Abstract:

Using data from the Polish Panel Survey, we analyze changes in occupational-career patterns by means of trajectories defined as the sequence and duration of work positions expressed on a numerical scale on different timelines: calendar years, age, and years in the labor force. We apply a program (CONVERTER) that transforms the floating format of the occupational history (recorded with dates at the beginning and end of each job) into a fixed format (where occupational codes are given on an established timeline). After presenting career trajectories for calendar years and age, we use a model based on difference equations that has an important feature: It predicts values of socioeconomic status even if they decrease over time, especially at the end of the career. In the discussion ending the study, we relate the occurrence of nonsmooth trajectories, career interruptions, and multijob situations to the turbulent economy in Poland.