original scientific article
received: 2018-08-09

DOI 10.19233/ASHS.2018.52

SHOULD HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS WORRY ABOUT THE PRECARISATION OF PROFESSIONAL WORK?

Samo PAVLIN
University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences, Kardeljeva pl. 5, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
e-mail: samo.pavlin@fdv.uni-lj.si

ABSTRACT

This conceptual paper seeks to show why and in what ways higher education should worry about the precarisation of professional work. Increasing number of higher education institutions recently strive to improve professional relevance of study programmes in relation to skill (mis)matches and the problem of unemployment. In this context the paper examines the key factors of the development of professional workers in higher education and explains the precarisation of professional work as an increasingly relevant social problem. Particular attention is paid to comparing the precarisation of young graduates of higher education with the elements of precarisation of academics. The paper concludes that the precarisation of graduates and the quality of academic employment are related phenomena.

Keywords: precarious work, labour market, higher education graduates, higher education, professionalization, professionalism

LE ISTITUZIONI DI ISTRUZIONE SUPERIORE DOVREBBERO ALLARMARSI PER LA PRECARIZZAZIONE DEL LAVORO PROFESSIONALE?

SINTESI

Il presente contributo concettuale si propone di illustrare perché l'istruzione superiore dovrebbe allarmarsi e come dovrebbe procedere di fronte alla precarizzazione del lavoro professionale. Numerose istituzioni di istruzione superiore hanno recentemente cercato di potenziare la rilevanza professionale dei propri programmi di studio in relazione alla (in)compatibilità delle competenze e al problema della disoccupazione. In questo contesto, l'articolo esamina i fattori chiave dello sviluppo dei professionisti nell'istruzione superiore e inquadra la precarizzazione del lavoro professionale come un problema sociale sempre più rilevante. Un'attenzione particolare è rivolta al raffronto tra la precarizzazione dei giovani laureati nell'istruzione superiore e quella degli accademici già affermati. L'articolo conclude che la precarizzazione dei laureati e la precarizzazione degli accademici sono fenomeni collegati.

Parole chiave: lavoro precario, mercato del lavoro, laureati, istruzione superiore, professionalizzazione, professionalità

INTRODUCTION

In the West, policy makers and stakeholders in higher education are increasingly considering the amount of time that students should spent on practical training during their education. They also are considering (i) how practical and classical learning could be better integrated and (ii) how education systems could strengthen their practical orientation. These concerns are related to recent changes in the labour market, particularly the decrease in the number and quality of jobs that are available to young graduates in most European countries and educational segments. In this paper, we explore the reasons that higher education should worry about the precarisation of professional work, and we determine the areas of work that should receive the greatest attention.

The relationships between higher education and the world of work should not be considered separate from disciplinary particularities. The term, disciplinary particularities, encompasses the nature of professional knowledge, modes of teaching and learning, costs of study, the number of students that are enrolled in a certain programme and the public image of the programme. These particularities determine how particular academic disciplines cooperate with the world of work. Some academic disciplines are practically oriented, and others have an applied emphasis. Some study programmes are very narrow in their vocational scope, while others have broad applications. Neumann (2009), for example, categorized the differences between the inherent logic of professional knowledge and cognitive purpose: the hard-pure category (e.g. natural sciences and mathematics), soft-pure (the humanities and the social sciences), hard-applied (e.g. medicine) and soft-applied (e.g. social work). In this context, the turbulent employment market and the status of young graduates are very much related to the vocational scope of study programmes. Disciplinary differences are also determined according to the established tradition of university-business cooperation modes, which include (i) research and development, (ii) the mobility and training of students and graduates, (iii) the mobility of academics and professionals from the world of work and (iv) the establishment of lifelong learning programmes or curriculum development and delivery (see Pavlin, 2015).

Regardless of differences in disciplinarity, some policy developments in higher education are universal and include concepts and ideas such as the "entrepreneurial university" (Clark, 1998) and "the triple helix model" (Etzkowitz, 2008). Other views on higher education stress the students' right to choose study areas according to their personal interests, access to higher education regardless of economic situation and socio-biographic background, diversity in study areas, including traditional disciplines that do not have public value, development of generic competencies that enable personal development and lifelong careers, setting professional standards for cooperation between education and employers and development of the skills needed for active citizenship (Teichler, 2009, 51; Pavlin et al., 2013). It is expected, however, that the extent of the precarisation of jobs for graduates of higher education as well as the precarisation of the work of those employed in higher education will importantly determine if the future developments of higher education will follow more labour market or more humanistic orientation.

In the next section, we discuss the key principles of the development of professional workers in higher education. In the third section, we describe the precarisation of professional work. In the fourth section, we examine the issue of the precarisation of young graduates of higher education and the precarisation of academic work. In the conclusion, we compare key issues in the precarisation of young graduates of higher education and the precarisation of academic work. We then recommend questions and topics that should be addressed in future research.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL WORKERS

Even though vocational and academic orientations have varied substantially because of the differing natures of professional knowledge, universities are assumed to play a key role in the development of theoretical and practical knowledge as well as the socialisation of future professionals. Universities were originally designed to accumulate, systemise, transfer and certify the knowledge of a particular professional domain. According to Teichler (2015, 469), economically advanced countries consider that the key educational functions of higher education are to train young professionals by (i) "*stimulating students intellectually in the academic domain, i.e., teach them to understand and master the academic theories, methods and knowledge domains*", (ii) "*contributing to cultural enhancement and personality development*", iii) "*preparing students for subsequent work* […] [and] *helping them to use the typical 'rules and tools' needed in their professional life*", and (iv) "*fostering the ability to challenge established practices* […]" in terms of generating new knowledge. An important contribution that further describes these developments was presented by the sociology of professions. This discipline traditionally describes professionals as the target occupational and class destination of those completing higher education:

> *Professions are essentially the knowledge-based category of occupations which usually follow a period of tertiary education and vocational*

> *training and experience. A different way of categorizing these occupations is to see professions as the structural, occupational and institutional arrangements for dealing with work associated with the uncertainties of modern lives in risk societies. Professionals are extensively engaged in dealing with risk, with risk assessment and, through the use of expert knowledge, enabling customers and clients to deal with uncertainty* (Evetts, 2003, 397).

In higher educational programmes, formal learning differs from knowledge acqusition in the world of work because it is based on rationalisation, reflection and scientific principles. However, knowledge developed in higher education institutions should enable graduates to select and connect theories to a particular situation and understand new situations (Eraut, 2006, 49). This link has not been fully explored (Svensson, 1990, 52–56). The development of professional knowledge is determined by several different elements, agents and processes:

a) *Modes of teaching and learning* imply classical lectures, group assignments, team work, internships, lectures, oral presentations and examinations. A key element that reflects these processes is the effort that students are expected to invest in completing their study obligations as well as improving their talent and other personal characteristics before, during and at graduation.
b) *Characteristics of study programmes* are related to formal programme requirements, such as programme duration, type of qualification, relations with employers and professional associations, learning relations, vocational orientation, prestige and so on.
c) *Personal characteristics of students* include intelligence, social background, gender, previous educational and work experiences. Work experiences (relevant and non-relevant) during education determine the personal centrality of "higher education" experiences.
d) *Transition from education to the labour market* implies modes and duration of job search, "transitional" jobs and earnings, coverage of expenses, national and international mobility and so on.
e) *Employment after graduation* is related to vertical and horizontal education match, formal work requirements, quality of employment, including characteristics of work place, competition, stability of demand and so on.
f) *Characteristics of professional work* are related to work vertical and horizontal skill matches, future career possibilities, managerial and professional orientation of work, autonomy, identity, personal values, orientation and so on.

The key questions that place the role of higher education into the perspective of the labour market are the following (Teichler, 2007, 14–15): (i) "*does the expansion of higher education* [...] *match the changes of graduate employment, or can signs of substantial shortages or oversupply in the highly educated labour force?*"; (ii) "*does the expansion of higher education stimulate or retard the economic growth?*"; (iii) what is the extent of pluralisation of "[...] *occupations, newly emerging job roles and innovative tasks across established occupational categories*"; (iv) what is the extent of "*innovations in the employment systems triggered off by changes in higher education*"; and (v) does an "*open education system in a society reward high-level education?*". The transition of young graduates from education to the world of work is one of the major policy issues in the recent development of higher education (Pavlin, 2014), where "*attention was increasingly paid to unemployment, precarious employment and employment in low-level occupations and positions of higher education graduate*s" (Teichler, 2007, 16). Key concepts that accompany emerging social problems are employability in terms of individual capabilities to find a meaningful job (Pavlin, 2014) and the skill-supply phenomenon versus the skill-demand phenomenon as measured by skill shortages versus skill surpluses (Allen & Van der Velden, 2001). The dilemma of having or not having a job within a few years after graduation is increasingly viewed from the perspective of long-term career goals. In particular, the question concerns whether it is worth taking a job that offers low security and financial incentives but has the high potential for development in the long term. In the DEHEMS project (2015-) this question was deemed even more complex. The employability of higher education graduates has been measured by the relation between their success in the labour market (e.g. past education and work experiences, type of higher education, educational characteristics, modes of teaching and learning, international experiences and study success) and the components of career success, which are occupational status, skill and qualification matching, autonomy, innovation and satisfaction.

However, it is important to reiterate that even though higher education increases the ability to adaptation of their programmes to assume requirements from the world of work, make study programmes more demanding or strengthen connections with employers it would still have only limited effects on the careers and professional development of graduates. Humburg et al. (2013, v) indicated that subject-specific knowledge and expert thinking were the most important skill set that affected graduates' employability, but interpersonal skills, such as communication skills and team-

work, were similarly important. The study also found that according to employers, relevant work experience was very important factor in acquiring a job. In the current employment situation, more graduates are seeking jobs of higher quality. Many do not believe that the ever-increasing pressure to develop better skills would improve their employment perspectives. The interplay between professional skills and professional protection is a normative value of professional standards. In some regions and countries, higher education institutions contribute to these issues through goods and services markets, professional associations or shaping professional standards. In other areas, higher education institutions have only a marginal role, and they leave the developmental processes of occupational professionalization to other players. However, cuts in public finances in the last decades have jeopardised the position of higher education institutions in these developments.

PRECARISATION

Globalisation has caused many changes to professional work. Professions have been increasingly exposed to hybridisation in recent years: we are now experiencing new forms of professions and professionalization. Noordegraaf described the several types of professionalism as

> ***pure professionalism**, aimed at restoring a traditional professional logic, free from and protected against managerial logics* [...] ***controlled professionalism**, aimed at disciplining professional work within organisational settings and structures... **managed professionalism**, aimed at hybridising professional/ organisational logics, in terms of structures, systems and roles* [...] ***organising professionalism**, aimed at going beyond hybridity, especially by embedding organising and organising roles and capacities within professional action* (Noordegraaf, 2015, 200).

As Noordegraaf proposed, professional types have adjusted in order to survive in various environments. Another typology was proposed by Evetts (2013, 788), who described two different forms of professionalism in knowledge-based work. *Occupational professionalism* is characterised by the discourse of professional workers, collegial authority, discretion and occupational control of the work, practitioner trust by both clients and employers, controls operationalized by practitioners, professional ethics monitored by institutions and associations. *Organisational professionalism* is generated by rational-legal forms of authority, hierarchical structures of authority and decision-making, managerialism and accountability, externalized forms of regulation, target-setting and performance reviews. Because both logics can apply, occupational and organisational professionalism are not mutually exclusive but are in parallel. This duality has been caused by the rise of neoliberalism and of market fundamentalism, which is a "*defining feature of the normative and technical environment surrounding professional work*", as well as cultural fragmentation and post-modern scepticism, which are "*the result of the questioning of grand narratives and the epistemological assumptions of professional competence*" (Leicht, 2015, 2). Professional organisations are increasingly subject to "performance indicators" and accountability. According to Evetts (2013, 790), "*the meaning of professionalism is not fixed, however, and sociological analysis of the concept has demonstrated changes over time both in its interpretation and function*". According to Brock et al. (2014, 1–2), professional workers are not "*lords of the dance*" only in traditional fields of education, health and justice but have taken key positions in entirely new areas, such as farming and manufacturing. In these areas, professionals develop new professionalised modes of cooperation with clients, as well as new products and new specialties.

The hybridisation of professionalization and professionalism has been accompanied by the elements of precarisation of work. The precarisation of work has spread to several labour market segments, such as youth, women and immigrants. It is an important question to what extent are higher education professionals, particularly young graduates, affected by this process in comparison to other segements of workers. According to Vallas and Prener (2012, 332), "*The rise of nonstandard, contingent, or precarious employment has received growing attention among social scientists, who have begun to produce a sprawling literature that has documented the spread of involuntary part-time, temporary, and contract work* [...]". Precarisation is a global process:

> *One of the most important trends over the past decades is undeniably the growth of insecurity in the world of work. Worldwide, unimaginable numbers of workers suffer from precarious, insecure, uncertain and unpredictable working conditions. Unemployment figures alone are cause for concern, but even these fail to capture the larger majority of people who work, but who do not have a decent job, with a decent wage, a secure future, social protection and access to rights* (ILO, 2011, 1).

The decline in the number of "good jobs" and the rise in the number of "bad jobs" can be observed as the outcome of economic restructuring and the disappearance of legislation that protects workers in the la-

bour market (Kalleberg, 2011). Furthermore, Standing described this as the new social order:

> [A]*t the top is an 'elite', consisting of a tiny number of absurdly rich global citizens lording it over the universe, with their billions of dollars* [...] *Below that elite comes the 'salariat', still in stable full-time employment* [...] *The salariat is concentrated in large corporations, government agencies and public administration, including the civil service* [...] *the growing 'precariat'* [...] *consists of people who have minimal trust relationships with capital or the state, making it quite unlike the salariat. And it has none of the social contract relationships of the proletariat, whereby labour securities were provided in exchange for subordination and contingent loyalty, the unwritten deal underpinning welfare states* (Standing, 2011, 7–8).

These issues are included in the concept of the risk society, which has been characterised by large changes in traditional norms and values (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1994). The ILO stated, "*in the most general sense, precarious work is a means for employers to shift risks and responsibilities on to workers* [...]" (ILO, 2011, 5). ILO defines precarious work as uncertainty about the duration of employment, multiple employers, ambiguous employment relationships, the lack of access to social protection and benefits usually associated with employment, low pay and substantial legal and obstacles to joining a trade union and bargaining collectively (ILO, 2011). Consequently, workers in precarious conditions have difficulties in building professional careers, personal development and family life. Olsthoorn (2014) proposed two indicators to measure precarious work: the first indicator measures income insecurity "*and is constructed using wage, supplementary income and unemployment benefit entitlements*"; and the second "*focuses on job insecurity and is constructed using contract type and unemployment duration*".

Precarious workers are under stress in their private and working lives, which might be particularly the case with young graduates of higher education who have already developed a vocational identity through years of schooling and at the time of graduation intend to establish a family. However, instead of a regular job, they are often offered various internships and temporary jobs as the entry point to establishing a professional career. According to Standing precarious workers

> *must devote a growing amount of time to work-for-labour, without it offering a reliable road to economic security or an occupational career worthy of the name [...] To be precaritised is to be wired into job-performing lifestyles without a sense of occupational development* [...] *Multitasking lowers productivity in every activity. Fractured thinking becomes habitual. It makes it harder to do creative work or to indulge in leisure that requires concentration, deliberation and sustained effort. It crowds out leisure, leaving people relieved just to play, passively in the mental sense. Nonstop interactivity is the opium of the precariat, just as beer and gin drinking was for the first generation of the industrial proletariat* [...] *And if the precariat does have occupational skills, those may vanish* [...] (Standing, 2011, 130–131).

Policy makers want higher education institutions to participate in solving this social problem. They believe that improving educational outcomes and upgrading youth skills leads to better labour market outcomes (e.g. Scarpetta & Sonnet, 2012). The hidden assumption is that better skills lead to more and better jobs: "*success in converting skills into productive jobs largely depends on developing a better understanding of whether the right mix of skills is being taught and learned in equitable and efficient ways* [...]" (Scarpetta & Sonnet, 2012, 7). Currently, most higher education stakeholders support ideas of increasing labour market orientation of higher education, which includes university business cooperation. However, if the perspective on the increase in precarious work of higher education graduates and established academics would gain more public and learners attention and provoke their stronger reactions different approaches to generating good jobs for professionals might have been considered. But why should higher education worry about the precarisation of existing professional work?

WHY HIGHER EDUCATION SHOULD WORRY ABOUT THE PRECARISATION OF PROFESSIONAL WORK?

Higher education institutions still have a central role in providing professional training for young graduates. However, in recent years, the deregulation and precarisation of professional jobs have jeopardised the way professionals traditionally have experienced their work. Three broad areas of concern should alert higher education institutions to worry about precarisation: 1) the precarisation of young graduates, particularly in transition from education to the labour market, weakens the quality of professional work, professional identity and possibilities of future professional development; 2) the emerging elements of precarisation of academics weakens the training of young professionals as well as the development of professional domains; and 3) the emerging larger socio-political consequences related to precarisation

cause changes in the traditional values related to trust of professional workers. These three areas are related to broader societal changes. In this section, we elaborate each area.

Precarisation of higher education graduates

Earlier in this paper, we described the relation between higher education institutions and the world of work. In particular, we considered the role that higher education institutions play in forming their graduates' "employability". According to Teichler (2015, 470–471), greater graduate employability includes enhancing graduates' career success, students' efforts to increase the exchange value of their study area, the match of study programmes with areas of work, practical orientation of higher education, enhancement of competencies that are needed in the labour market, and increased assistance to students in the transfer to the employment system. The call for greater employability has been also strongly promoted in response to the increasing precarisation of work among young highly skilled workers. According to Poggio et al. (2012, 8), "*the ongoing economic crisis, as well as labour market reforms enhancing flexibility have created uncertain conditions for all young people, regardless of their skills levels or education*". Even though young highly skilled workers in Europe have above average employment rates compared to their colleagues with lower levels of education, countries such as Italy, Spain and Greece indicate very low employment rates among the highly educated. Poggio et al. (2012) reported that young graduates have difficulties in finding or keeping a job in all EU countries, and they are characterised by the high probability of being employed in temporary jobs. In addition, Lodovici and Semanaza (2012) showed that precarious work among young workers, including the highly skilled, caused uncertainty in all spheres of life. According to Lodovici and Semanaza, problems in the early transition from education to the labour market cause problems in later career stages as well as the loss of human capital in terms of investment in higher education institutions.

The reasons that higher education should worry about the precarisation of professional work are diverse, and they are both functional and ethical. According to the results of the DEHEMS project (see Pavlin, 2014), many who are employed in higher education, particularly in some new EU states, do not consider the systematic collection and utilisation of the hard evidence of graduates careers as mandatory for the development and adaptation of higher education programmes to the labour market. Some critics have said that they worry more about their own jobs even though the lack of higher education professional relevance could jeopardise higher education programmes they are engaged in. There are several reasons that higher education institutions should worry about the lack of good jobs in professional domains and the precarisation of the work performed by their graduates – if they want to in a long term mentain a central player in providing professional training and support the professional relevance of their particular domain. Below we describe five of them.

First, higher education institutions should in principle support graduates to find good jobs that match their field of study. Good jobs that are related to the field of study and personal vocational choice nurtur professionalism, satisfaction with work, and personal values, thereby enabling personal and professional development. Professionalism has logics that differ from managerialism, which stipulates ever-increasing efficiency and competition, which often means working harder with fewer resources. However, in many cases, managerialism alone do not contribute to the *raison-d'être* of professionals and higher education institutions.

The second reason is related to particular aspects of apprenticeships, internships and traineeships in the transition of graduates to the labour market. Although the training of professionals is in principle a process of socialisation, new forms of practical professional training have become highly institutionalised, and they often have abandoned its primary role. Practical learning sometimes present a legal barrier and obstacle for obtaining work in particular profession (Perlin, 2012). In some cases, practical learning in higher education might lead to continuous temporary employment, which is key indicator of precariousness.

The third reason that higher education institutions should worry about the precarisation of professional work is related to massification and commodification of higher education and consequently (too) larger number of graduates in particular domains. In recent decades, higher education has experienced a massive increase in the number of new students. This trend has not been triggered by the demands of the labour market. Standing (2011, 67) gave the example of Spain, where "*40 per cent of Spanish university students a year after graduating find themselves in low-skilled jobs that do not require their qualifications. This can only produce a pandemic of status frustration*". Moreover, "*A British survey found that nearly 2 million workers were 'mismatched', having skills that did not match their jobs*" (Standing, 2011, 122). According to Standing, "*only a third of all new jobs will be available for young people who complete tertiary education. A majority will be bumped down into jobs that do not require high-level qualifications*" (Standing, 2011, 68). This issue not only might result in frustration but also might cause young graduates to incur severe debt related to their investment in higher

education study programmes. For this reason, in certain study fields, higher education institutions should focus on the quality of their study programmes instead of the number of students.

The fourth reason is related to the increasing stress young graduates experience in their first jobs. In particular, "*professionals reported significantly higher levels of work intensity than all other occupational groups, and higher levels of stress and work-life imbalance*" (Le Fevre et al., 2015, 966). Moreover, a large scale survey conducted among approximately 40,000 graduates (Allen et al., 2011) found that the competencies that were in the greatest demand were related to the ability to work under stress and time management. Combined with work insecurity, work-related stress leads to exhaustion and the "burn-out" effect. Higher education institutions should consider paying greater attention to these issues not only by equipping graduates with the ability to work under stress but also by promoting work-friendly professional environments. If the present trend of work and stress intensification continues, higher education institutions will no longer be perceived as avenues to a better life, career development or social status.

The fifth reason is related to the obsolescence of knowledge and the increasing speed at which knowledge is produced by innovation, dissemination and utilisation (Lundvall, 2001). According to Standing (2011, 124), "*There is a paradox. The more skilled the work, the more likely it is that refinements will take place, requiring 'retraining'. Another way of putting it is as follows: The more trained you are, the more likely you are to become unskilled in your sphere of competence*". Consequently, in their present form, professionals might be replaced by precarious specialists because the only path to the labour market will be through narrow and precarious specialisations. Therefore, higher education institutions might consider developing modes of cooperation between universities and business, particularly lifelong learning programmes that would focus on bridges to different specialisations. At present, it is difficult to predict the meaning that such cooperation would have for future professional development.

In summary, the five reasons that higher education should worry about the increasing precarisation of professional work are interrelated. Efforts that are related to nurturing professionalism in a particular domain, ensuring relevant work experience, matching the quality and quantity of students, promoting family-friendly working standards, and establishing integrated lifelong learning programmes as links between different specialisations could enable the professional domain to survive in the long term. These efforts might prevent or slow down the precarisation that has spread in some countries and professional domains.

Perspectives of academic precarisation

Occupational precarisation and deprofessionalization in academia can be described as the downgrading of working conditions, which is caused by increasing internal and external competition. In many higher education institutions, academics work harder for less money and social security. Both processes—precarisation and deprofessionalization—are accompanied by bureaucratisation and the principles and rules of managerialism (see Freidson, 2001). Even though both processes are inherent in many occupational groups and labour market segments, those "*in the process of employment*" in academia suffer more than most others. Academics have invested in their professional careers heavily often being exposed to voluntary unpaid work and the constant evaluations that are an integral part of academic careers. "*Many teachers and academics became depressed and stressed as they try to adjust* [...] *The neo-liberal state that fosters commercial behaviour reacts to the reluctance of teachers to do standard teaching by introducing artificial performance and auditing tests and indicators, backed by sanctions and penalties*" (Standing, 2011, 71). Academic administrators and government officials increasingly monitor and control the formal and financial aspects of academic work. Because of the uncertain financial situation in academia, academics are increasingly asked to be responsible for own project funding. At the same time they are increasingly dependant on student enrolments and responsible for the (re)accreditation of new programmes, which requires extra work and causes additional stress. The applications for some EU grants can require two to three months of extra work although less than 10 per cent are successful.

An additional problem in the context of academic precarisation is the increasing segmentation within higher education (Musselin, 2007; Henkel, 2007). Segmentation can be viewed as falling between teaching and research, permanent and temporary contracts, obligatory and optional courses and formal status (e.g. young assistants versus full professors). As elaborated by Teichler (2010, 162), some of these differences are reflected in highly disproportional workloads. In some cases, only a small percentage of academics produce the largest academic output. Moreover, one segment of academic workers in some cases assumes social risks for the other segment by taking on projects that are associated with much harder working conditions. Therefore, this group of workers assumes risks for the benefit of other academics who have permanent and easier work. The situation is particularly delicate when the hard-working and risk-taking group has little or no access to decision-making, funding or career development. Moreover, such hard workers and risk takers are more exposed to the hybridisation of their work in

terms of administrative responsibilities, which Abbott (1988) described as the entrance of bureaucratic and managerial logics into professional work.

Academics, particularly those in the hard-working and risk-taking segment, are subject to evaluations of their efficiency, productivity and performance. Such evaluations are related to the implementation of national and international projects, the production of scientific papers, national and international financial audits, student satisfaction evaluations, internalisation, and so on. These performance measures gradually trigger another step in driving academic segmentation. According to Enders and Musselin (2008, 138), "*When the number of papers published each year in international journals and with a high impact factor becomes a main (and easy to calculate) indicator of performance, involvement in risky research projects with a long-term perspective for publication is no longer attractive*".

In this context, the future developments of (de)professionalization and precarisation in academia could include the following expectations (Pavlin et al., 2013, 74): "*One may expect that deprofessionalization and diversification of academic work will continue also in the next decades* [...] *Some academics might increasingly fall into the new emerging occupations that are gradually starting own professionalization projects*". Such emerging occupations include project coordinators, teaching specialists, university-business cooperation specialists, international officers, alumni officers, public relations workers, career developers, and so on. As described earlier, some tasks in these "new academic occupations" are gradually already entering the work agendas of traditional academic professions and to some extent already shape performance expectations. The segmentation, performativity, deprofessionalization and precarisation of academic work in general is reflected in the deterioration of academic autonomy and identity, which is related to changes in personal values and the quality of work. This trend promotes circumstances in which higher education institutions produce higher education graduates that are challenged by precarity.

Changes in society

The precarisation of academic work has direct effects on public perceptions of and trust in professionals and professionalism. Unemployed graduates and graduates in precarious employment and precarious workers employed in academia are gradually forming a new social class. This vulnerable class will gradually question and test social values such as the traditional role of the family as well as issues of the global challenges related to massive influxes of immigrants. Such circumstances may cause important shifts in the perceptions of democracy as we know it.

CONCLUSION

The precarisation of graduates and elements of academic precarisation are related. They appear in the context where higher education institutions are exposed to globalisation, massification, diversification of programmes and (policy driven) standardisation. Precarisation of graduates and academics can not be viewed independently from the quality of education and its professional relevance from the perspective of education and skill (mis)matches, the job quality and (un)employment. Emerging problems in academia and in the employment of young professionals might be represented in Standing's view of the "old Soviet joke"

> *in which the workers said, 'They pretend to pay us, we pretend to work'. The education variant would be as follows: 'They pretend to educate us, we pretend to learn'. Infantilising the mind is part of the process, not for the elite but for the majority. Courses are made easier, so that pass rates can be maximised. Academics must conform* (Standing, 2011, 72).

The precarisation of higher education graduates as well as in certain ways also academics is reflected in the decreasing quality of teaching and the decreasing relevance of professionals. In the current circumstances of shrinking public finances, academics often do not have the capacity to learn about the development of graduates increasingly complex and flexible professional careers. Therefore, higher education should worry about the precarisation of professional work because of the need for i) promoting professionalism as a personal value in own professional domains what is related to the social status of graduates and various aspects of working conditions, ii) supporting the overall quality of professional work and services, and iii) providing professionally relevant work experiences and teaching. All three aspects significantly contribute to the development and survival of university programmes and academic workers. In this context, several questions for further research can be identified:

a) How to understand and measure the connection between the elements of precarious employment of academics with the precarious employment of their graduates? Can be drawn any parallels in terms of employment segmentation between both groups?
b) What should be minimum employment standards for workers in higher education institutions? What are the implications of the low employment conditions of academics for the careers of their graduates? What are the roles of the state and professional associations in these developments?

c) Should higher education institutions be prevented from enrolling new students in education programmes that have little or no employment potential in the labour market? Shall the state still support professional study programmes that lead to precarious employment?
d) What codes of ethics should be established in this respect? Should the state strengthen the role of external quality assurance agencies in monitoring the professional relevance of higher education institutions? Is it necessary to establish another agency that would follow graduates careers only from the labour market perspective?
e) How to determine the responsibility of the state for supporting professional domains with low market value such as is sometimes the case with humanities?
f) In this context, what are differences and similarities in disciplinarity?

We conclude by calling for much more integrated further research on the relationships between the precarisation of graduates of higher education, the precarisation of professionals in higher education and broader consequences of precarisation for developments of professional domains and society.

ALI NAJ VISOKOŠOLSKE INSTITUCIJE SKRBI PREKARIZACIJA PROFESIONALNEGA DELA?

Samo PAVLIN
Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede, Kardeljeva pl. 5, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenija
e-mail: samo.pavlin@fdv.uni-lj.si

POVZETEK

Ta konceptualni članek pokaže zakaj in zaradi katerih razlogov naj visokošolske institucije skrbi prekarizacija profesionalnega dela. Vedno večje število visokošolskih institucij se v zadnjem času trudi izboljšati profesionalno relevantnost študijskih programov v relaciji do (ne)ujemanja spretnosti in problemom brezposelnosti. V tem kontekstu članek proučuje glavne dejavnike, ki v visokem šolstvu vplivajo na razvoj profesionalcev in označi prekarizacijo profesionalnega dela kot zelo relevanten družben problem. Posebna pozornost je namenjena primerjavi prekarizacije mladih visokošolskih diplomantov z elementi prekarizacije akademikov. Članek zaključimo z ugotovitvijo, da sta prekarizacija diplomantov in kvaliteta zaposlitev akademikov povezana pojava.

Ključne besede: prekarno delo, trg dela, visokošolski diplomanti, visoko šolstvo, profesionalizacija, profesionalnost

SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbott, A. D. (1988): The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor. Chicago, London, University of Chicago Press.

Allen, J. & R. Van der Velden (2001): Educational Mismatches versus Skill Mismatches: Effects on Wages, Job Satisfaction, and On-the-Job Search. Oxford Economic Papers, 53, 3, 434–452.

Allen, J., Pavlin, S. & R. van der Velden (eds.) (2011): Competencies and Early Labour Market Careers of Higher Education Graduates in Europe. Ljubljana, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences.

Beck, U. (1992): Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity. London, Sage Publications.

Brock, D. M., Leblebici, H. & D. Muzio (2014): Understanding Professionals and their Workplaces: The Mission of the Journal of Professions and Organization. Journal of Professions and Organization, 1, 1–15.

Clark, B. R. (1998): Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organizational Pathways of Transformation. Pergamon, IAU Press, Elsevier Science.

DEHEMS project (2015-): Project DEHEMS – Network for the Development of Higher Education Management Systems. Http://www.dehems-project.eu (last access: 7. 6. 2018).

Enders, J. & C. Musselin (2008): Back to the Future? The Academic Professions in the 21st Century. In Higher Education to 2030, Volume 1: Demography. Paris, OECD.

Eraut, M. (2006): Professional Knowledge and Learning at Work. Knowledge, Work and Society/ Savoir, Travail et Société, 4, 3, 43–62.

Etzkowitz, H. (2008): The Triple Helix: University-Industry-Government Innovation in Action. London, Routledge.

Evetts, J. (2003): The Sociological Analysis of Professionalism - Occupational Change in the Modern World. International Sociology, 18, 2, 395–415.

Evetts, J. (2013): Professionalism: Value and Ideology. Current Sociology Review, 61, 5–6, 778–796.

Freidson, E. (2001): Professionalism: The Third Logic. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Giddens, A. (1994): Beyond the Left and Right: The Future of Radical Politics. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Henkel, M. (2007): Shifting Boundaries and the Academic Profession. In: Kogan, M. & U. Teichler (eds.): Key Challenges to the Academic Profession. Paris and Kassel, UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, 191–204.

Humburg, M., Van der Velden, R. & A. Verhagen (2013): The Employability of Higher Education Graduates: The Employers' Perspective – Final report. European Comission. Http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/study/2013/employability_en.pdf (last access: 7. 6. 2018).

ILO (2011): From Precarious Work to Decent work: Outcome Document to the Workers' Symposium on Policies and Regulations to combat Precarious Employment. International Labour Organization. Printed in Switzerland. Http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---actrav/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_179787.pdf (last access: 7. 6. 2018).

Kalleberg, A. L. (2011): Good Jobs, Bad Jobs: The Rise of Polarized and Precarious Employment Systems in the United States 1970s to 2000s. New York, Russell Sage Foundation.

Le Fevre, M., Boxall, P. & K. Macky (2015): Which Workers are more Vulnerable to Work Intensification? An Analysis of two National Surveys, International Journal of Manpower, 36, 6, 966–983.

Leicht, K. T. (2015): Market Fundamentalism, Cultural Fragmentation, Post-modern Skepticism, and the Future of Professional Work. Journal of Professions and Organization, 0, 1–15.

Lodovici M. S. & R. Semanaza (eds.) (2012): Precarious Work and High-skilled Youth in Europe. Milano, FrancoAngeli.

Lundvall, B.-Å. (2001): The Learning Economy: Some Implications for the Knowledge Base of Health and Education Systems, In Knowledge Management in the Learning Society. Paris, OECD.

Musselin, C. (2007): Transformation of Academic Work: Facts and Analysis. In: Kogan, M., Teichler, U. (eds.): Key Challenges to the Academic Profession. Paris and Kassel, UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, 175–190.

Neumann, R. (2009): Disciplinarity. In: Tight, M., Mok, K.H., Huisman, J., and Morphew C. (eds.): The Routledge International Handbook of Higher Education. New York–London, Routledge, 487–501.

Noordegraaf, M. (2015): Hybrid Professionalism and Beyond: (New) Forms of Public Professionalism in Changing Organizational and Societal Contexts. Journal of Professions and Organization, 2, 187–206.

Olsthoorn, M. (2014): Measuring Precarious Employment: A Proposal for Two Indicators of Precarious Employment Based on Set-Theory and Tested with Dutch Labor Market-Data. Social Indicators Research, 119, 421–441.

Pavlin, S. (2014): The Role of Higher Education in Supporting Graduates' early Labour Market Careers. International Journal of Manpower, 35, 4, 576–590.

Pavlin, S. (2015): Considering University-Business Cooperation Modes from the Perspective of Enterprises. European Journal of Education. John Wiley & Sons. Early View.

Pavlin, S., Deželan, T. & I. Svetlik (2013): Challenges of Citizenship in Higher Education: Shifting Visions, Roles and Outcomes. Wien, Wisdom – Echoraum.

Perlin, R. (2012): Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy. London/Brooklyn, Verso.

Poggio, B., Murgia, A., Zanutto, A. & L. Maestripieri (2012): Trapped or Flexible? Risk Transitions and Missing Policies for Young High-skilled Workers in Europe – Synthesis Report. Funded by the European Commission, Pilot project to encourage conversion of precarious work into work with rights (VP/2010/016). Http://web.unitn.it/en/rucola/17828/trapped-or-flexible-risk-transitions-and-missing-policies-young-high-skilled-workers-europe#link-download (last access: 7. 6. 2018).

Scarpetta, S. & A. Sonnet (2012): Challenges Facing European Labour Markets: Is a Skill Upgrade the Appropriate Instrument? Forum. ZBW – Leibniz Information Centre for Economics. Intereconomics. Https://www.oecd.org/els/emp/49567835.pdf (last access: 7. 6. 2018).

Standing, G. (2011): The Precariat - The New Dangerous Class. London/New York, Bloomsbury Academic.

Svensson, L. G. (1990): Knowledge as a Professional Resource: Case Studies of Architects and Psychologists at Work. In: Torstendahl, R. & M. Burrage (eds.): The Formation of Professions: Knowledge, State and Strategy. London, Sage, 51–70.

Teichler, U. (2007): Does Higher Education Matter? Lessons from a Comparative Graduate Survey. European Journal of Education, 42, 1, 11–34.

Teichler, U. (2009): Higher Education and the World of Work: Conceptual Frameworks, Comparative Perspectives, Empirical Findings. Rotterdam, Sense Publishers.

Teichler, U. (2010): The Diversifying Academic Profession? European Review, 18, 157–179.

Teichler, U. (2015): Changing Perspectives: The Professional Relevance of Higher Education on the Way Towards the Highly-Educated Society. European Journal of Education, 50, 4, 461–477.

Vallas, S. & C Prener (2012): Dualism, Job Polarization, and the Social Construction of Precarious Work. Work and Occupations, 39, 4, 331–353.