

Distribution of Work-Related Socio-Economic Security in Russia

Irina Soboleva

irasobol@gmail.com

Institute of Economy Russian Academy of Sciences

The key aspect of socio-economic security of individuals and households today is security in the world of work. For the majority of people it is paid employment or self employment that on the one hand provides the main source of income and on the other hand constitutes a vital sphere of self-realization. The position in the world of work to a large extent determines one's social status, self-appraisal and general well-being. Increasing insecurity of work situation negatively impacts motivation and productive activity and worsens human development prospects. Moreover employed population spends at work the largest share of overall active time fund.

In Russia market reforms were accompanied by a pronounced growth of insecurity. As it is today flimsiness of available safety nets and lack of public commitment to basic social income strengthen the dependence of household income security on employment related characteristics of its members. Thus in the case of Russia the socio-economic security aspects linked to employment are especially important. This paper deals with trends in distribution of work-related security and the factors underlying different security/insecurity patterns.

The empirical base is formed by two rounds of People's Security Survey carried out in three Russian regions in 2002 and 2007 complemented by statistical and other relevant data available from official and independent sources.

The research is based upon ILO methodology emphasizing seven key aspects of work-related security which could be measured by sets of indices on micro and macro level. It is demonstrated that macro-level indices designed by ILO experts for cross-country comparisons are good for measuring context but ill-suited for measuring outcome. Moreover, they tell us nothing about distribution of work-related security among different categories of population within countries and of factors impacting this distribution. Thus for the purposes of this research a set of micro level indices is constructed which allows grasping both objective base and subjective perceptions of socio-economic security among different groups of employed population.

The main results obtained are as follows.

1. During the period of economic stability (in between the two survey rounds), a considerable strengthening in 5 out of 7 aspects of work-related security was observed. The most prominent loss was in skill security reflecting opportunities to master one's profession, to gain and retain skills through professional education and training programs.
2. In both rounds men proved more vulnerable than women as far as work security and representation security were concerned while women lacked labour market security being less sure of finding another employment in case of job loss.
3. Public sector employees experienced the largest gains in work-related security with those employed by privatized enterprises falling slightly behind and employees in the 'new' private sector being the main losers.
4. With the help of cluster analysis five work-related security profiles characterized by different zones of vulnerability were distinguished: three clusters represent reasonably well-to-do groups while the other two comprise outsiders.
5. The key factors determining individual work-related security profiles are sector of employment, enterprise size, age, and health. The profiles are less dependent upon place of living, gender, family size and education and not dependent upon marital status and number of children.