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COMBINING STUDY AND WORK – ECONOMIC COMPULSION OR A BRIDGE TO A SUCCESSFUL CAREER?

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Purpose: The purpose of the article is to identify the main motives for students to engage in labour force participation in different countries, as well as in Poland, and to examine how it affects career prospects.
Design/methodology/approach: The basis for the verification of the hypotheses is a review of the current global literature on the subject, the results of the Eurostudent VII 2018-2021 survey and an analysis of the data contained in the *Ekonomiczne Losy Absolwentów* (Business Careers of Graduates) (ELA) system for graduates completing their studies in the 2017-2021 time period.
Findings: Having a paid job while studying is not always a choice, about two-thirds of students work for economic reasons. Combining studies and gainful employment makes it easier for graduates to enter the labour market. Students with work experience before obtaining a diploma, compared to those without such experience, look for work for a shorter time and obtain higher salaries at the early stage of their career.
Research limitations/implications: Based on ELA data it is difficult to assess whether work experience gained during studies leads to a successful career later on. It is necessary to expand research in this area by including information on all forms of work experience and extending the tracking of graduates.
Practical and social implications: The findings of this article contribute to a better understanding of the social challenges created by combining education and work, as well as the ongoing changes in the model of higher education and the school-to-work transition. They underscore the importance of gaining work experience while still in education and introducing more flexibility of higher education institutions in terms of the study programmes and the organisation of the course of study.
Originality/value: The study, using administrative data, assessed the employment situation of Polish graduates of all universities with and without professional experience, which creates added value in relation to the results of other research works based on surveys of graduates of selected universities or fields of study.
Keywords: combining study and work, youth, gaining work experience, entering the labour market, career.
Category of the paper: research paper.

1. Introduction

In 2022, 25.1% of the population of young people aged 15-29 in the European Union participated in formal education and were gainfully employed at the same time (Eurostat, 2023). For young people, overlapping two activities at the same time, i.e., gainful employment and studying, is an increasingly common phenomenon. Some people work part-time, a few hours a week, only during weekends or vacations, participate in paid internships, but prioritize academic education. Others work full time and study in the evenings or at weekends, trying to reconcile their studies with professional activity. The situation in this regard varies quite a bit among EU member states, and is influenced by institutional factors concerning national education and training systems, cultural patterns and a student-friendly labour market.

Most questionable and controversial is the phenomenon of combining full-time studies and gainful employment. The Eurostudent VII report shows that in the countries surveyed, 78% of students had gainful employment, of which 60% worked during the semester. Polish students are also quite busy, with 80% of them taking jobs during the semester or in their free time from classes and lectures. The prevalence of gainful employment among students creates new social challenges, signifies changes in the model of higher education and entry into the labour market, forcing the development and introduction of solutions that should foster a balance between study and work. It therefore seems interesting to ask questions about the reasons for students becoming gainfully employed and the effects it has on their future careers.

The aim of this study is to identify the main motives for students to undertake economic activity in different countries, as well as in Poland, and to investigate how it affects career prospects. Three research hypotheses were formulated:

- Economic factors are the main reason why students take up gainful employment.
- Combining studies and gainful employment makes it easier for graduates to enter the labour market.
- Gainful employment during studies provides a bridge to a successful career.

A successful career means taking up employment that is in line with one's field of study after receiving a degree and earning higher salaries. This article is analytical and descriptive in nature. Hypotheses verification was based on a review of the current literature on the subject, the results of the Eurostudent VII 2018-2021 survey, and an analysis of data contained in the Ekonomiczne Losy Absolwentów (Business Careers of Graduates) (ELA) system in the 2017-2021 time period.

2. Taking up student employment in the literature – pros and cons

Students take up work for a variety of reasons, ranging from the material ones meaning the need to acquire the financial means to support themselves during their studies or to supplement their entire monthly budget with income from work, to those concerning the building of their capital in the form of practical professional knowledge, work experience and competences needed for the future workplace (Becker, 1994; Piróg 2013; Bocsi, Fényes, Markos, 2017). The economic situation and study conditions vary widely in Europe, both between countries and between fields of study. Unfortunately, support in many countries is insufficient and does not improve accessibility to study in material terms. As a result, this increases the risk of discrimination against certain groups in their opportunities to pursue higher education (Gvetadze, 2014). Pusztai and Kocis (2019) write about the financial situation of students, using Hungary as an example. A survey conducted shows that higher education, financed for 70% of students by public funds, is a heavy burden on the family budget. Problems with covering the costs of study aids, clothing, accommodation and food, as well as cultural or sporting activities affect not only families of low socio-economic status, but also representatives of the middle class. Faced with economic difficulties, young people in EU countries who want to study are often forced to take up employment to cover the costs related to studying (Eurofund, 2014).

The rationale for gaining work experience already during study flows from human capital theory. Research in this area has a fairly long tradition (Becker, 1962; Davies, 1999; Ormiston, 2016; Irvinn, Nordmann, Simms, 2019). Work experience as an investment in human capital increases the value of this capital, facilitating entry into suitable employment with higher wages after graduation, while reducing the risk of unemployment. Piróg and Rocki (2013, 2021) point out in their work that having a degree combined with work experience is a 'signal' that improves a graduate's image and should bring economic benefits in the future. Similar findings are presented by Okay-Sommerville and Scholarios (2015), identifying work experience as a beneficial factor for job search and career success. The positive impact of doing work during studies, not necessarily related to the field of study, on the employability of young people in Hungary is confirmed by Pusztai and Kocsis (2019). Economic activity during study is viewed positively by employers, as it is a sign of determination and diligence. It contributes to the level of knowledge and skills needed in the workplace, improving the employment prospects of future graduates. By working during their studies, young people learn attitudes of responsibility, goal orientation and effective time management that are useful in a later working environment (Hovdhaugen, 2015; Evans, Richardson, 2018; Evans, 2021).

In research on the combination of studies and economic activity, it seems crucial to analyse the relationship between the work undertaken and the chosen field of study. Researchers question whether the work undertaken during studies contributes to the development of specialised, job-specific skills or merely allows the development of general human capital.

According to Ormiston (2016), the specific skills learnt during employment are not correlated with the level of wages obtained after graduation, and the work experience gained during study only increases the level of general qualifications. Such a relationship was only found in some occupations, such as construction. Pastore (2017) draws similar conclusions in his work using Italy as an example. He considers that young people, including students, mostly work on temporary or part-time contracts and do not have the opportunity to develop job-specific skills due to the temporary, short horizon of such employment. It should also be noted that students often take up a type of work activity that does not require specialised knowledge or skills, which is at odds with opportunities for the development of specific human capital (Kosi, Nastav, Susteric, 2013). Similar results in this regard obtained in a survey among students of the University of Economics in Katowice (Poland) in 2014-2017 are presented by Ostoj (2016, 2019). The author concludes that the work undertaken during studies does not provide a good bridge to future employment, and the benefits of this work for human capital and further career are relatively small. According to Kunasz (2022), most of the surveyed students undertake occupational challenges characterised by relatively low competence potential in sections such as commerce, catering, transport and storage, and entertainment on lowest executive positions, not related to high task complexity and with the lowest pay rate.

Working students have less time to devote to their studies, working while studying can therefore have a negative impact on academic performance (Creed, French, Hood, 2015; Creed et al., 2022, 2023). Firstly, this impact depends on the intensity of students' gainful employment, measured by the number of working hours per week, and is correlated with the amount of material support received from family (Pusztai, Kocis, 2019). Secondly, when analysing the impact of work on academic performance, it is important to distinguish whether students are employed on or off the university campus doing various small jobs for the university. This is especially true in the United States, where this type of practice often takes place. It appears that working on campus facilitates integration into the university and fosters greater involvement in university life (Pascarella et al., 1998). The negative impact of gainful employment during higher education on academic achievement and attainment, both yearly and for the whole course of study, was demonstrated by Callender (2008) in a study of a sample of 1000 students from six UK universities. Other researchers do not completely deny the validity of combining work activity with study at university. At the same time, they emphasise that the negative impact mainly relates to doing too much work, which disturbs the study-work balance, making it difficult for young people to reap the full benefits of academic life. Similarly, Triventi (2014), based on astudy in Italy, and Body et al. (2014) using France as an example. The latter indicates that it is only when working more than 16 hours per week that students' academic performance is negatively affected. Then, work overload can be discouraging and often prevents class participation.

Pathological relationships in terms of combining study and work in the Baltic States and Central and Eastern Europe are found by the authors of a report on the issue of school-to-work transitions in the European Union countries (Eurofound, 2014). The researchers find that the percentage of working students in these countries is significantly lower than the EU average. However, for those students who are gainfully employed, work takes up more than 20 hours per week, meaning that it is a priority activity for these young people. This combination of study and work is judged to be 'unhealthy', as it often leads to students abandoning their studies in favour of work and ultimately dropping out of further education. This problem is also highlighted by Hungarian researchers, who point out that the student dropout rate is rather high in Hungary, at 36-38% for undergraduate studies, 14-17% for master's studies (Derényi, 2015), and 50% for doctoral studies.

An analysis of the literature shows that combining study and work can positively influence the career prospects of future graduates, under certain conditions. Student work activity is only desirable to the extent that it will not affect academic achievement and the quality of the education obtained. The gainful employment of students creates added value in the form of personal development, impacting positively on their future success in the labour market (Pusser, 2012). The work undertaken by students in line with their field of study, at least partially, allows them to gain work experience, which promotes positive transitions from school to the labour market and is an important step towards a successful career.

3. Economic activity of students in the light of the Eurostudent survey

The issue of combining study and work is addressed by the international Eurostudent VII survey 2018-2021 (Eurostudent VII). Unfortunately, a weakness of these surveys, in the context of conducting analyses on the labour force participation of students is the combined treatment of full-time and part-time students, as mentioned in Ostoj (2019). In Poland, the share of part-time students was 34.2%. However, with an EU average of 16%, the proportion of part-time students in Poland should be considered high. At the same time, it is worth adding that among students working more than 20 hours per week, as many as 68% declared studying part-time (Eurostudent VII, p. 113).

In the countries covered by the Eurostudent survey, 78% of students were gainfully employed, with 60% combining study with work during the semester. Among students overall, the highest proportions of working students were found in the Czech Republic (92%), Iceland (89%), Norway (87%), Slovenia (86%), and the Netherlands (85%). The lowest percentages of working students were found in Luxembourg (60%), Georgia (46%) and Portugal (49%). The result for Poland in this respect was very close to the average in all countries, at 80%. Older students studying on a second-cycle programme were more likely to be economically

active: on average, 71% of them worked during the semester compared to 57% of those studying on a first-cycle programme. For Poland, these percentages were respectively: 73% and 51% (Eurostudent VII, p. 150).

Gainful employment is not such an obvious activity for students on national public support, on average about half of these students perform gainful employment during the semester. Those students who do not receive public support are busier, with 67% of them combining their studies with work during the semester. In Poland, these percentages were 41% and 62% respectively.

Unfortunately, as the results of the Eurostudent survey show, the majority of jobs held by students do not correlate with their field of study. In the countries covered by the survey, 46% of students held a job that was related to their field of study. In Poland, this percentage was the lowest among the countries surveyed, at only 26%. A more pronounced relationship between the work undertaken and the field of study can be observed among students of education (56%), health care (53%) and information technology (52%). In Poland, this is still the case for students majoring in business, administration and law (Eurostudent VII, p. 152).

Regarding the motivation to work during their studies, the survey results show that more than two-thirds of the students worked mainly for economic reasons: 68% worked to cover their living costs and 65% to afford things they could not otherwise buy. The former reason applies mainly to students who do not live with their parents. In Poland, this was declared by as many as 79% of this group. It is also worth noting that every second student surveyed indicated that if they were not working, they would not be able to afford to study. The desire to gain work experience in the labour market is only the third most frequently indicated reason for students taking up employment. This reason was declared most frequently by students in Lithuania, Estonia, France and Romania, and least frequently by those in Ireland, Turkey and Portugal (Eurostudent VII, p. 153).

The study also addressed the issue of students' self-perception and identification with the role of employee or student. Working students mostly declared themselves as students, with only one in five identifying themselves primarily as an employee. In Poland, the proportion identifying themselves as employees was higher, which should be linked to the relatively high proportion of part-time students.

4. Early career of graduates with and without work experience

Data collected in the service of the nationwide monitoring system of Business Careers of Graduates (ELA) provide information on how higher education graduates in Poland fare on the labour market. They come from the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) system and the POL-on higher education information system. It should be noted that these data do not include those

insured in the Agricultural Social Insurance Fund (KRUS), graduates who work abroad and those without a contract. The reliability of the inference therefore depends on how large a proportion of graduates are listed in the Social Insurance Institution.

The labour market situation of graduates can be analysed by distinguishing groups of people who have been gainfully employed during their studies and groups of people who have no such experience. However, only contracted employment and self-employment are counted as work experience; part-time employment is not included. This means that students with work experience do not include those under the age of 26 who have worked under a contract of employment and a contract for work. The actual number of students who are gainfully employed during their studies is much higher, as students often undertake work based on civil law contracts. Thus, the conclusions drawn from the comparison of the labour market situation of graduates with and without work experience are 'underestimated' and the differences in the situation of the analysed groups may be greater (Rocki, 2021). In the context of examining the labour market situation of graduates with previous work experience, this is a limitation.

To assess the labour market situation of tertiary graduates with and without work experience, characteristics such as the time needed to find the first job, the percentage of self-employed, the risk of unemployment and two relative indicators, i.e., the relative unemployment rate and the relative earnings rate, were used. Detailed definitions of the indicators and the method of their calculation are included in the ELA system description (Materiały informacyjne…). The analysis covers graduates who graduated between 2017 and 2021.

The data in Table 1 show that the number of tertiary graduates showed a downward trend between 2017 and 2021, with the number of graduates decreasing by 14.8% during the period under review. The shares of full-time and part-time graduates in the total number of university graduates remained relatively stable, averaging 65.8% and 34.2% respectively. As can be seen, working and gaining work experience in the form of full-time employment or self-employment prior to obtaining a diploma applies mainly to part-time graduates, which is natural, as this mode of study is aimed at working people and its organisation allows a free combination of study and work. Graduates of full-time studies, compared to graduates of part-time studies, decided less often to gain work experience through full-time employment or self-employment, but it should be noted that the share of those who decided to take such a step increased by 7.5 percentage points in the analysed period. In the case of full-time studies, it is much more difficult to combine study with full-time employment or self-employment due to students' obligations set out in the study regulations, resulting directly from the provisions of the 2018 Higher Education Act.

Table 1.

Higher education graduates by mode of study 2017-2021

Year	Total graduates	Graduates of full-time studies		Of which: with work experience gained before obtaining the diploma (%)	Graduates of part-time studies		Of which: with work experience gained before obtaining the diploma (%)
		Number	%		Number	%	
2017	335,267	222,179	66.27	25.82	113,088	33.73	81.42
2018	316,285	210,999	66.71	28.66	105,286	33.29	83.53
2019	307,452	203,824	66.29	31.37	103,628	33.71	84.84
2020	285,652	185,313	64.87	33.01	100,339	35.13	85.70
2021	285,434	186,308	65.27	33.40	99,126	34.73	85.11

Source: own calculations based on ELA data.

Success in the labour market is evidenced by the low values of the time to look for the first job and the risk of unemployment. It can be clearly seen (Table 2) that graduates of second-cycle and long-cycle master's degree studies with work experience searched for their first job significantly shorter compared to graduates without experience. The former needed, on average, about one month to find a job, while for the latter group, the time to find a job extended three or even four times. In the case of first degree graduates without work experience, the many times longer time to find their first job after obtaining the diploma compared to graduates with such experience was probably related to the continuation of their studies within the second degree programme and postponing the decision to take up employment in time. Lower values for the risk of unemployment characterise graduates with work experience regardless of their degree, with the differences in the amount of this indicator between those with and without work experience prior to obtaining a degree being highest for second-cycle studies graduates. The values of the relative unemployment rate for graduates of all types of study were below unity over almost the entire period. This means that university graduates were, on average, exposed to a lower risk of being unemployed than the risk resulting from the unemployment rate in their place of residence. The exceptions in this period are graduates of second-cycle and long-cycle master's degree studies without pre-degree work experience, for whom the values of the relative unemployment rate exceeded one in 2020 and 2021. This is probably related to the sudden deterioration of the economic and labour market situation caused by the lockdowns introduced in connection with the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Graduates of both first- and second-cycle studies with work experience prior to obtaining their diploma were more likely to decide to pursue a career by starting their own business compared to their colleagues without such experience. This is evidenced by significant differences in the percentages of self-employed in the years analysed, averaging five percentage points between graduates with and without experience. These differences were significantly lower for graduates with a single master's degree.

The values of the relative earnings index (Table 3) also show how graduates with and without work experience before graduation fare on the labour market at the initial stage of their careers. The values of the relative earnings ratio indicate that in the early stage of their careers, the groups of graduates of second-cycle studies and long-cycle master's degree studies who worked during their studies obtained higher average salaries after graduation than the groups of people without such experience. It is also worth noting that the 2017 and 2018 second-cycle graduates with work experience received on average higher salaries than the average salaries in their districts of residence in the third year after graduation, while the 2019 and 2020 graduates managed to do so already in the second year after graduation. The values of the relative earnings ratio were different for graduates of long-cycle master's degree studies; work experience gained during their studies did not reward this group of graduates to the same extent as graduates of second degree programmes. The data show that graduates of these studies who did not work full-time during their studies were already earning an average salary higher than those who worked or were self-employed during their studies in the third year after graduation. Graduates of this type of studies with work experience before the diploma are mostly people who studied part-time and therefore earn more in the initial period of their career compared to graduates without such experience, i.e. mainly full-time students. On the other hand, it can be presumed that in the long term, the salary situation becomes more favourable for full-time graduates, which seems to be confirmed by the data on earnings of graduates of long-cycle master’s degree studies.

Table 2.
Average indicators among graduates with and without work experience by degree from 2017 to 2021

Indicator	Average values of indicators from 2017 to 2021									
	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	with experience	without experience	with experience	without experience	with experience	without experience	with experience	without experience	with experience	without experience
First-cycle studies										
Time spent looking for first job (in months)	3.35	15.95	3.33	15.26	3.36	14.21	2.83	12.04	1.39	6.21
Percentage of self-employed	20.3	14.3	18.6	12	16.2	9.4	13	6.2	10.5	3.6
Unemployment risk (in %)	2.8	3.8	2.8	3.6	2.7	3.4	2.6	2.9	2.2	2.5
Relative Unemployment Rate	0.49	0.63	0.49	0.62	0.49	0.58	0.46	0.49	0.4	0.43
Relative Earnings Index	0.89	0.76	0.88	0.72	0.86	0.68	0.83	0.62	0.8	0.57
Second-cycle studies										
Time spent looking for first job (in months)	1.19	5.7	1.04	5.08	0.89	4.87	0.84	4.58	0.57	3.09
Percentage of self-employed	18.8	13.4	16.8	12.1	15.4	10.4	13.6	8.5	11.3	5.9
Unemployment risk (in %)	2.4	4.7	2.4	4.8	2.3	5.4	2.3	5.7	2.1	5.4
Relative Unemployment Rate	0.43	0.82	0.45	0.88	0.43	0.98	0.42	1.01	0.4	0.98
Relative Earnings Index	0.99	0.78	0.97	0.75	1.01	0.73	0.98	0.68	0.94	0.64
Long-cycle master's degree studies										
Time spent looking for first job (in months)	1.97	5.5	1.89	4.98	1.79	4.68	1.7	4.44	1.24	3.39
Percentage of self-employed	32.5	33.5	29.9	30.2	26.2	24.5	23.7	20.6	16.4	12.5
Unemployment risk (in %)	2.7	3.8	2.7	3.8	2.9	4.1	3.1	5	3.1	5.2
Relative Unemployment Rate	0.6	0.79	0.61	0.83	0.66	0.85	0.69	1.01	0.7	1.14
Relative Earnings Index	0.92	0.92	0.9	0.89	0.88	0.86	0.86	0.8	0.81	0.71

Source: own calculations based on ELA data.

Table 3.

Relative Earnings Index of second-cycle and long-cycle master's degree studies graduates with and without experience from 2017-2021

Specification	Relative Earnings Index of second-cycle and long-cycle master's degree studies graduates with and without experience in …									
	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	with experience	without experience	with experience	without experience	with experience	without experience	with experience	without experience	with experience	without experience
Second-cycle studies										
in the first year after receiving the diploma	0.89	0.57	0.9	0.59	0.94	0.59	0.93	0.57	0.92	0.6
in the second year after receiving the diploma	0.97	0.74	0.96	0.73	1.01	0.73	1	0.73	-	-
in the third year after receiving the diploma	1	0.81	1	0.79	1.05	0.82	-	-	-	-
in the fourth year after receiving the diploma	1.03	0.84	1.03	0.85	-	-	-	-	-	-
in the fifth year after receiving the diploma	1.06	0.89	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Long-cycle master's degree studies										
in the first year after receiving the diploma	0.78	0.56	0.79	0.57	0.77	0.58	0.78	0.64	0.79	0.67
in the second year after receiving the diploma	0.88	0.74	0.88	0.75	0.88	0.82	0.89	0.84	-	-
in the third year after receiving the diploma	0.95	0.96	0.96	1.06	0.96	1.07	-	-	-	-
in the fourth year after receiving the diploma	0.99	1.11	0.99	1.11	-	-	-	-	-	-
in the fifth year after receiving the diploma	1.03	1.15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: own calculations based on ELA data.

5. Discussion and conclusions

The results of the conducted literature analysis (Pusztai, Kocsis 2019; Hovdhaugen 2015; Pastore 2015; Pastore, Quintano, Rocca, 2022), as well as ELA data showing the professional situation of university graduates in Poland, point to the positive role of combining study and work in the transition to the labour market. Those with work experience before obtaining a diploma, compared to those without such experience, look for work, including full-time jobs, for a shorter time and obtain higher salaries at the initial stage of their career. According to Rocki (2021), this inequality in labour market entry is a result of the quality of human capital, of which work experience is becoming an increasingly important component alongside education.

However, conclusions about the positive impact of experience on the situation of tertiary graduates in Poland based on ELA data should be treated with caution (Zając, Jasiński, Bożykowski, 2018). Firstly, because in the ELA system, those with work experience before graduation are mostly part-time graduates, employed or self-employed. The ELA data do not include students up to the age of 26 undertaking work under civil law contracts. Thus, graduates with work experience are mostly those who continue employment with the same employer after obtaining their diploma, do not have to participate in lengthy recruitment processes and the higher salary they obtain is a reward for improving their qualifications. Their employment situation in the initial period after obtaining the diploma looks much more favourable than that of graduates without work experience. Secondly, the data show the positive impact of experience only on the process of entering the labour market. Based on them, it is difficult to assess whether work experience gained during studies leads to a successful career later on. The data do not provide information on the relationship of the post-graduation career with the field of study, and the tracking of graduates' careers is limited to the first five years.

Having a paid job while studying is not always a choice, about two-thirds of students work for economic reasons. This is especially true for students who do not live with their parents. In addition to the income it provides, this work develops skills needed for the future workplace and facilitates professional networking. The growing popularity of working while studying in Poland is indicated by ELA data. Between 2017 and 2021, the number of full-time graduates working while studying or self-employed increased from 25.8% to 33.4%. Undertaking gainful employment by students is unfortunately not always sustainable, preventing them from achieving high academic results or even leading them to abandon their studies in favour of work.

The ELA data used in the study mostly concern the pre-pandemic period and therefore may not properly reflect the current situation of graduates. The deterioration of the graduates' situation on the labor market is noticeable for people who graduated in 2021, as indicated by the data presented in Tables 2 and 3. As ELA data on graduates from subsequent years becomes

available, it is worth expanding research in this area to include comparative analyzes of the employment situation of young people completing higher education before and after the pandemic.

Given the socio-economic situation of students, as well as the importance of gaining work experience while still in education, a conclusion can be drawn about the need for higher education institutions to become involved in promoting and facilitating students' entry into employment (Evans, Richardson, 2017, 2018) More flexibility of higher education institutions in terms of the study programmes offered and the organisation of the course of study is desirable. Solutions such as individual study paths, individual study organisation, timetables arranged to take into account students' needs for combining study and work, and the wider dissemination of hybrid studies using synchronous and asynchronous remote learning methods can be mentioned here. As Pusztai and Kocsis (2019) point out, this may be difficult to implement, as universities operate with rigid, conservative structures, which limits their ability to respond quickly to new societal challenges.

In the context of dynamically changing labour market requirements, mainly related to the development of economy 4.0, as well as the socio-economic conditions of studying, helping students to optimally combine study and gainful employment is a necessity. More in-depth research is needed on the impact of economic activity undertaken during studies on career prospects by including information on all forms of work experience and extending the tracking of graduates. These would provide a good and reliable basis for a broader discussion on regulating the combination of study and work involving representatives of higher education institutions, employers and students. Please put here the acknowledgements for private individuals or institutions that contributed significantly to the publication, as well as information about the projects, in which the article was created. This section is optional and can be omitted by the author.

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