator, CEE countries

JEL: J08, J50

WDRAŻANIE KONCEPCJI „FLEXICURITY" W WYBRANYCH KRAJACH EUROPY ŚRODKOWO-WSCHODNIEJ

Streszczenie

Kraje EŚW muszą wypracować swoje własne polityki „flexicurity" (czyli elastyczności zatrudnienia połączonej z zabezpieczeniem socjalnym pracowników), biorąc pod uwagę wytyczne ogólnej polityki zatrudnienia, tradycje kulturowe i poziom rozwoju społeczno-gospodarczego. Celem artykułu jest zbadanie i ocena realizacji koncepcji „flexicurity" w tych krajach na podstawie przyjętego zestawu złożonych wskaźników. Analiza obejmuje 9 krajów EŚW, a badany okres to lata 2007 i 2013. Przegląd dotychczasowych badań pokazuje, że brakuje badań uwzględniających szeroki zestaw wskaźników włączanych do syntetycznego wskaźnika „flexicurity". Ponadto nie ma publikacji porównujących elastyczność i bezpieczeństwo rynków pracy w poszczególnych krajach EŚW lub porównujących odnośne wskaźniki w różnych punktach czasowych. Ten artykuł próbuje wypełnić tę lukę. Przeprowadzona analiza syntetycznego wskaźnika „flexicurity" i jego części składowych ukazuje duże różnice w realizacji tej koncepcji w poszczególnych krajach EŚW. Rynek pracy w krajach EŚW charakteryzuje się nadal ostrymi przepisami dotyczącymi ochrony zatrudnienia, co osłabia jego funkcjonowanie. Z drugiej strony jednak kraje EŚW dokonały dużego postępu w ostatnim dziesięcioleciu we wdrażaniu aktywnej polityki rynku pracy i niestandardowych form zatrudnienia. W większości badanych kra-

jów głównym problemem jest stosunkowo mała liczba pracowników doskonalących swe umiejętności zawodowe oraz zapewnienie bezpieczeństwa materialnego pracownikom zatrudnionym na niestandardowych umowach o pracę.

Słowa kluczowe: „flexicurity" (elastyczność zatrudnienia i zabezpieczenie socjalne pracowników), wskaźnik złożony, kraje EŚW

JEL: J08, J50

ВНЕДРЕНИЕ КОНЦЕПЦИИ «FLEXICURITY» В ИЗБРАННЫХ СТРАНАХ ЦЕНТРАЛЬНО-ВОСТОЧНОЙ ЕВРОПЫ

Резюме

Страны ЦВЕ должны выработать собственную политику „flexicurity" (гибкой системы трудоустройства с одновременной хорошей социальной защитой работников), учитывая заложенные цели общей политики занятости, культурные традиции и уровень общественно-экономического развития. В статье делается попытка анализа и оценки реализации концепции „flexicurity" в этих странах на основании комплекса сложных показателей. Исследование охватывает 9 стран ЦВЕ за 2007 и 2013 годы. Обзор имеющихся исследований указывает на недостаток работ, учитывающих широкий комплекс показателей, включаемых в синтетический показатель „flexicurity". Кроме того, нет публикаций, в которых проводилось бы сравнение гибкости и безопасности рынков труда в отдельных странах ЦВЕ или сравнение этих показателей в разные временные периоды. Данная статья пытается восполнить этот пробел. Проведенный анализ синтетического показателя „flexicurity" и его составных частей показывает, насколько велики различия в реализации этой концепции в отдельных странах ЦВЕ. Рынок труда в странах ЦВЕ продолжает характеризоваться жесткими правилами защиты трудоустройства, что ослабляет его функционирование. В то же время страны ЦВЕ в последнее десятилетие достигли большого прогресса во внедрении активной политики рынка труда и нестандартных форм трудоустройства. В большинстве исследуемых стран главной проблемой является недостаточное число работников, повышающих свою профессиональную квалификацию и обеспечение материальной безопасности работникам, занятым на основании нестандартных договоров.

Ключевые слова: „flexicurity" (гибкость трудоустройства и социальное обеспечение работников), сложный показатель, страны ЦВЕ

JEL: J08, J50