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The Atypical Forms of Employment Acceptance by Polish Full-Time Employees as per Modern Labour Market Rules in an EU-Country Context

Abstract

This manuscript is dedicated to atypical forms of employment which are a response to transactional relations between the employee and the employer on the modern labour market. The general research question is whether employees who accept atypical forms of employment (or “AFE”; readiness to providing work) obtain benefits in the form of high employability and well-being as well as low levels of job insecurity. The assumptions and the research scheme are new compared to previous studies. A quantitative CAWI study was conducted on a sample of Polish full-time employees (N = 543), as potentially voluntarily declaring their acceptance of AFE. In addition, well-being was operationalised according to C. Ryff’s approach as a sense of agency in the creation of the professional environment. The respondents were divided into two groups – those accepting AFE and those accepting traditional, long-term employment, in reference to the concept of transactional and relational psychological contract. The regression analysis shows that the first group had a high level of employability. However, they achieved low levels of well-being, and job insecurity was not significant. These are individuals in managerial positions in the private sector. On the other hand, the group that accepts the traditional form of relationships are public sector employees and have high job insecurity only. An important determinant of the acceptance of AFE is the so-called ‘Big Five trait’ openness. In addition, the level of acceptance decreases with age. Gender and education are not statistically significant.

The focus in this paper on full-time employees, and the benefits of AFE, fill the research gap in this area. It also delivers recommendations for

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labour market practices and policy on how to support employees on the modern labour market in EU countries.

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Introduction

The labour market in the EU is facing a number of challenges related to many changes, including technological, demographic and educational issues, as well as sustainable development and globalisation processes. The consequence is that of a problem for creating constructive and business-efficient relations between employees and employers. A manifestation of this is, for example, the indicated problem of low engagement and employees quiet quitting (Gallup, 2023). Establishing the principles of cooperation that satisfy both parties is, therefore, an important aspect that may be decisive for building the competitiveness of enterprises, especially from a global perspective. This necessity results, among other things, from a shortage of qualitative and quantitative competences of employees, which is not solved on an ongoing basis by the education system, nor does it keep up with labour market needs (PARP, 2020). The result of the activity of entrepreneurs looking for solutions is the development of atypical forms of employment, also known as alternative or flexible (OECD, 2019). Thus, we are dealing with a kind of bottom-up initiative, thanks to which entrepreneurs have generated special forms of relations with employees.

After their appearance, AFE-governing legal regulations were developed to take care of the interests of both parties (Walczak, 2023). This is important because, as practice shows, there have been many abuses of workers' rights, hence the need to protect the social rights of employees (Sluiter et al., 2022). The benefits of atypical forms of employment for employers seem to be obvious, as they include lower costs and access to competences, which increases the flexibility of responding either to customer needs (Randstad, 2021), or changes in the economic situation (Brzeziński, 2017). This is not the same case with employees. It is assumed that the degree of acceptance and application of these practices may vary depending on the economic sector, organisational culture, as well as the policies of the countries within the EU (e.g. Gialis et al., 2017).

Generally, previous studies on this subject are dominated by the assumption that AFE is disadvantageous for employees. The presented research focuses on risks to workers due to, among other things, lower

salaries and higher job insecurity (Ratti et al., 2022). This is associated with the disappearance of traditional relationships between employee and employer based on long-term employment. A transactional, psychological contract with more or less short-term employment is being formed, which requires adaptation of both sides of such relations (Pawłowska, 2022) to be satisfied and to see the benefits of the contract form, especially its rules.

In this article, the formulated general research question is whether employees who accept AFE (in the sense of being ready providing work) enjoy the benefits of high employability and well-being as well as low job insecurity which enables them to function effectively on the modern labour market. Full-time employees were selected for the study so that the measurement of AFE acceptance resulted from their declared voluntary choice, without external pressure to be employed in this form, which is very important (Bąk-Grabowska et al., 2022; Van Aerden et al., 2015).

The proposed approach is different from mainstream research and delivers a contribution to science in the context of transactional labour market rules.

So far, in publications, the perspective of economics and labour law have been presented (Walczak, 2023; Markefke et al., 2020; Valletta et al., 2020), along with the issue of social benefits, household income (Gouzoulis et al., 2023), the worse position of women (European Parliament, 2020; Menendez-Espinai et al., 2020), the relationship with age and education (Green et al., 2017; Sobocka-Szczapa, 2015), as well as the impact of the pandemic (Granger et al., 2022).

From the psychological or managerial perspective, individuals on atypical forms of employment are diagnosed in terms of commitment (Panaccio, Vandenberghe, 2009), and job insecurity (Morgan et al., 2000). The analysis on the well-being of European labour market employees was conducted by K. Van Aerden et al. (2015).

The dissimilarity of the studies presented in this article is due to the fact that they focus on full-time employees, measuring their acceptance of AFE in general, and not in relation to particular forms. The assumption that, thanks to this, they achieve benefits in the form of a higher level of employability, which in turn reduces job insecurity and increases their efficiency in the transactional labour market, is verified. At the same time, it affects their well-being, which has been operationalised as a sense of agency in shaping the individual's relationship with the environment, in this case, the professional environment (Ryff, 1989, after: Karaś et al., 2017) which is unusual in relation to previous studies.

The aim of the research is also to search for determinants of AFE acceptance. The Big Five personality traits were included, whose

importance for the professional functioning of individuals, including one's readiness to change or look for a job, is confirmed by numerous studies (Li, Guan et al., 2015; Villas et al., 2010).

At the same time, demographic variables such as age, gender and education were controlled. In addition, referring to previous studies, the public sector (administration) vs. private sector (Keller et al., 2015) and the managerial vs. non-managerial position (Kattenbach et al., 2023) were among the controlled variables. Highly-qualified specialists were excluded from the analyses, whose potentially special position on the labour market could distort the results of the research.

The hypotheses were verified based on regression analysis in two groups of respondents: those accepting AFE and those accepting traditional, long-term employment, referring to the concepts of transactional and relational psychological contracts, respectively.

The research perspective presented in this article is therefore a search for employee benefits, in contrast to the hitherto dominant trend of research pointing to AFE risks. It is a search for solutions for effective cooperation between the employee and the employer according to the transactional rules of the modern labour market.

AFE in Poland Compared to the EU

Alternative forms of employment were selected for the analysis in accordance with the existing classification, regardless of the possible doubts arising as to whether, for example, remote work should be included in them. This is because it is about taking into account the way work is performed and relations with the employer that are different from the traditional ones.

AFE is characterised by the flexibility of time and place of work, the form of employment relationship, the form of employee-employer relationship, remuneration, and the scope of work (Berezka, 2012). Compared to the EU, Poland ranks fourth lowest in terms of the share of people employed in the traditional form, i.e., for an indefinite period of time. According to the data included in the Labour Market Monitor report, 56% of respondents are employed on the basis of a full-time employment contract. In second place was a fixed-term employment contract (20%). 14% of the respondents indicated their employment as being under a contract of mandate or contract for specific work. By comparison, in 2016 in the EU-28, the proportion of 15–74 year employed olds on a fixed-term contract was 14.2% (Eurostat, 2018).

AFE includes remote work, which, according to the Central Statistical Office in Poland for 2023, is performed by 7.1% (GUS, 2023). In the EU,

13.5% worked remotely in 2021. A special variant of this form of work is so-called “cloud working”, which is associated with greater independence and work for many entities (wei.org.pl, 2022). In addition, platform work is also mentioned, allowing employees and employers to be matched, and tasks are often shared and then assigned to employees in a virtual cloud. According to EY data, 10.9% of employed people declared that they performed this type of work (wei.org.pl, 2022). At the same time, according to Eurofound (2016), platform work is the main source of income for only 1–2% of workers in the EU, and 10% do it occasionally.

Another atypical form is the work of freelancers, who, according to the Central Statistical Office, account for 19.4% of employed people in Poland (Piwowarska, 2023). Currently, it is a very fast-growing form of employment. According to a Brief report, there are already 1.1 billion freelancers working worldwide, 35.5% of whom are in Europe. Leasing employees and temporary employment is another form, with 242,000 temporary workers to be found in Poland (www.rp.pl, 2023). Employee sharing refers to a situation where employees are sharing resources between different employers or projects. Analogous job sharing is a situation in which two or more people share full-time work, and who share the duties and responsibilities associated with one position, e.g., working on different days or shifts. There is also collaborative employment, i.e., cooperation between freelancers and self-employed people in order to jointly implement projects that exceed the capabilities of each of them individually. Another term used to describe this phenomenon is crowd working, but in this case it primarily refers to online work through modern technologies (wei.org.pl, 2022). In addition to the above-mentioned, AFE also includes casual work, voucher-based work, or portfolio work.

AFE can generate a number of benefits for employees. For example, employee sharing, contrary to appearances, reduces precariousness because it creates full-time jobs for workers that could not be offered by a single employer (Eurofound, 2016). More arguments pointing to the benefits of this form for the employee can be found in the next chapter.

An Employee on the Modern Labour Market

The AFE described above fits in with the current rules of functioning on the modern labour market. This article assumes that alternative-forms-of-employment acceptance by employees will occur when they contribute to solving problems and improving adaptability, bringing about real benefits, and not just be seen as an unusual form of relationship with the employer. This requires, first of all, identifying employee needs resulting

from the realities of the labour market and the conditions that must be met in order to function efficiently (Eurofound, 2016). The picture of an employee's situation can be described from various perspectives. This article adopts an approach relating to changing the psychological contract between the employer and the employee from a traditional, relational one to a transactional one (Pawłowska, 2022).

As defined, “a psychological contract consists of employees' ideas about the employer's expectations of them and the employer's expected reactions to the employees' behaviour” (Rousseau, 2001, cited in: Wellin, 2010, p. 43). A relational contract involves a focus on long-term employment and meeting each other's needs. In a transactional contract between an employer and an employee, there is a para-economic exchange of benefits within a strictly defined scope of duties and tasks of both parties, which involves a more or less short-term contract.

The change in psychological contracts is a consequence of general processes, such as the shortening of the existence of economic entities and thus the inability to work in one place throughout one's life. For example, in 1960, the average lifespan of a Fortune 500 company was 33 years, and, by 1990, it had dropped to 20 years. It is currently around 15 years and it is estimated that half of the companies that make up this list will disappear within ten years. In addition, technological developments are accelerating the aging of professional competences, from thirty years in the 1980s to less than five years today (Lamri, 2021). Automation processes and the use of robots will accelerate these processes. All this adds up to a fundamental problem for employees, which is job insecurity and a constant need to look for another job. The way to deal with this situation is for the employee to build employability (Pawłowska, 2022). As a result of doing so, the employee obtains a guarantee of employment, having a portfolio of competences that they can offer to the next interested employer, instead of struggling to keep their current job (Frey, Grill, 2015). Therefore, the question arises whether employees, by accepting AFE, increase their employability and reduce job insecurity or not. If so, it would mean that they are able to adapt to the transactional rules of the modern labour market. This established research problem is a kind of contradiction to the view prevalent in the discourse that AFE is associated with job insecurity (Wood, Lehtonvirta, 2021).

The general belief that dominates in research is that an individual obtains job security when he or she can work for a given employer for as long as possible. Meanwhile, in this article, employability reduces job insecurity due to one's ability to get another job. Therefore, in order to grasp the essence of the adopted approach to job insecurity, it is worth

distinguishing between, in accordance with J. Lamri (2021), work and employment. Work is the totality of activities aimed at achieving a result, whereas employment is a contract regulating the relationship between an organisation and a person, and this is the subject of interest of legal regulations and refers to AFE. Employability thus ensures lower levels of job insecurity by guaranteeing a job, not employment, as is the case in traditional, full-time relationships. Therefore, in this article, external employability is diagnosed, referring to the external labour market. G. Standing (2014) points this out when he states that some prefer to be “traversers” and, therefore, not everyone should be seen as victims of the profit bias of companies.

Very often, AFE is associated with low levels of well-being (Mockańo et al., 2022). In the context of employees’ AFE-based well-being, R. Sluiter et al. (2022) examined their opportunities to participate in the problem-solving process. K. Van Aerden et al. (2015) identified a relationship between employment quality and work-related well-being in the European workforce, linking this to employment arrangements.

It should be clearly emphasised that in this article, however, the research does not focus on problems related to well-being on singular forms, such as freelancers (e.g., van der Zwan, et al., 2020). It investigates whether the full-time employed are willing to accept AFE (without external coercion) with specific well-being and whether this acceptance gives them benefits that respondents attached to the traditional form of relationship do not have. Therefore, the adopted research scheme requires a different approach to well-being. An answer is being sought to the question of whether full-time employees are able to accept a change in employment rules from traditional to transactional, i.e., AFE, without situational or economic coercion. That is why, in the research presented in this article, one of the most popular concepts of well-being by Ryff (1989, after: Karaś et al., 2017) was adopted. In the original, it contains six dimensions. For the purposes of this study, only the environmental mastery scale was used, understood as “a sense of agency, competence, as well as the ability to transform the environment, according to one’s needs and values, coping with complex environmental conditions. Taking up the opportunities that life brings and actively participating in the individual’s environment” (Karaś et al., 2017, p. 817).

Another variable taken into account in the presented research was diagnosed according to N. De Cuyper et al. (2008). In their view, employability refers to an individual’s ability to cope with changes and transitions in the labour market associated with job loss. It is an individual’s perception and assessment of their ability to gain

employment. N. De Cuyper et al. (2008) showed that people of high employability were less affected by job insecurity. This paper answers the question of whether people who accept AFE achieve higher employability and thus lower job insecurity. It is worth emphasising that this is posing the problem in a rather reversed way. Usually, analyses and studies indicate a high level of job insecurity of people employed in atypical forms.

Hypotheses and Research Scheme

In the adopted approach, acceptance of AFE is related to the assumption of the declarative full-time employees' readiness to providing their services in this way. The possibility of choosing forms of employment is particularly important for employees aged 18–24 (Bąk-Grabowska et al., 2022). This is also referred to in the research on the knowledge and recognition of AFE contained in the Report of the Labour Office in Łódź (2014).

So, the following research hypotheses have been formulated and presented below.

Hypothesis 1

A high acceptance of AFE (readiness to providing one's services) is associated with lower job insecurity and higher employability and well-being.

Hypothesis 2

A high acceptance of full-time work is associated with higher job insecurity and lower employability and lower well-being. In addition, the aim of the presented research, apart from the previously mentioned aims, is to search for determinants of the acceptance of atypical forms of employment. This is still quite a rare problem in published research results. Therefore, the importance of the Big Five traits in professional development was taken into account. Personality traits have been found to be a predictor of: employment instability (Wille et al., 2010); the intensity of job search activities (Pavani et al., 2021); and career change and employability decisions (de Vos et al., 2021). Moreover, career exploration correlates negatively with neuroticism, but positively with openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Li, Guan et al., 2015). The strongest relationship with job change, to which AFE may refer, was found in the case of agreeableness and openness (Wille et al., 2010).

For this purpose, the assumption about the importance of personality based on the Big Five concept was made.

Hypothesis 3

There is a relationship between the Big Five's personality traits and acceptance of AFE.

Also, the following controlled variables were taken into account: age; gender; education; job position – managerial vs. non-managerial; and job category – public (administration) vs. private sector. That is why hypothesis 4 and related specific hypotheses were formulated.

Hypothesis 4

There is a relationship between acceptance of AFE and age, gender, education, employment in the public (administration) vs. private sector, and employment in the managerial vs. non-managerial position. The presented research scheme also takes into account the importance of age. Research indicates that students are more likely to work in atypical forms, but this tendency decreases with age (Green et al., 2017).

Hypothesis 4a

The level of acceptance of AFE decreases with age. The next research problem is the importance of gender. Some studies point to flexible working, particularly valued by women, to accommodate the demands of family or mothers to maintain working hours after childbirth (Chung et al., 2018; Fuller et al., 2018).

Research on gender differences points to inequalities and directions of changes worsening the situation of women in the labour market in the context of AFE (European Parliament 2020; Menendez-Espinai et al., 2020). However, it should be clearly emphasised that the surveyed respondents are full-time employees who voluntarily accept AFE and who are not influenced by external factors such as family situation.

Hypothesis 4b

There is a relationship between gender and the acceptance of atypical forms of employment.

It has also been evidenced that the individuals with higher education are less likely to work in atypical forms (Sobocka-Szczapa, 2015).

Hypothesis 4c

There is a relationship between level of education and the acceptance of atypical forms of employment. R. Kattenbach et al. (2023) indicated

that people in managerial positions demonstrate specific patterns of professional change, which is related to forms of employment. Therefore, in the presented study, the authors controlled whether a given person is employed in a managerial position when leading a team of employees. Thus, the study did not include highly qualified specialists, which may be taken into account in future studies.

Hypothesis 4d

A higher level of acceptance of atypical jobs is associated with managerial job positions.

Research on AFE also takes into account the differences between the private and public sectors (Morgan et al., 2000). B. Keller et al. (2015) demonstrated the differences in terms of their development and scope. Therefore, in the present study, this variable was controlled.

Hypothesis 4e

A low level of atypical acceptance is associated with the public (administration) and private sector.

Verification of the above hypotheses was carried out according to the quantitative research scheme. The regression analyses were carried out in two contrasting groups, i.e., those accepting atypical forms, and those accepting full-time employment only. The division was made on the basis of the assumptions of the concept of a relational psychological contract (traditional, long-term employment) and a transactional contract (short-term employment, which is manifested in atypical forms of employment) (Pawłowska, 2022). On the basis of this, an original quantitative indicator has been constructed containing items classifying people into a given group. At the same time, the respondents' preferences were diagnosed collectively towards atypical employment and without their detailed specification.

Research Methodology and Diagnostic Tools

A quantitative CAWI study was conducted on a sample of Polish full-time employees and involved $N = 543$ respondents, of whom 277 (51%) were women, and 266 (49%) were men. Their age ranged from 18 to 58 years, with mean $M = 38.72$ and standard deviation $SD = 10.975$ [$M = 39.49$ ($SD = 11.29$) for women and $M = 37.92$ ($SD = 10.59$) for men]. Table 1 below shows the characteristics of the sample.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics (N = 543)

Variable	Categories	All		Women		Men	
		(N = 543)		(n = 277)		(n = 266)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Age	18–24	68	12.5	34	12.3	34	12.8
	25–34	151	27.8	72	26.0	79	29.7
	35–44	131	24.1	61	22.0	70	26.3
	45–54	147	27.1	77	27.8	70	26.3
	55 or more	46	8.5	33	11.9	13.0	4.9
Place of residence	Village	225	41.4	103	37.2	122	45.9
	City up to 20,000 residents	64	11.8	32	11.6	32	12.0
	City of 20,000 to 100,000 residents	95	17.5	51	18.4	44	16.5
	City of 100,000 to 500,000 residents	99	18.2	56	20.2	43	16.2
	City of 500,000 or more residents	60	11.0	35	12.6	25	9.4
Education	Primary or basic educational	47	8.7	17	6.1	30	11.3
	Secondary	215	39.6	108	39.0	107	40.2
	Tertiary or higher	279	51.4	152	54.9	127	47.7
	Other	2	0.4			2	0.8
Job position	Managerial	113	0.2	57	20.6	56	21.1
	Non-managerial	430	0.8	220	79.4	210	78.9
Job category	Administration	161	0.3	98	35.4	63	23.7
	Outside administration	382	0.7	179	64.6	203	76.3
Company size (max number of employees)	Micro (up to 10)	86	0.2	58	20.9	28	10.5
	Small (up to 50)	133	0.2	63	22.7	70	26.3
	Medium (up to 250)	138	0.3	71	25.6	67	25.2
	Large (over 250)	186	34.3	85	30.7	101	38.0

Source: the author’s own studies.

In the questionnaire, the respondents evaluated their agreement with the statements on a five-point Likert scale (for the Big Five, it was on a seven-point Likert scale).

The acceptance of AFE was measured using a proprietary questionnaire referring to the following AFE: freelancer (five items); job sharing (one item); employee sharing (one item); remote (one item); and platform (two items) – Cronbach’s α 0.78. The different number of items is due to the fact that the diagnostic items included in the acceptance rate referred to the formal

definitions and complexity of individual atypical forms in accordance with the guidelines contained in their classification as described in the initial part of this article (Berezka, 2012; Eurofound Report after: Mockało et al., 2022). Thus, the time and place of work, the forms of an employee's relationship with the employer(s) (e.g., B2B), the scope of work, unconventional working hours, use of ICT, etc., were taken into account. Reference was also made to the assumptions of the concept of the psychological contract (Pawłowska, 2022), as in the case of the next variable.

The preference for full-time work (the traditional form of employment relations) was diagnosed using the author's scale including three items from Cronbach's Alpha 0.6. It involves the preference to have only one employer and being bound by a permanent employment contract with them for life. In accordance with the explanatory justification set out in the previous chapter, the well-being variable was diagnosed with a single Environmental Mastery Scale (five items, Cronbach's Alf 0.72) of the Ryff questionnaire (1989, after: Karaś, Ciecuch, 2017).

The level of external employability was determined on the basis of three items of the author's scale (Cronbach's Alpha 0.66) (Pawłowska, 2022).

The feeling of job insecurity was measured by one item. The respondents assessed the level of job insecurity on a five-point Likert scale to what extent they agreed with the statement: "I'm afraid of losing my job".

To diagnose the Big Five personality, the reduced TIPI (Sorokowska et al., 2014) questionnaire was used, diagnosing the following scales: openness; agreeableness; conscientiousness; emotional stability; and extraversion. The last two scales have Cronbach's Alf above 0.6. The reliability of the remaining scales is so low that it suggests the use of another diagnostic tool in the future.

The following variables were controlled: age; gender; job position (managerial vs. non-managerial); and job category (public/administration vs. private sector – respondents had only these two options from which to choose).

Analytical Approach

First, the means, standard deviations, skewness, kurtosis, and correlations among the variables of interest were computed (Table 2). Subsequently, multiple hierarchical regression models were used to evaluate the degree to which independent variables (selected through a stepwise method) justify the variability in the outcomes of two dependent variables separately: a) the acceptance of AFE; and b) preferences for full-time work. The models include control variables, namely, gender, age

(in years), education, position, and job category (selected via the entry method). The obtained final solutions are presented in the article.

The analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS 29.0 software.

Research Results

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and correlations of all measures included in the analysis. The skewness of the variables varied between -0.53 and 0.26, and the kurtosis for the majority of them ranged from -0.73 to 0.89. These findings indicate a normal distribution for these variables. However, openness to experience and external employability attained a kurtosis value exceeding 1. It suggests a notable concentration of results around the mean and the presence of outliers for these specific variables.

Pearson's *r* correlation analysis revealed that, on the one hand, one's acceptance of AFE exhibited significant and positive correlations with external employability, openness to experience, and fear of losing a job. On the other hand, it demonstrated a significant and negative correlation with well-being and conscientiousness.

The preference for full-time work significantly and positively correlates with extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and agreeableness.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Pearson's R Correlation Analysis of the Variables of Interest (N = 543)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>K</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 AFE	39.33	7.19	-0.23	0.89									
2 Job insecurity	2.81	1.05	-0.02	-0.73	.11*								
3 Ex. Emp.	9.69	2.03	-0.11	1.04	.30***	-.04							
4 Well-being	17.19	3.32	0.20	0.28	-.12**	-.32***	.11**						
5 Extraversion	9.36	2.78	-0.24	-0.30	-.03	-.15***	.16***	.47***					
6 Agreeableness	10.15	2.21	-0.13	-0.48	-.06	-.12**	.04	.40***	.44***				
7 Conscientiousness	10.76	2.48	-0.53	-0.23	-.09*	-.18***	.15***	.51***	.43***	.49***			
8 Em. Stab.	8.71	2.72	0.01	-0.26	-.05	-.19***	.18***	.48***	.55***	.30***	.30***		
9 Openness	8.73	1.84	0.26	1.34	.22***	-.07	.20***	.27***	.36***	.25***	.20***	.28***	
10 Full-time work	9.85	2.27	-0.17	0.57	-.46***	.08	-.02	.08	.15***	.09*	.14***	.11*	-.08

Note: AFE – Acceptance of atypical forms of employment, Ex. Emp. – External employability, Em. Stab. – Emotional Stability. *** $p < 0,001$; ** $p < 0,01$; * $p < 0,05$.

Source: the author's own studies.

In the second step, regression hierarchical models were conducted separately for both a) acceptance of AFE, and b) preferences for full-time work. The results are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Results of Regression Analysis Predicting Acceptance of Atypical Forms of Employment

Predictor	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Step 1			
<i>Constant</i>		24.01	< .001
Gender (ref. Woman)	0.12	2.94	.003
Age	-0.22	-5.31	< .001
Education (ref. Primary or basic education)	0.01	0.14	.890
Job position (ref. Managerial)	-0.10	-2.31	.021
Job category (ref. Administration)	-0.04	-0.99	.323
R^2_{adj}	.068		
<i>F</i>	8.88***		
Final step			
<i>Constant</i>		13.18	< .001
Gender (ref. Woman)	0.11	2.93	.004
Age	-0.19	-4.68	< .001
Education (ref. Primary or basic education)	0.00	-0.12	.906
Job position (ref. Managerial)	-0.05	-1.23	.218
Job category (ref. Administration)	-0.05	-1.16	.248
External employability	0.25	6.12	< .001
Openness	0.23	5.66	< .001
Well-being	-0.18	-4.30	< .001
R^2_{adj}	.196		
<i>F</i>	17.50***		

Note: Significant predictors are in bold font. *** $p < 0,001$.

Source: the author's own studies.

In the first step of Model 1, the overall regression was significant, $F(5; 537) = 8.88; p < .001$, and the predictors explained 6,8% of the variance in acceptance of atypical forms of employment. The significant control variables were: gender ($\beta = .12; p < .01$); age ($\beta = -.22; p < .001$); and job position ($\beta = -.10; p < .05$). It means that men achieve higher results in their acceptance of AFE than women. In turn, with age, acceptance decreases. Moreover, people in non-managerial positions exhibit a lower acceptance of AFE than those working in managerial positions.

In the final model [$F(5; 547) = 17.50; p < .001$], among all the predictors included in the analysis, the following were found to be significant: external employability ($\beta = .25, p < .001$); openness to experience ($\beta = .23, p < .001$); and well-being ($\beta = -.18, p < 0.001$). It implies that higher levels of readiness for external employability and greater openness to experience are associated with increased acceptance of atypical forms of employment. Conversely, lower levels of well-being are associated

with higher acceptance. The model explained 19.6% of the variance in acceptance of atypical forms of employment.

Table 4. Results of Regression Analysis Predicting Preferences for Full-Time Work

Predictor	β	t	p
Step 1			
<i>Constant</i>		13.98	< .001
Gender (ref. Woman)	0.03	0.66	0.513
Age	0.19	4.46	< .001
Education (ref. Primary or basic education)	0.01	0.20	0.844
Job position (ref. Managerial)	0.00	-0.08	0.937
Job category (ref. Administration)	-0.09	-2.13	0.034
Final step			
<i>Constant</i>		9.24	< .001
Gender (ref. Woman)	0.04	0.93	0.355
Age	0.16	3.69	< .001
Education (ref. Primary or basic education)	0.00	0.11	0.911
Job position (ref. Managerial)	-0.01	-0.12	0.904
Job category (ref. Administration)	-0.09	-2.20	0.028
conscientiousness	0.11	2.32	0.021
Openness	-0.17	-3.84	< .001
Extraversion	0.15	2.98	0.003
Job insecurity	0.10	2.39	0.017

Note: Significant predictors are in bold font. *** $p < 0,001$

Source: the author's own studies.

The first step in the analysis of model 2 also was statistically significant, $F(5; 537) = 5.10; p < .001$, explaining 3.6% of the variability in preferences for full-time work. Statistically significant control variables were age ($\beta = .19, p < .001$), and place of employment ($\beta = -.09, p < .05$). It turns out that the preference for full-time work increases with age. Additionally, people employed in administration have stronger preferences for full-time work than those working in the private sector.

The final model included four predictors: the fear of losing a job ($\beta = .10, p < .05$); extraversion ($\beta = .15, p < .01$); conscientiousness ($\beta = .11, p < .05$); and openness to experience ($\beta = -.17, p < .001$), explaining 8.3% of the variance in preferences for full-time work [$F(95; 533) = 6.48; p < .001$]. It means that a greater fear of losing a job is associated with a heightened preference for full-time work. Additionally, that preference increases with higher levels of extraversion and conscientiousness.

Conversely, in the case of openness to experience, the pattern is reversed; the higher the level, the lower the preference for full-time work.

In conclusion, hypothesis 1 was partially confirmed. A high acceptance of AFE is associated with higher employability, but lower well-being. No significant association with lower job insecurity has been established. Hypothesis 2 was also partially confirmed. A high acceptance of full-time work is associated with higher job insecurity, and the relationship with external employability and well-being in the regression model turned out to be insignificant. In the case of hypothesis 3, a high acceptance of AFE is associated with high openness, and high acceptance of full-time work with low openness, and higher extraversion and conscientiousness. As part of the verification of hypothesis 4, it was determined that people with a high acceptance of AFE are younger men in managerial job positions working in the private sector. A high acceptance of full-time employment increases with the age of employees in administration. The relationship with education is statistically insignificant.

Research Result Discussion, Limitations, and Directions for Further Research

Answering the research questions formulated in this article, it should be stated that, as expected, the main benefit obtained by people accepting AFE is higher employability, which, according to many other studies (e.g., Pawłowska, 2022) allows us to predict that those people will function better in the new transactional rules of the labour market. On the other hand, the low level of well-being is interesting, which, according to the operationalisation, refers to a sense of agency. Therefore, it can be assumed that this is an attitude of reactive reaction to such job offers and results from the feeling that they cannot intentionally create their professional careers. This should be verified in the future, taking into account, *inter alia*, the link identified by S.P. da Motta Veig et al., (2018), that as employment self-efficacy increased, the intensity of job searches subsequently decreased. It is also worth noting that job insecurity turned out to be statistically insignificant, which is surprising since it is often associated with AFE in research. Perhaps this study group is internally diverse and requires in-depth analysis.

The above remark is particularly relevant to the next study result. Namely, the respondents from the second group recorded a high level of job insecurity, which may indicate their lower level of adaptation to the rules of the modern labour market, and yet they accept traditional employment. The question arises to the reason why they do not accept

AFE despite this. It is probably also worth looking for other causes in in-depth qualitative research. Perhaps this is explained by the fact that the high openness of the Big Five turned out to be an important determinant of the acceptance of AFE. Such people show cognitive curiosity and a tolerance for novelty. This is confirmed by the fact that people who prefer full-time employment are characterised by a low level of openness, which means conservatism, attachment to known and accepted solutions, and conventionality (Zawadzki et al., 2007). This is consistent with previous studies of Wille et al. (2010), who showed that changes in work are related to the Big Five's dimension of openness.

The presented results of the study also found that people in managerial positions in the private sector have a high level of AFE. Therefore, it can be assumed that private sector rules presumably provide patterns of behaviour that support transactional employment rules. Perhaps this is the result of some kind of professional socialisation. It is worth subjecting it to further research in order to use AFE in AFE's popularisation, especially taking into account the different formal and legal solutions in individual EU countries.

It also turned out that the acceptance of AFE decreases with age, which is consistent with the research of D. Bąk-Grabowska et al. (2022), but education and gender are not statistically significant. Although women, due to their social role, and according to research (Fuller et al., 2018), should be more interested in AFE. In light of the presented research, it is most likely different when they have the opportunity to choose and are not forced by external circumstances. This problem requires a deeper analysis in the future, and should probably be qualitative in nature.

The lack of importance of education is a different result from previously published studies (Green et al., 2017; Grabowska et al., 2022; Sobocka-Szczapa, 2015). It cannot be ruled out that this is a signal of new trends in the labour market, where the role of education level is changing. Of course, this thesis should be verified in the future, preferably in longitudinal studies.

It should be noted that the main limitation of drawing conclusions based on the above results obtained is the fact that they concern respondents functioning in the realities of the Polish labour market and legal regulations. It would be worthwhile to compare these results with other European Union countries, as social and legal arrangements may differ (Aloisi, 2022; S. Gialis et al., 2017). However, the relationship between acceptance of AFE and personality to a high degree may be universal, as confirmed by other studies on the professional development of the individual (Wille et al., 2010). Other limitations of the survey results relate to the quantitative nature of the survey and the possible

subjectivity of respondents' responses, the need for social approval, and their potentially low level of self-reflection. It would also be advisable to use more advanced statistical analyses, e.g., structural models.

An important direction of research for the future is to check whether there are differences in the acceptance of particular atypical forms, or whether it is a general attitude of openness. Other groups could be included in research, such as highly-qualified IT professionals with a special position on the labour market.

In addition, it is worth checking how to promote AFE among employees and match it to their personality predispositions. The legal risks that may arise from this should be addressed, but more emphasis could be placed on the measurable benefits that these forms provide to employees (Berezka, 2012).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The situation on the labour market and the ongoing economic and technological changes, not only at the EU level, but also at the global level, require the development of new solutions that support pro-efficiency relations between employees and employers, bringing forth benefits to both parties.

The presented study shows that, among the respondent employees, there are individuals, especially at a younger age, potentially voluntarily accepting AFE, despite full-time employment, which gives them higher employability. However, there are indications that their well-being, as a sense of agency in creating this professional situation, is the result of a passive attitude.

There is also a second group of employees who, despite high job insecurity, are still attached to traditional, permanent employment and long-term relationships with their employers. This does not result in employability, which makes it difficult to function efficiently in the transactional rules of the modern labour market. It has been confirmed that this is due to their personality limitations, which poses a challenge for the development of employment policy in individual EU countries, where, in addition to the above-mentioned psychological barriers, there are also formal and legal restrictions to varying degrees. However, it is important to establish in the presented research that it is not only employers benefit from AFE, but employees also. Despite the many drawbacks of these solutions, they allow for a more efficient shaping of their mutual cooperation. The problem as regards people's acceptance of AFE is very important because the number of people working in

this form is increasing. In Poland, by 2025, about one million people will be employed in so-called “giggers”, or, the gig economy (wei.org.pl, 2022). This group should be supported in and guided towards being open to AFE, as flexibility is an irreversible process that prevents unemployment and maladjustment to the labour market (Dubel, 2020). Thanks to this, the effect formulated at the beginning of the article will be achieved in the form of effective cooperation between the employee and the employer.

Finally, the importance of geopolitical processes cannot be overlooked. Gomółka et al. (2023) draw attention to the importance of workers from Ukraine and the phenomenon of emigration in general, which will affect the formation of employment forms. Therefore, the article refers to other interesting threads that cannot be included due to its volume limitations.

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