

## STUDENTS ON THE TEMPORARY LABOUR MARKET – PILOT STUDY

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**Abstract:** The aim of the article is to present and discuss the results of pilot studies conducted among students of three faculties of Silesian University of Technology: Faculty of Organization and Management; Faculty of Automatic Control, Electronics and Computer Science; Faculty of Mechanical Engineering. The paper presents a thesis assuming that temporary work is a frequently chosen form of employment among students. The aim of the pilot studies was to analyse the preferred employment types among students and to indicate the factors and conditions that influence the choice of temporary work.

**Keywords:** labour market, temporary work, employment types, students.

### 1. Introduction

In the literature on management and quality sciences, labour market is presented as a set of purchase and sale transactions and the circumstances, i.e. the conditions in which they are concluded and in which they take place (Pujer, 2016). A different approach implies that labour market is one of the many markets in the economy and each of them functions according to its own rules. In the economy, labour market operates together with the product market, land market, capital market and money market (Kryńska, and Kwiatkowski, 2013). On the labour market there are sellers and buyers, acts of exchange take place, prices are set and the size of the transactions carried out is determined. In simple words, labour market can therefore be described as the place where agreements concerning the exchange of employment services between employers and employees are made, as well as the value of those services and their dimensions and conditions of exchange are determined (Pujer, 2016). Research based on qualitative techniques has identified the labour market segmentation theory, which is

contradictory to classical theory of the labour market, although it also takes into account the specific occurrence of different groups on the labour market (Huńka, Lis, and Maciaszczyk, 2015). According to this concept, labour market consists of many elements, otherwise known as segments or, in other words, it comprises many sub-markets. The segments in question are determined by various indicators, including gender, age, experience, education, skills, occupation, region, town and city and economic sector (Kozek, 2015).

All occupations have their own individual labour market with its own rules and customs. Such market is best known to the employees of a certain profession and is most often described in cases where a given occupation has a well-established professional status. Professionals often care about maintaining occupational secrecy and confidentiality, feel responsible for a specific segment of social life and prevent outsiders from entering their profession. When analysing the labour market for a given profession, it is worth noting to what extent this market falls within one of the presented models, and to what extent it concerns the occurrence of only some elements from the area of other occupational models of labour markets (Kozek, 2015). The table below helps to understand the classification of a specific occupation, which can vary according to the market situation, in terms of supply and demand. Legislative and technical changes in the field of working tools are also relevant.

**Table 1.**

*Types of professional labour markets on the example of occupations in Poland*

Vocational labour market model – main dimension	Secondary labour market				
	Market under professional supervision	Traditional market	Administered market	Contesting market	Free market
Market under professional supervision – main dimension	Parliamentarians - ideal model	Notaries - mixed model	Managers (public sector) – mixed model	----	Managers (private sector) – mixed model
Traditional market – main dimension	Lawyers – mixed model	Veterinarian – ideal model	Gravediggers – mixed model	Lawyers - mixed model	Jewellers
Administered market – main dimension	Judges – mixed model	Midwives – mixed model	Officials (civil service) – ideal model	Police officers (2003)	Mixed model
Contesting market – main dimension	Customs officers(2003) – mixed model	Taxi drivers (2003) – mixed model	Nurses (2000/2001) – mixed model	Miners – ideal model	Mixed model
Free market – main dimension	Mixed model	Hairdressers – mixed model	Cleaners (private sector) – mixed model	People collecting raw materials from landfills	Market porters – ideal model

Adapted from: "Rynek pracy" by W. Kozek. Copyright 2015 by Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warsaw, pp. 108-110.

Atypical forms of employment on the labour market constitute a very broad concept, which refers to different ways of performing work under conditions different from those considered traditional. It is worth noting that according to the literature on the subject, tasks that are characterized by variety and diversity are a challenge for employees, constitute intrinsic

motivation for their efficient performance (Kochmańska, 2015) and allow them to acquire new professional competences (Kochmańska, 2016). Traditional employment model, on the other hand, recognises work performed within the framework of an employment relationship between an employee and an employer. This model is usually governed by an indefinite term contract. Work is performed on a full-time basis and involves generally accepted daily and weekly working time standards, while working hours are regular and work is provided in a place specified by the employer.

The following should be considered as important prerequisites for the introduction of atypical forms of employment: economic transformation, competition, development of the service segment and adaptation of work to the employee's needs (Frieske, 2003). There are also forms of atypical work performance which include: casual work, job-sharing, self-employment, contracting, labour market programmes, fixed-term employment contracts, hiring of employees, part-time work, on-demand contracts, home work, work where time is variable even though the employee is employed on a permanent basis, teleworking and on-call working (Kryńska, 2001).

Temporary work is defined in the Act of 9 July 2003 on the employment of temporary workers (Dz.U. /Journal of Laws/, No.166, item 1608, as amended). According to the aforementioned Act, temporary work is performed for an employer and the tasks performed under temporary work are of seasonal, casual or periodic character. Temporary work also concerns the tasks of which timely execution by employees would not be possible, or the performance of which is the responsibility of an absent employee. Thus, temporary work refers to the situation where there is a need to replace a permanent employee in the event of their inability to work resulting, for example, from illness, maternity leave and annual leave (Wiśniewski, 2007). Temporary work also refers to situations where there is a temporary need to employ more employees as a result of a seasonal increase in production, for example: Christmas, Easter or holidays (tourist resorts, hotels) (Wiśniewski, 2007).

The reasons for the formation and development of the analysed forms of employment are characterised by a large diversity. People present on the temporary labour market differ not only in terms of age, but also, more importantly, they represent different competences, expectations and attitudes towards work (Bieniek, and Pliszka, 2014). The common feature of the formation of atypical forms of employment is the intrinsic link with the occurring transformations, which are economic in nature and often express the interest of the employer (Makowski, 2006). The problem of diversity and change is one of the most important and at the same time the most difficult theoretical problems in the description of any processes (Orbik, 2017). A separate group comprises the reasons related to the needs of employees as well as those whose source is considered to be a specific state policy concerning employment and tackling unemployment (Bąk, 2009).

The temporary nature of work has been accepted in the practice of social life. The Act of 9 July 2003 on the employment of temporary workers (Dz.U. /Journal of Laws/ No.166, item 1608, as amended) points to the positive indications concerning the admissibility of employing temporary workers. The established time-limits indicate the following:

- an employee may perform work for one employer,
- an employer may employ a temporary employee for a total period of no more than 12 months in the period of subsequent 3 years,
- an employer may exceptionally employ a temporary worker for a maximum period of 36 months only if the temporary employee continues to perform the duties and tasks of a permanent employee who is absent. An example of such a situation is when an employee is on parental leave (Wiśniewski, 2007).

On the one hand, the existing limits are not very reasonable because, according to the provision formulated by the project originators (Dz.U. /Journal of Laws/ No.166, item 1608, as amended), temporary work is considered to be an additional pathway into the labour market, especially for young people. This approach is supported by the limitation of gaining professional experience in one employer through the performance of temporary work by learners, especially students (Bąk, 2009). On the other hand, the existing limits are set so that the temporary work did not constitute a full replacement of permanent work. The provisions included in the Polish Act are much more restrictive in comparison with the regulations in other EU Member States. It is therefore clear that the legislator did not pay due attention to the essence of the form of work described, the purpose of which is not to replace permanent work but to complement it.

In addition to the aforementioned restrictions on working time limits for temporary workers, there are also restrictions on the protection of health, life and interests of employees. These restrictions relate to the ban on entrusting a temporary employee with the work that is particularly hazardous, as set out in Art. 8 of the Act (Dz.U. /Journal of Laws/ No.166, item 1608, as amended), the provisions of the Act of 26 June 1974 so stipulate. Labour Code (Dz.U. 1974 No. 24, item 141). The established restrictions are justified by the responsibility of protecting temporary employees against the risk of loss of health or life during the performance of temporary work. Undesirable situations can be caused by the lack of experience of temporary employees. Permanent employees are less exposed to undesirable events because they stay in a specific working environment for a longer period of time and become familiar with the risks that may occur during the performance of the work entrusted to them. Work generally considered hazardous is defined in chapter six of the Regulation of the Minister of Labour And Social Policy of 26 September 1997 on General Provisions of Occupational Safety And Health (Dz.U. /Journal of Laws/, 2003, No.169, item 1650).

Another restriction concerns the ban on entrusting a temporary employee with work in a position in which, in the previous three months before the date of commencement of temporary work by a temporary employee, an employee of the employer user was employed,

and the employment was terminated for reasons not attributable to employees. The purpose of this ban is to prevent abuse of the temporary work scheme. This abuse concerns the replacement by temporary workers of the permanent employees who had previously been made redundant. This ban applies to the employer for a period of three months from the date of dismissal of the employee. This restriction is applicable in accordance with the Act of 13 March 2003 on special rules on termination of employment for reasons not attributable to employees, only in a situation when the employer user has dismissed or made redundant an employee on the basis of the Act on special rules of termination of employment with employees for reasons not attributable to them (Dz.U. /Journal of Laws/ of 2003, No.90, item 844).

Another restriction concerns the ban on entrusting a temporary employee with work in a position where an employee of the employer user is employed, while that employee is on strike. This restriction has a protective function. It involves the protection of the employer user's own employees during their participation in a strike. This ban in a temporary employment environment is a necessary and justified reinforcement of guarantees in the area of the exercise of their right to strike by permanent workers. This restriction is justified in the situation when employees go on strike in accordance with the applicable law, as referred to in the Act of 23 May 1991 on solving collective labour disputes. (Dz.U. /Journal of Laws/, 1991, No. 55, item 236). In case of illegal strikes this restriction is not binding for the employer. During such actions it is possible to use temporary employees to replace employees who do not perform work as a result of participation in illegal protest campaigns (Paluszkiewicz, 2011).

The next restriction applies to the provision that employers are not allowed to use temporary employment agencies for the purpose of employing those who were previously employed by them. This restriction is absolute. The ban in question binds an employer irrespective of whether the own employed worker in such situation would be additionally assigned to perform the tasks which they normally perform when employed by that employer, or various other tasks, and irrespective of whether those tasks would be performed during the employee's regular working hours or in their spare time (Wiśniewski, 2007).

Another important aspect of temporary work is the possibility of entering into any number of fixed-term employment contracts with a temporary employee. This is justified by the fact that the fixed-term contract is recognised as the basis for temporary employment. In this respect, it should also be noted that temporary employment may involve very short periods of employment as well. This means that the introduction of a limit on the number of fixed-term contracts could shorten the labour market participation of workers taking up employment in temporary work agencies and would force temporary employees to lose stability within this form of employment (Wiśniewski, 2007). In line with the newest changes in legal provisions, since November 2018 the 18-month limit on temporary employee's referral to one employer expires, due to the clarification of the provisions of the Act on the Employment of Temporary Employees in June 2017. (Infor.pl, 2018).

When analysing the subject of temporary work, it is worth to mention the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2008 on temporary agency work (OJL 327 of 5 December 2008). The Directive addresses issues related to ensuring that a temporary worker can continue to work for the employer user after the expiry of a fixed period of agreement with the temporary employment agency. For an employee to benefit from the continued employment, the employer user would have to be obliged to inform the temporary employees employed by them about the vacancies. Temporary employees could enter into such employment agreement after the expiry of the temporary employment agreement. The above Directive also provides for the possibility of introducing nullity penalty in respect of any contractual clauses hindering or prohibiting the establishment of an employment relationship between an entrepreneur user and an employee who previously worked for that employer as a temporary employee (Wiśniewski, 2007).

## 2. Materials and methods

The main aim of the pilot studies was to analyse the preferred employment types among students and to indicate the factors and conditions that influence the choice of temporary work. A clearly defined objective contributes to improving the knowledge of the persons and of the phenomena that are the subject of this study. The article presents a thesis that assumes that temporary work is a frequently chosen form of employment among students. Five hypotheses were formulated in the paper, which in connection with the research problem and the purpose of the article served as the basis for the creation of a questionnaire. The following hypotheses were adopted into the study:

- students are more likely to take up temporary employment than permanent one,
- temporary work is the main source of income for students,
- remuneration for the performance of temporary work impacts the choice of this form of employment,
- students are more likely to take up temporary employment in their place of residence,
- students perceive temporary work as a flexible form of employment.

A survey was the research tool used in this study. A survey is a technique which uses a questionnaire, applied in social sciences. This technique is considered to be a specific written form of research. It belongs to the categorised studies, where the rules and principles for a given study are strictly defined. The survey can be used to collect a large amount of information on the phenomena occurring in society (Sztumski, 1995).

The pilot study was anonymous in nature, so the questionnaires did not require signing. According to the literature on research methodologies in management sciences and quality, such surveys are more popular, as the respondents are more likely to answer questions more frequently and willingly. Contrary to them there are non-anonymous surveys, otherwise known

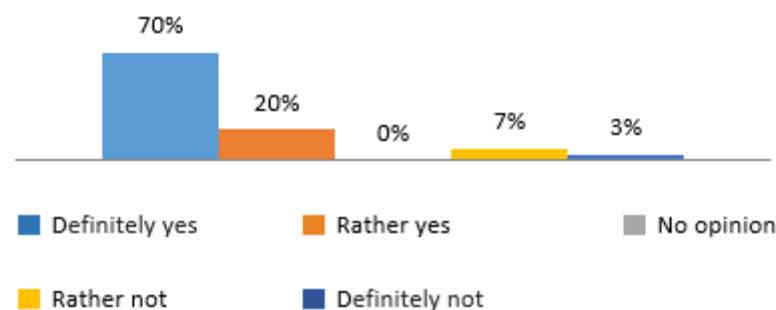
as identified, which may indicate to the respondent through the questions they contain (Kaczmarczyk, 2003). The research was conducted once, the survey was aimed at recognizing the problem only once at a given point in time. The survey included only closed-ended questions, i.e. those with previously prepared possible answers to choose from, which makes them much easier to analyse and shortens the time of research (Dutkiewicz, 2001).

The research was conducted in the form of a paper and electronic survey from March to June 2019 among students of three faculties of Silesian University of Technology: Faculty of Organization and Management; Faculty of Automatic Control, Electronics and Computer Science; Faculty of Mechanical Engineering. The link to the online survey sent via [www.interankiety.pl](http://www.interankiety.pl) was e-mailed to 150 students from each of the three selected faculties. In addition, paper questionnaires were distributed to the same number of students studying at these faculties. In total, 210 respondents filled in online questionnaires and 90 respondents filled in the paper ones. The total number of students of all faculties of the Silesian University of Technology (as of November 30, 2017) was 20 238, including: 19 895 students (Polish citizens) in first and second cycle studies and 343 foreign students in first and second cycle studies (Rector's report on the activities of the Silesian University of Technology in 2017).

### 3. Results and discussion

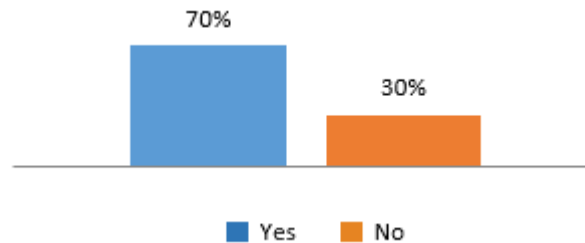
The first question that was included in the survey concerned taking up any form of employment during studies. The vast majority of students, 85%, declared being employed during their studies.

The next question concerned the influence of being a student on the choice of the form of employment. A great majority of the respondents, 90%, stated that the student status has an impact on the choice of the form of employment. Only 10% of students believed that studying had no influence on the choice of the form of employment. Distribution of the answers is presented in Figure 1.



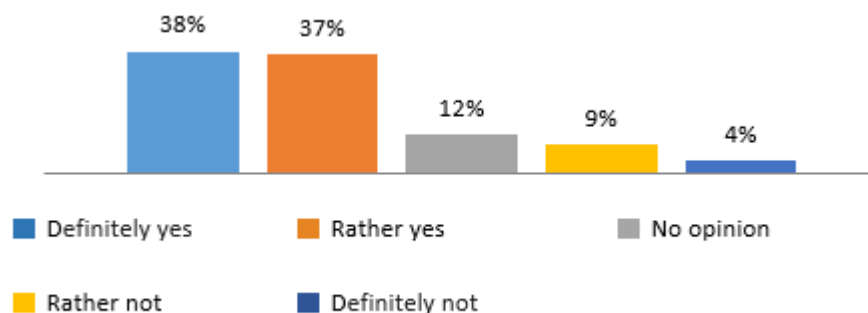
**Figure 1.** Influence of studying on the choice of the form of employment. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

In the next question, the respondents were asked whether they had taken up temporary employment at least once during their studies. Figure 2 shows that students were willing to take up temporary employment during their studies, 70% of the respondents gave such an answer. Persons participating in the survey who did not take up temporary employment even once during their studies account for only 30% of respondents.



**Figure 2.** Taking up temporary work during studies. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

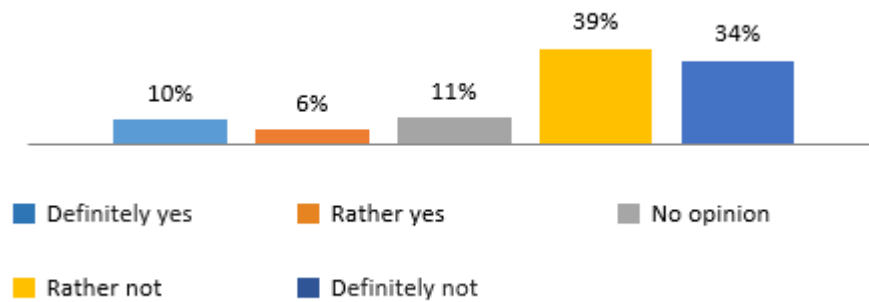
In the next question the respondents were to indicate whether, according to them, temporary work was the best form of employment during studies. The figure below shows that students perceived temporary employment as the best form of work during studies; as many as 75% respondents gave such answer, and most people who gave the 'definitely yes' or 'rather yes' answers were the respondents who studied full-time. Only 13% of the respondents stated that temporary work was not a suitable form of employment during studies.



**Figure 3.** Temporary employment as the best form of employment during studies. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

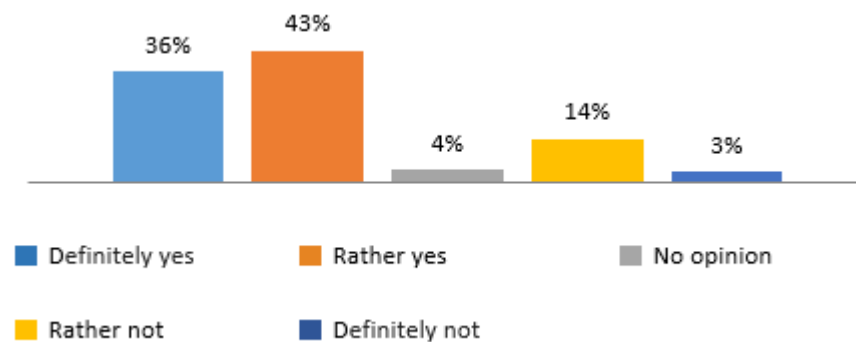
The respondents were then asked whether they thought that permanent employment was the best form of work during studies. The distribution of answers in Figure 4 shows that the respondents did not think that permanent employment was the best form of employment during studies, which confirms rationality of the answers given to the previous question. Vast majority of the 'definitely yes' and 'rather yes' answers were given by part-time students.





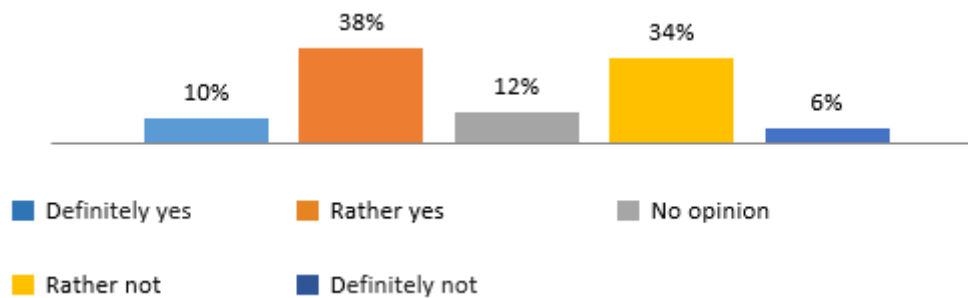
**Figure 4.** Permanent employment as the best form of employment during studies. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

The next question the respondents were asked was: do your colleagues from the university environment take up temporary work? Vast majority of the respondents – as many as 79% - stated that their colleagues and friends who are students take up temporary employment. 14% of the respondents gave the 'rather not' answer, and the 'definitely not' answer was given by only 3% of the students. Figure 5 shows the percentage distribution of the answers.



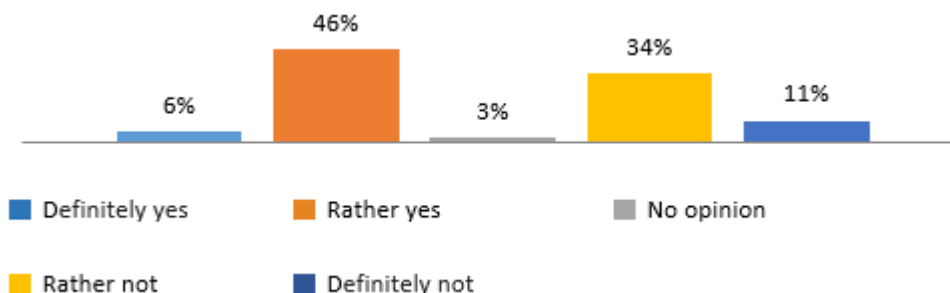
**Figure 5.** Popularity of temporary work among students. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

The aim of the next question was to find out about the opinions regarding temporary employment as a main source of income during studies. The answers of the respondents indicate that temporary employment is considered to be a rather possible source of main income during studies, and the 'definitely yes' answer was given by 10% of the respondents, whereas 38% of them answered 'definitely yes'. In total, 48% of the respondents gave positive answers. 40% of the students had a different opinion. The correlations of the answers are presented in Figure 6.



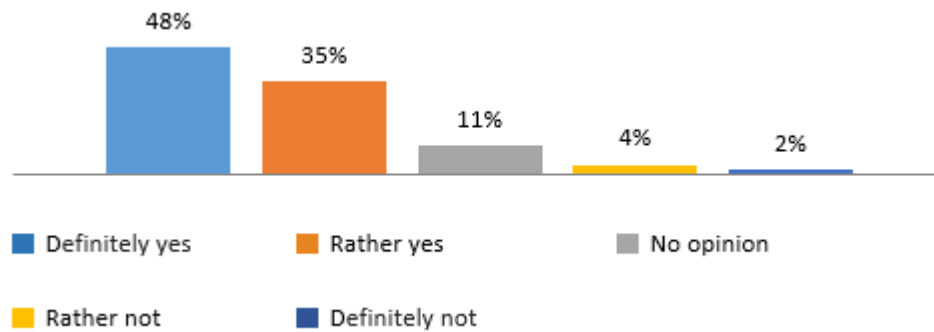
**Figure 6.** Temporary employment as the main source of income during studies. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

The eighth question concerned choosing between temporary employment and permanent employment. While analysing the distribution of answers it can be concluded that students take up temporary work more eagerly than permanent work. Almost a half of the respondents answered that, if given the possibility of permanent employment, they would rather choose temporary employment; most respondents who gave such answer were part-time students. On the other hand, 34% of the respondents stated that it was not likely they would take up temporary work if they had an opportunity to be in permanent employment, and 11% of students stated that they definitely would not choose temporary employment. Most respondents who preferred permanent employment were part-time students. The correlations between the answers are presented in Figure 7.



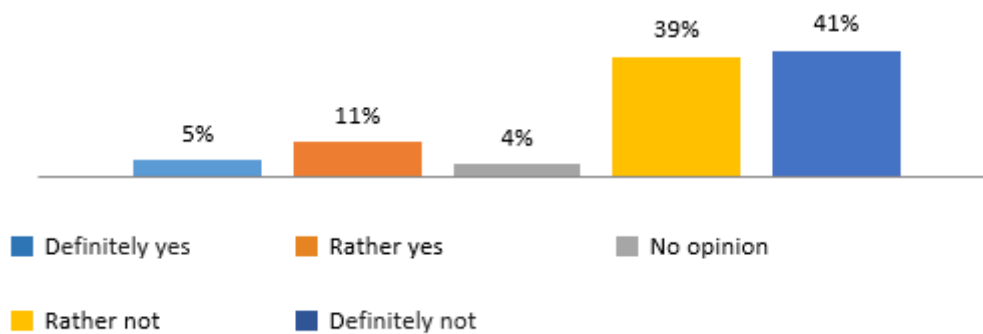
**Figure 7.** Choosing between permanent and temporary employment. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

The next question concerned the potential impact of remuneration for temporary work on the choice of such employment type. Analysis of the answers given by the respondents proves that students consider remuneration to be one of the most important factors when choosing the form of employment. 83% of the respondents state that remuneration for temporary work impacts the choice of such form of employment. Only 6% of the respondents believe that remuneration for temporary work does not influence the choice of this form of employment. 11% of respondents had no opinion. Distribution of answers is presented in Figure 8.



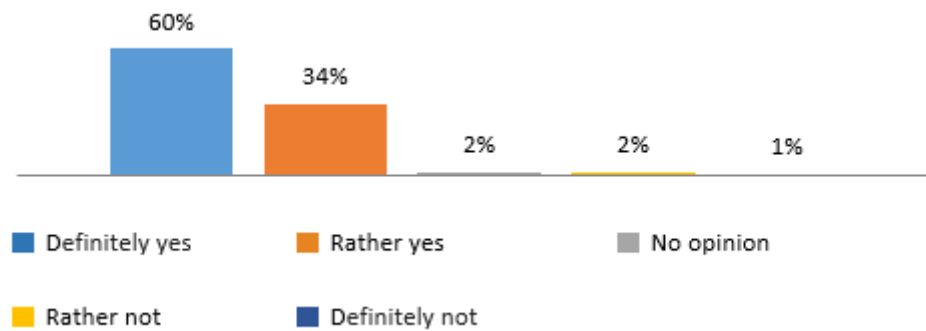
**Figure 8.** Influence of remuneration on the choice of the form of employment. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

The respondents were then asked whether they would take up temporary employment in a place located more than 20 km away from the place of their residence. The answers to this question were mostly negative - 80% of the respondents would not decide to take up temporary employment in such distance from their place of residence. Only 16% of students would be willing to take up work far from where they live. 4% of the respondents had no opinion. Correlations of the answers are depicted in Figure 9.



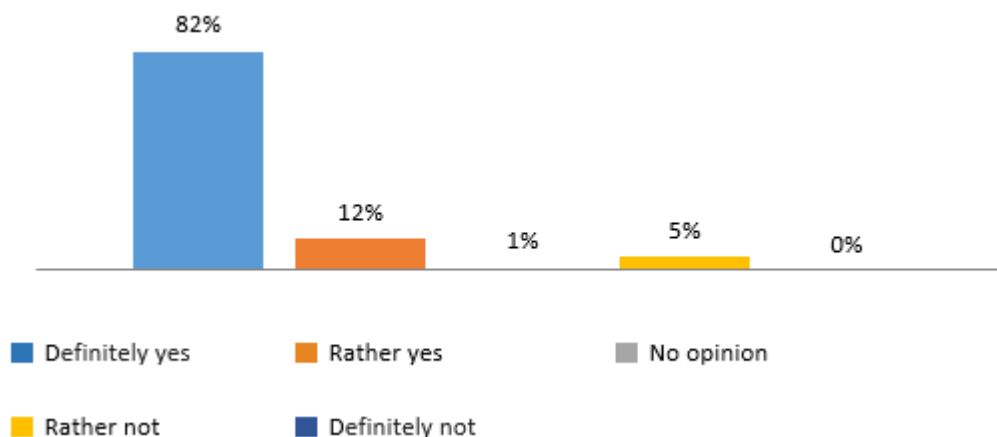
**Figure 9.** Temporary employment in a place located more than 20 km away from the place of residence. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

Subsequently, the respondents were asked whether they would take up temporary employment in the city in which they reside. Comparing the answers with the answers to the previous question it can be observed that students would be much more willing to take up temporary employment in the city where they reside. The "definitely yes" answer was given by 60% of the respondents, and the "rather yes" answer – by 34%, which means that 94% of students in total expressed willingness to take up temporary employment in the city of their residence. Only 3% of students feel negative about taking up temporary work in the place of their residence. Distribution of answers is presented in Figure 10.



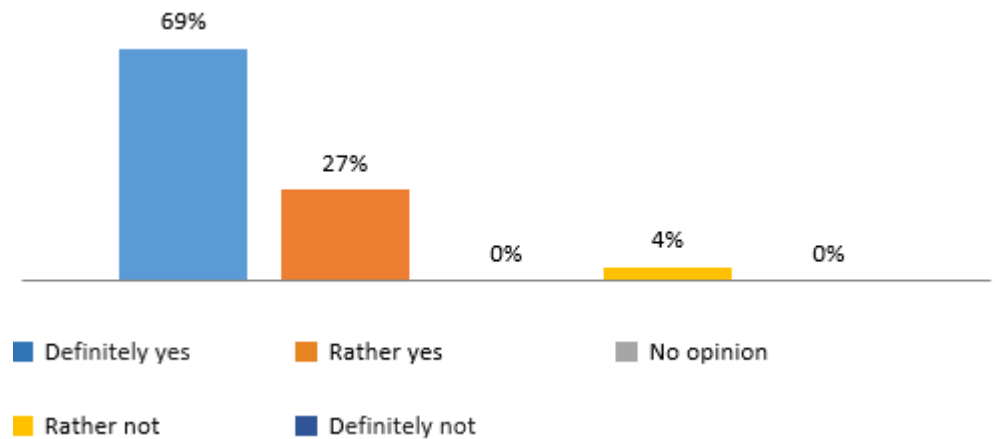
**Figure 10.** Temporary employment in the place of residence. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

In the next question, the respondents were asked to indicate whether flexible working hours in temporary employment have influence on choosing this form of employment. Vast majority of the respondents stated that flexible working hours had influence on choosing the form of employment. As many as 82% of the respondents gave the "definitely yes" answer, and 12% - the "rather yes" answer. Only 5% of respondents stated that it did not have any influence on their choice, and 1% had no opinion. Correlations between the answers are shown in Figure 11.



**Figure 11.** Influence of flexible working hours on choosing temporary employment. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

The last question in the survey was: do you think that temporary employment is a flexible form of employment? The "definitely yes" answer was given by 69% of the respondents, and the "rather yes" answer was given by 27% of the respondents. Respondents who believed that temporary employment was not a flexible form of employment constituted merely 4%. Distribution of answers is shown in Figure 12.



**Figure 12.** Temporary employment as a flexible form of work. Source: own study based on the results of the survey.

## 4. Conclusions

This article presents five hypotheses that were positively verified during the research process. On the basis of the conducted analysis it can be concluded that:

- The surveyed students from three Departments of the Silesian University of Technology would rather take up temporary than permanent employment; more than a half of the respondents declared that if they had an opportunity to take up permanent employment, they would choose temporary employment. Most respondents who were likely to choose such form of employment were full-time students.
- Temporary work is the main source of income for the respondents, and the conducted studies confirm this hypothesis – it is supported by 48% of surveyed individuals.
- Remuneration influences the choice of temporary employment, this hypothesis is certainly true. This statement is endorsed by the survey results – as many as 83% of the surveyed students confirm it.
- The respondents are more eager to take up temporary work in the place of their residence, the survey included two questions regarding this issue; analysis of the answers makes it possible to confirm this hypothesis. The surveyed students were significantly more eager to take up temporary employment in their place of residence (94% of the respondents).
- The surveyed students perceive temporary work as a flexible form of employment, as indicated by 96% of the respondents, which makes it possible to confirm the hypothesis.

The hypothesis assuming that temporary employment is a form of employment that is frequently chosen among students was positively verified at the stage of the pilot study. Survey results indicate that the respondents from three Departments of the Silesian University of

Technology readily took up temporary employment due to many reasons important to them, which include, among other things, remuneration for temporary work and flexible working hours.

To summarise, it is worth noting that the provisions that determine prohibitions and restrictions concerning temporary employment promote the general interest, which results mainly from the need to protect temporary workers and to ensure efficient functioning of the temporary work market as well from the OHS requirements. European Union Member States are obliged to assess the introduced limitations and prohibitions concerning the employment of temporary workers. Their task is to verify the validity of these limitations and prohibitions. If there is no rationale, the limitations and prohibitions discussed in the article should be abolished (Wiśniewski, 2007). Dynamic development of the temporary employment market makes it possible to fulfil the needs of entrepreneurs and users more efficiently, create new workplaces and positively influence the situation on the job market.

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