

Transition from Higher Education to Labour Market in Poland on the Basis of Geography Graduates *

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Outline of Transition Conditions of University Graduates in Poland

Transformation of economy

Dynamic increase in the number of people commercing HE

Dynamic growth in the number of university graduates

Acceleration in the growth rate the number of graduates influenced
by mass establishment of non-public schools

Devaluation of university diplomas at the labour market

Signifant increase in the number of unemployed university graduates

Transition of geography graduates – strategy of research

Period: June 2011 (first stage); January 2012 (second stage)

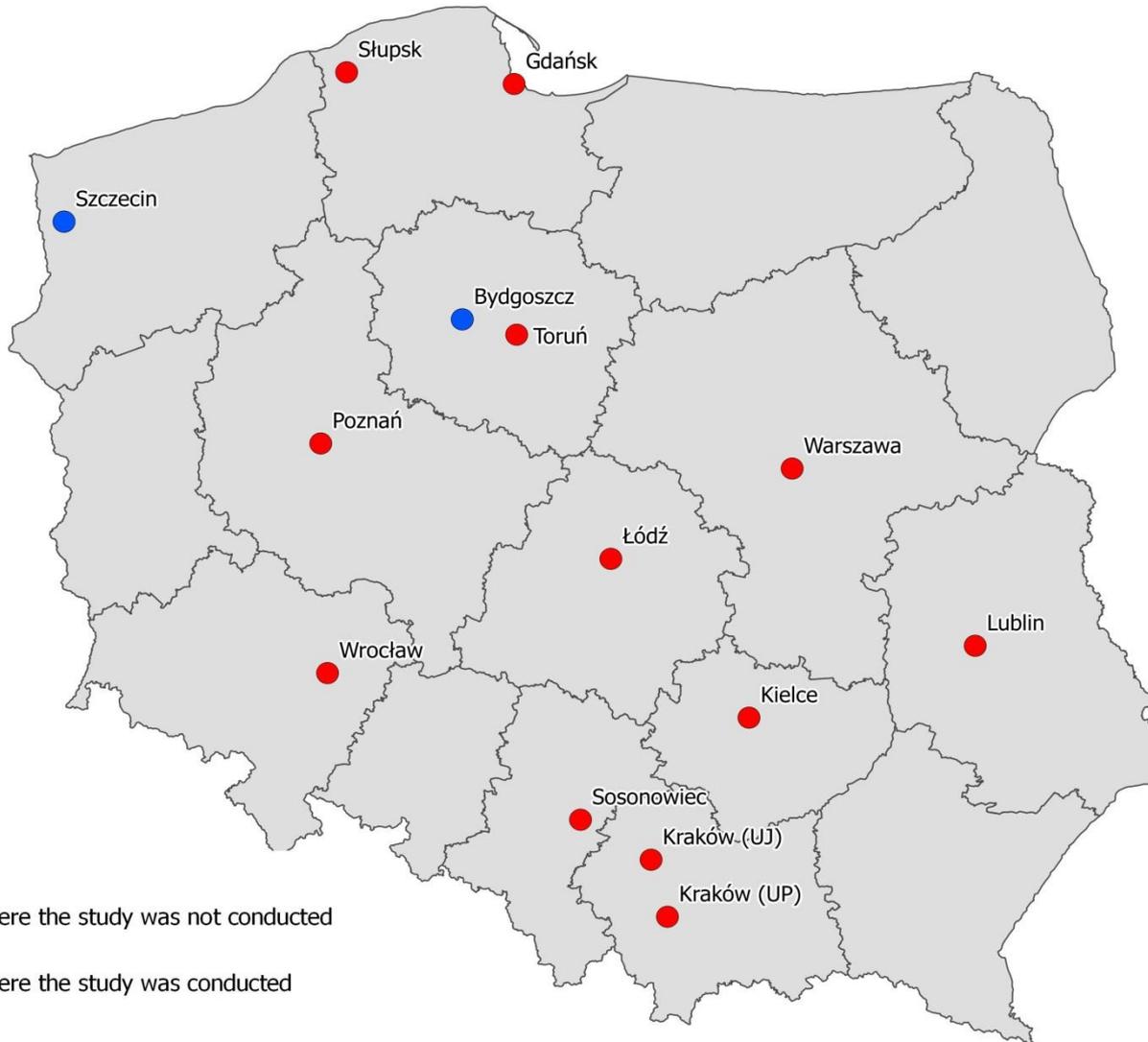
Methods: diagnostic opinion pool

Respondents: full-time students completing university; graduates six months from completion HE

Stages: 2

Scale: twelve out of the fourteen universities (see Fig.1)

Universities teaching geographers in Poland



FIRST stage of research: the purpose, scale

To register:

- the planned manners of looking for work,**
- desired work places,**
- financial expectations ,**
- willingness of self-employment;**
- evaluation of familiarity with the labour market,**
- satisfaction with the studies in the context of looking for a work.**

Study: confidential NOT anonymous

Scale: 1347 persons who finished full time geography studies in the academic year 2010/2011

SECOND STAGE: the purpose, scale

To diagnose the actual situation of specific geography graduates at the labour market in reference to prior expectations and plans

**The reference is possible when this status is known after several months from completion of studies and the degree of implementation of plans and aspirations is checked
INDIVIDUALLY**

Scale: 597 (people who planned looking for a job); 375 complete filled questionnaires

Basic methodological innovation

PERSONALIZATION : a pair of questionnaires (questionnaire of a given person completed in June 2011 and in January 2012) was a base for analysis

TWO DATA BASES: was used to generate a final database

- advantage: the possibility of a separate analysis of answers from first, second stage as well as simultaneous quick possibility of referring the results from one database to the answers collected in the second database
- maintenance of data from “June” questionnaires which are not related to the “January” questionnaires for the purpose of using them for basic analyses

Transition of geographers to the labour market: selected study results

- 1. Planned and actual work places**
- 2. Planned and actual criteria of work selection**
- 3. Expected and actual recruitment criteria**
- 4. Expected and received amount of remuneration**

Work places: expectations

EXPECTATIONS:

- **work closely-related with study major and the type of specialization**
- **the most numerous group of respondents wished to work in a state and local government (12.7%); spatial planning offices (11.4%), education (10.9%), cartographic companies (10.1%)**
- **many students (9.5%) declared their willingness to create work place by establishing their own business**

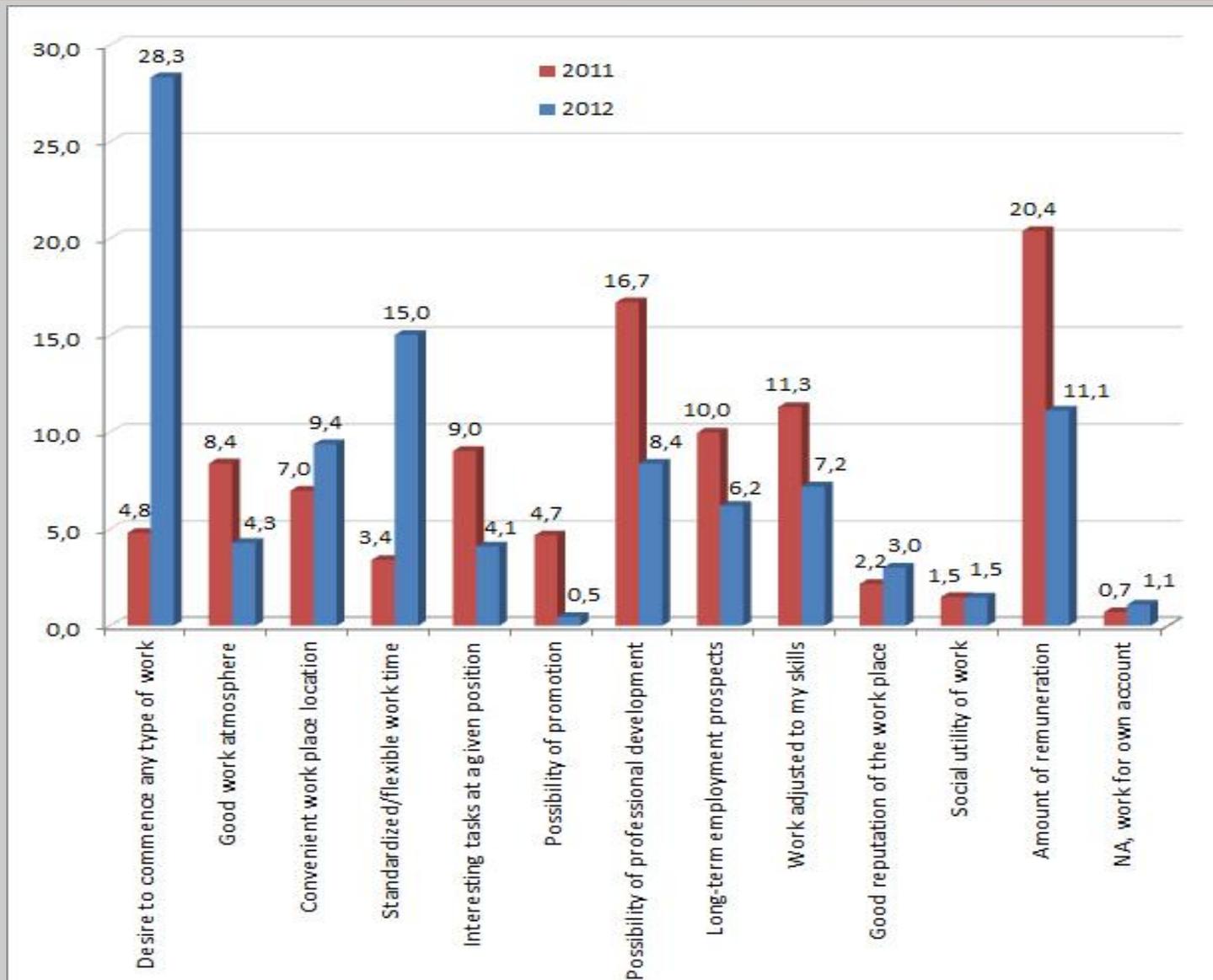
Work places: reality

Almost half of respondents have a job (48.5%)

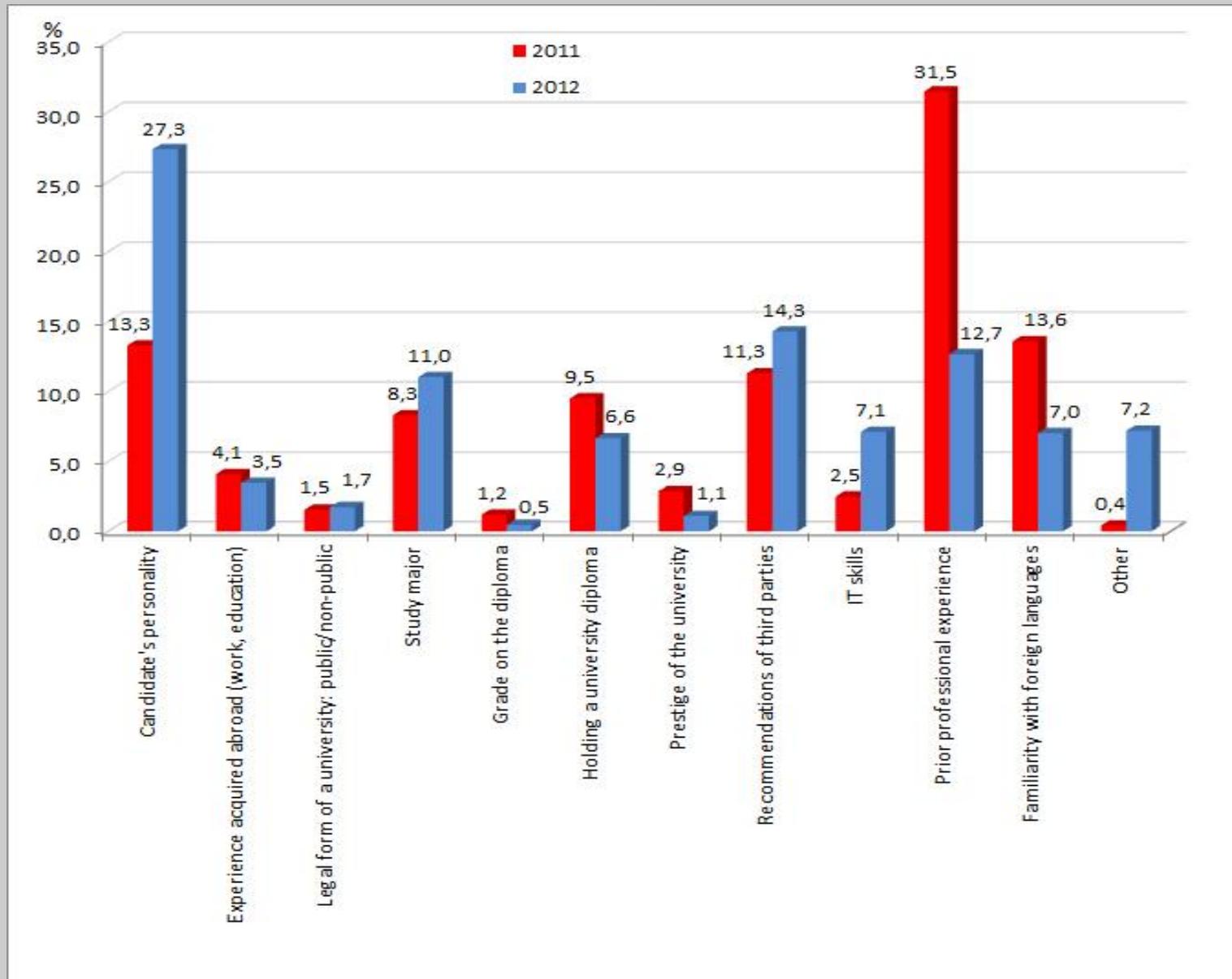
Over half of them (58.3%) perform work not related to the study major and not even requiring higher education; they work in broadly understood trade and services.

Graduates who practise professions closely related to completed studies work mainly as teachers (14.4%), in land survey and cartographic companies (7.7%), local government (7.2%), touristic industry (4.5%).

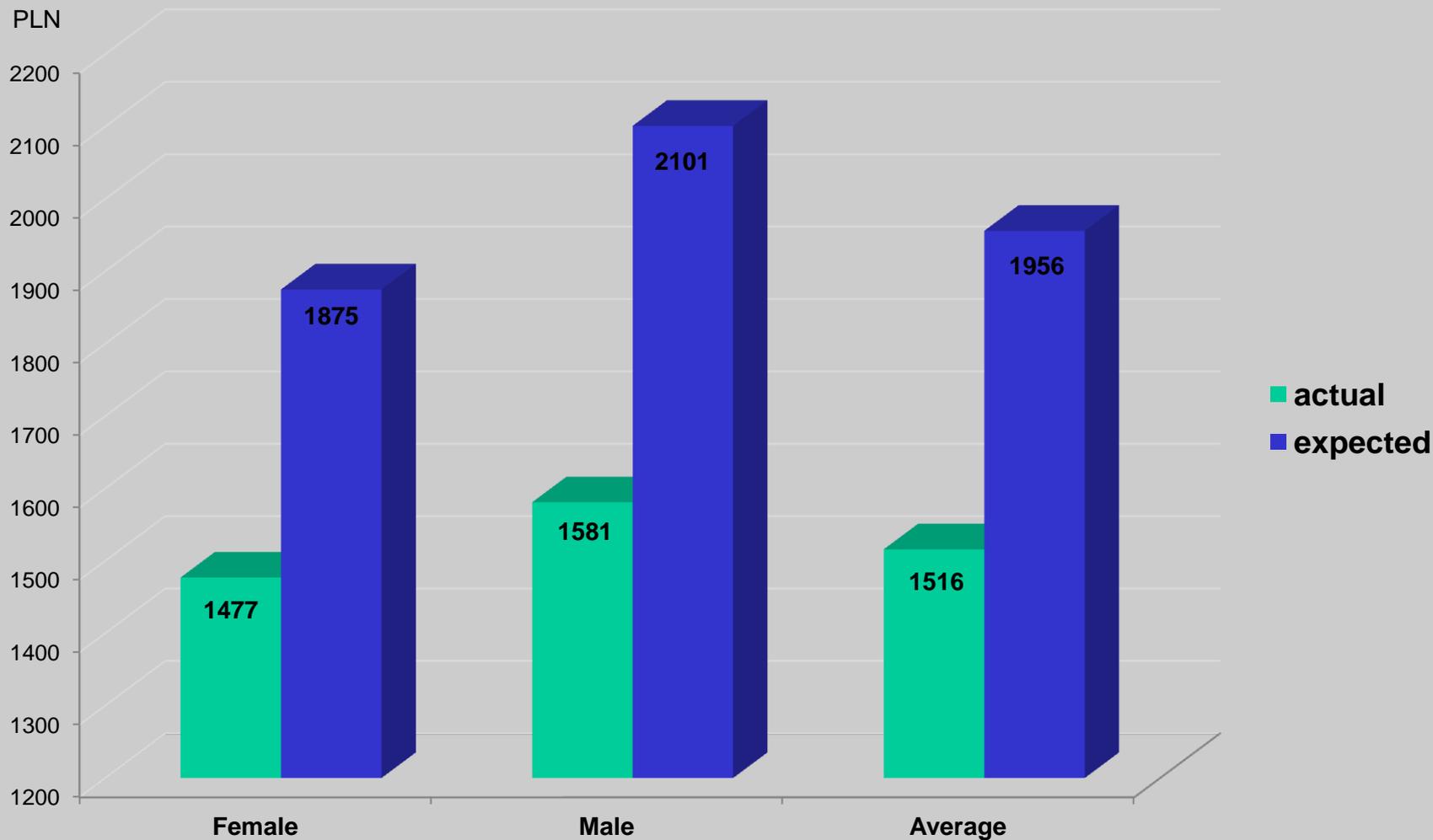
Selection criteria of work place: plans and fulfilment of plans



Expected and actual recruitment criteria



Remuneration: expectations vs. actual situation



Conclusions (1)

The study shows that transition of HE graduates in Poland is a difficult and complex process, ending in a partial success and that it is quite distant from aspirations and expectations registered by such persons at the moment of completion of university education.

In a half-year period from completion of studies, only approx. half of respondents were employed and their work frequently did not correlate with their academic preparation or was performed on the basis of not advantageous or unstable contracts.

Only every fifth graduate performed work related to the completed study major and these were mainly persons employed in education, in the cartographic industry and land survey and in administration. The remaining respondents most frequently worked in trade and services at low positions.

Conclusions (2)

According to geography graduates, holding of higher education influences procurement of work Poland in a small degree, whereas the prestige of a university and the grade on the diploma have almost no impact. Key role, in their opinion, is played by the candidate's personality traits, prior professional experience and connections

The first job brought limited satisfaction to young people; both in the material and non-material sphere

The limited satisfaction with the nature of work changes into almost complete absence of satisfaction with respect to pay. Every fifth graduate receives less than PLN 1,000 net (with the current EUR exchange rate this amounts to approx. EUR 230)