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Cultural employment in Russia and Europe: A comparative analysis

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Table of Contents

Abstract	4
Introduction.....	5
Data and methodology	7
Results and discussion.....	8
Cultural workers: Who are they?	8
Cultural employment: Focus on specific occupations.....	11
Conclusion.....	16
References	17
Appendix 1	20

Abstract

This paper examines employment in the cultural field in Russia and in a selected number of EU countries in light of debates on the development of the “creative economy” in Russia. Data from the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions by Rosstat and Eurostat cultural statistics are used to illustrate main differences in socio-demographic and occupational characteristics of cultural workers in these countries.

The findings show that the characteristics of cultural workers vary dramatically over Russia and Europe. In particular, part-time and self-employment as well as the existence of a second job are not key features of Russian cultural workers. By contrary, individuals involved in the creative and cultural sphere in the EU are less likely to be in full-time employment and more likely to be self-employed or part-timers than in Russia.

Our results suggest that it is hardly possible to emulate the European experience in creative and cultural industries without serious structural changes in the sphere of cultural employment in Russia.

Introduction

In recent years, the interest of Russian policymakers and researchers in the creative economy has been increasing (Zotova, 2015; Zelentsova & Melville, 2011; Zelentsova & Gladkeeh, 2010; Goncharik, 2008; Gnedovsky, 2005). Generally speaking, the “creative economy” is a heterogeneous field. It constitutes a range of various activities involving traditional arts and crafts, paintings, music, etc. and technology-intensive areas such as the film industry, design, digital technologies and others. (Ruutu et al., 2009, p. 12).

The vigorous debates surrounding the creative economy stemmed from a belief that creative and cultural industries or creative and cultural sector are a foundation for future development (Hölzl, 2006; Potts & Cunningham, 2008). These convictions are partially based upon cases of economic growth in European countries and the USA spurred on by the rapid expansion of the creative and cultural sphere in these countries (Gouvea & Vora, 2018; Yum, 2016; Boccella & Salerno, 2016).

According to researchers, the creative and cultural industries are poised to become a dynamic and innovatively developing new economic field in the current period of scientific and technological transformations and mass digitalization (Gordin & Matetskaya, 2011; Panfilo, 2011; Ruutu et al., 2009). The expansion of the creative and cultural sector is considered as an opportunity to get away from the Russian economy’s over-dependence on oil. It can bring new possibilities that might be used to strengthen the position of the country as modern rapidly growing economy. There has been a view that the flourishing of creative and cultural industries in Russia can be achieved by adoption of the mechanisms and policy initiatives applied in European countries (Belokrylova & Dubskaya, 2013; Petrenko, 2011).

However, such a major breakthrough has been difficult to implement in the Russian economy with a simple emulation of successful European experience. While the creative and cultural industries directly affect all the sectors of the economy, those industries themselves are influenced by the features of the labor market. Rapid growth of creative and cultural sphere is linked to its attractiveness for high-skilled labor force with both technical and soft skills necessary for innovative start-ups and design of successful business projects (Bakhshi & Windsor, 2015). However, creative and cultural industries are in competition with other industries that also attract high-skilled labor force. It is hardly possible to develop effective policy measures for the development of Russian creative economy without understanding the structure of cultural employment and its dependence on the features of the existing labor market.

The Russian labor market is very different in some aspects from the European one. This, in turn, leaves an imprint on the organization of cultural work and composition of cultural workers in Europe and Russia. For example, the self-employed individuals and small businesses have a central role in the UK creative and cultural sphere as the primary driver of the sector’s growth and employment creation (Chaston & Sadler-Smith, 2012). By contrast, self-employment is not typical of the Russian labor market (Gimpelson & Voskoboynikov, 2015). It is

necessary to understand who the cultural workers are in Russia before discussing some measures in the field of creative economy and possible policy transfer from the European countries.

In the existing research literature, there are only a few scholars who explored cultural employment in Russia (e.g. Pivovarov & Khokhlova, 2014; Abramova, 2013; Tchouikina, 2010; Kuleva, 2018) and not a single one of them has aimed to compare systematically the cultural workers in Russia and in the European Union (EU) by using large scale datasets. The research gap is obvious as is the lack of data needed for such research. It is rather difficult to obtain a relevant data sources that allow an international comparison.

This study focuses on filling the revealed gap by examining the occupational characteristics of cultural workers in the EU and Russia. Thus, the main research question can be formulated as follows: What are the main differences between occupational and socio-demographic characteristics of cultural workers in Russia and the EU?

For the purpose of answering the main research question, we rely on the methodology proposed by the European Statistical System Network on Culture (ESSnet-Culture) (ESSnet ..., 2012). The ESSnet-Culture elaborates a new methodology for estimating the cultural employment through both NACE Rev. 2 (industries) and ISCO-08 (occupations) classifications. In particular, the statistical office of the EU (the Eurostat) uses the methodology of the ESSnet-Culture to collect European cultural statistics.

The main statistical sources of this paper are the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions (CMLC) by the Russian Federal State Statistic Service (the Rosstat) and the European cultural statistics. The CMLC is one of the most suitable Russian data sets for an international comparison of cultural workers.

It should be noted that the application of the ESSnet-Culture's methodology to the data of the CMCL still creates some difficulties. While the CMLC provides information on occupations of respondents (e.g. "designer"), it does not include information about industries where the respondents are employed (e.g. sports, tourism, entertainment etc.). However, to our knowledge, there is no open access data that would allow us to cross-reference occupations with the industry affiliations of respondents in Russia. Therefore, due to the constraints of the available data, the authors do not consider persons who hold non-cultural occupations and work in the creative and cultural industries in Russia (e.g. a manager in a concert hall or museum). Nonetheless, the lack of industry affiliations in the data does not preclude the analysis designed for the purposes of this paper. Despite the possible estimation bias, our results are able to reveal the major trends in the employment patterns of cultural workers in the Russian labor market.

This study can be broadly divided into two parts. The first part concentrates on description of the data sources and the methodology. The second part focuses on the empirical analysis: In the section "Cultural workers: Who are they?" we consider socio-demographic characteristics of cultural workers in Russia and the

EU; the section examines employment characteristics of creative and performing artists, authors, journalists, and linguists. The paper ends with a concluding section.

Data and methodology

In this paper, we rely on the definition of cultural workers by the ESSnet-Culture. The group includes three types of workers (Culture Statistics..., 2016):

- those who hold a cultural occupation and work in the creative and cultural sector;
- those who hold a cultural occupation outside the creative and cultural sector;
- those who hold a non-cultural occupation in the creative and cultural sector.

The data for the EU countries came from the Eurostat cultural statistics. In Eurostat, there are no specific collections of sources about culture. The Eurostat cultural statistics are derived from already existing multi-purpose data sets following the ESSnet-Culture methodology. Information about cultural workers are extracted and then compiled from the European Union Labor Force Survey databases. We use the Eurostat cultural statistics for 2014. The sample includes employed respondents.

The cross-section data set from the CMLC of 2014 was used for the estimation of cultural workers in Russia. The CMLC is conducted by Rosstat. The overall objective of the project is to monitor the living conditions of Russian families, their health condition, and socio-demographic and employment characteristics. The sampling design of the survey ensures the representativeness of the Russian population at the country level. The CMLC does not include any information about industries where respondents are employed. Therefore, we can identify only two groups of cultural workers out of three in the above-mentioned definition: 1) those who hold a cultural occupation and work in the creative and cultural sphere; 2) those who hold a cultural occupation outside the creative and cultural sector.

The authors analyze only people who are employed in solely cultural occupations as in the Eurostat cultural statistics. There are 32 fully cultural professional groups in the ISCO-08, according to the ESSnet-Culture methodology (ESSnet ..., 2012).

In order to estimate cultural workers in Russia we need to transfer ISCO-08 codes to their Russian analogues. The ISCO-08 relates to the Russian Classification of Occupations-2014 (RCO-14). However, the CMLC includes the older version of classification – RCO-93. In order to construct an estimated group, the codes of RCO-14 were collated to the codes of RCO-93, using the Rosstat' official correspondence table (see table 1A in appendix).

The final sample with all missing values deleted includes 62237 employed respondents out of which 1300 respondents are defined as cultural workers. We use the weighed data of the CMLC to be able to disseminate the results from the sample to the statistical population.

Results and discussion

Cultural workers: Who are they?

The analysis presented in this section provides a basic overview of the cultural workers, presenting it regarding different socio-demographic characteristics in Russia and the selected number of the EU countries.

Our findings show that on average 2.9% of the employed population worked in the creative and cultural sphere in the EU in 2014. By contrast, 2.09% of employed respondents hold cultural occupations in Russia in the same year. It was lower than, for example, in Poland (2.5%), United Kingdom (3.5%), Finland (3.9%) (Figure 1).

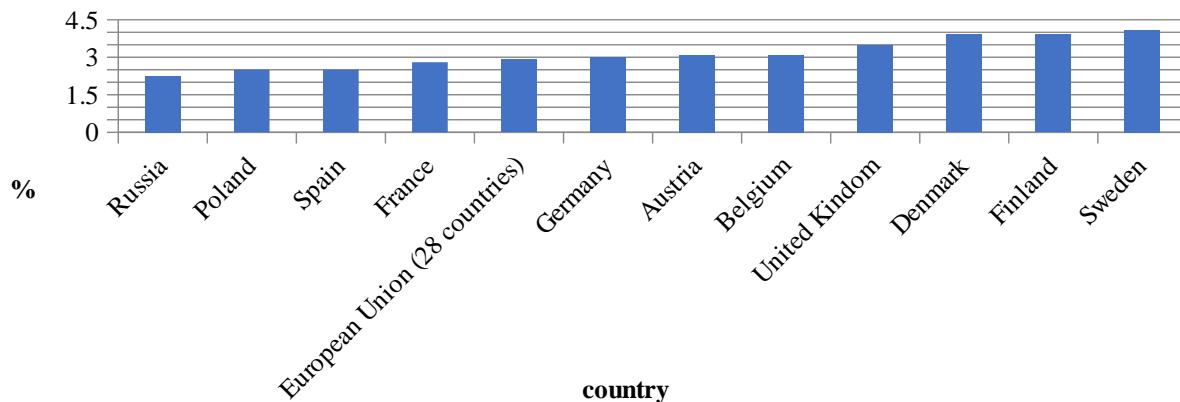


Figure 1. Cultural employment, 2014 (% of total employment).

Source: For Russia – the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions; for other country – the Eurostat.

The gender composition of cultural workers also varies dramatically in different countries. In Russia, women accounted for a remarkable larger share (67%) of the cultural employment compared to the EU (46.6%) (Figure 2).

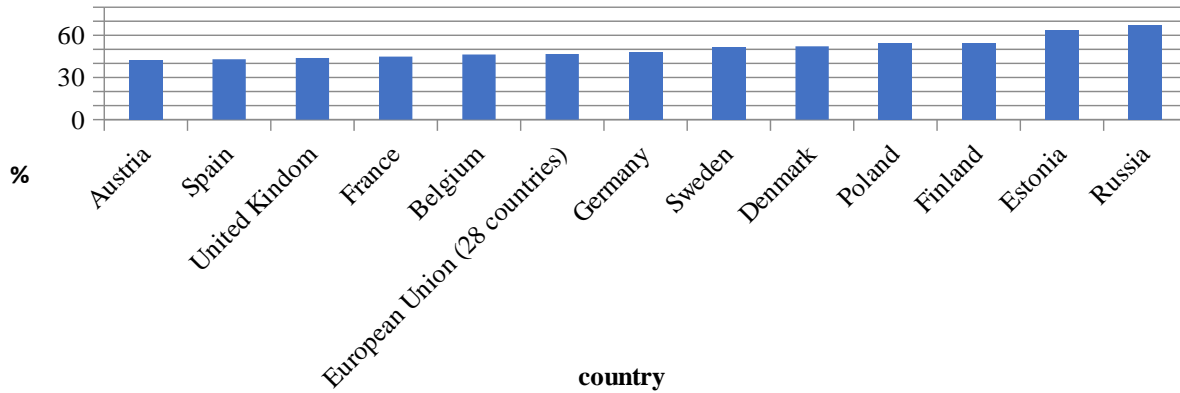


Figure 2: Women in cultural employment, 2014 (%).

Source: For Russia – the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions; for other country – the Eurostat.

Our findings coincide with the results of the previous studies. For example, Tschoikina (2010) notes the huge feminization of the cultural sphere in Russia. This is a consequence of the fact that most cultural occupations are job places at public institutions (Tschoikina, 2010). On average, public workers have relatively low wages compared to non-public sectors (see Gimpleson et al., 2015). It leads to a gender imbalance in the creative and cultural sector as well as in whole public sector due to different reasons (e.g. gender profiles in domestic responsibilities).

The heterogeneity of cultural workers in different countries is also evident when estimating the young people’s shares. The results show that the respondents aged 15-29 represented 25.4% of all individuals who hold cultural occupations in Russia. It is much higher than those in other countries such as, for example, Spain (14.9%), France (18.8%), Poland (20.3%), Denmark (22.2%) (Figure 3).

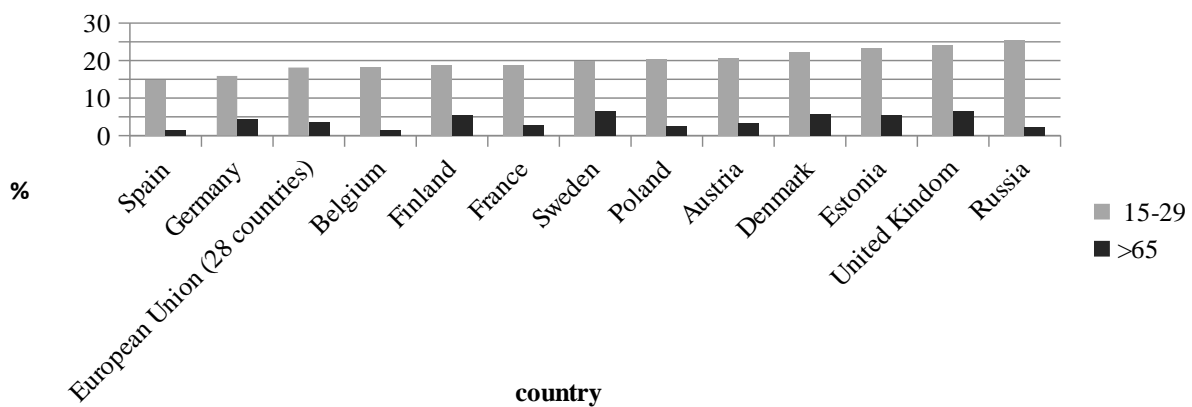


Figure 3: Persons in cultural employment by age groups, 2014, (%).

Source: For Russia – the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions; for other country – the Eurostat.

At the same time, the share of cultural workers over 65 (2.3%) in Russia was lower than in the most EU countries (Finland (5.34%), Estonia (5.58%), Denmark (5.62%), United Kingdom (6.41%), Sweden (6.6%)) (Figure 3). It coincides with the overall situation in the Russian labor market when retired persons are rather non-active on the employment market (Lyashok & Roshchin, 2017).

With regard to educational attainment of cultural workers, it is evident that they are highly educated both in Russia and in the EU. In 2014, nearly 7% of cultural workers in the EU had a lower secondary education, while almost 60% obtained higher education degree (Table 1). A similar trend occurred in Russia, the share of people with higher education degree in culture was 61.7% and only 5.6% completed at most lower secondary education (Table 1).

Table 1. Persons in cultural employment by educational attainment level, 2014 (%)

Educational attainment Country	Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-higher education	Higher education
Austria	6.5	35.4	58.1
Belgium	6.4	22.6	71
Denmark	13	31.7	55.3
Finland	7.5	29.8	62.7
France	9	29.9	61.1
Germany	4.6	36.2	59.2
Poland	1.3	35	63.7
<i>Russia</i>	5	33	62
Spain	8.3	16.2	75.5
Sweden	6.1	38.5	55.4
United Kingdom	6.5	26.7	66.8
The European Union (28 countries)	7.4	32.8	59.8

Source: For Russia – the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions; for other country – the Eurostat.

Our findings add to the broader literature on cultural workers. Previous studies also show that cultural workers are highly educated on average. For instance, in the UK, more than 50% of the artist population has at least a Bachelor's degree (McAndrew & McKimm, 2010).

However, there are important differences between professional cultural education in Europe and in Russia. Creative and cultural industries depend on national educational policy to supply them with the fresh talent that will keep them in their position as a cutting-edge sphere. Experts are convinced that education is becoming the defining factor for the creation of young creative professionals.

Despite the fact that more than 60% of cultural workers in Russia have a higher education, this does not help to develop the Russian creative and cultural sector. The Russian education system in culture is no longer able to meet the basic needs of the modern labor market. It keeps young people from getting more engaged with employers and retards entrepreneurial activity (Analytical Center..., 2017).

Cultural employment: Focus on specific occupations

No doubt, people who hold cultural occupations do not form a homogeneous professional group. They range from librarians and curators in state libraries and museums to self-employed artists such as painters or sculptors. This section presents a range of cultural occupations in Russia.

This part also provides the analysis of two groups of occupations in Russia and in a selected number of EU countries in detail: 1) creative and performing the artists (including “sculptors, painters and other related specialists,” “musicians, singers and composers,” “dancers and choreographers,” “actors, film, stage and related directors and producers,” “announcers on radio, television and other media”); 2) authors, journalists and linguists (including “journalists, authors and related the writers,” “journalists, authors and related the writers”). These groups of workers may often have non-standard types of employment (e.g. part-time jobs), insecure employment contracts (e.g. without holiday allowances, maternity leave, short-term contracts) etc. (Culture statistics..., 2016). Therefore, the analysis of these groups in the EU and Russia reveals the differences in working conditions of the most vulnerable cultural workers in these countries.

The findings display that the largest share of cultural workers in Russia is taken by librarians and related information professionals (16.88%) in 2014. On the contrary, actors, film, stage and related directors, and producers accounted for the smallest proportion (1.79%) (Table 2).

Table 2. Share of top 10 occupations among cultural workers in Russia, 2014.

Occupation	Share, %
Librarians and related information professionals	16.88
Designers	12.71
Teachers not elsewhere classified	11.00
Architects and technicians on transport and urban development	7.83
Journalists, authors and related the writers	7.58
Photographers	5.91
Translators, interpreters and other linguists	4.57
Dancers and choreographers	3.76
Broadcasting and audio-visual technicians	3.70
Archivists and curators and other related professionals	3.70
Library clerks	3.53
Sculptors, painters and other related professionals	3.06
Jewelry and precious-metal workers	2.16

Actors, film, stage and related directors and producers	1.79
Other	11.82
Total	100

Source: the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions.

The joint share of creative and performing artists (from now on: “artists”) and authors, journalists and linguists (from now on: “writers”) was 22.76 % in Russia in 2014. This proportion was lower than in the EU countries (29.9%) (Figure 4).

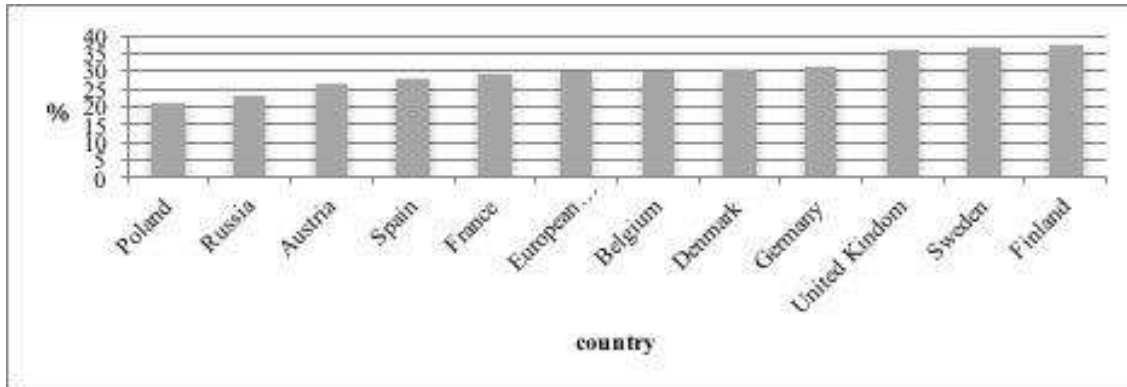


Figure 4. Share of creative and performing artists, authors, journalists and linguists in cultural employment, 2014 (%).

Source: For Russia – the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions; for other country – the Eurostat.

Nearly half (49%) of all artists and writers in the EU countries were self-employed compared to 6.5% in Russia in 2014 (Figure 5). The share of self-employed artists and writers was higher in, for example, Finland (43%), Sweden (38%), France (34%), Poland (31%) than in Russia.

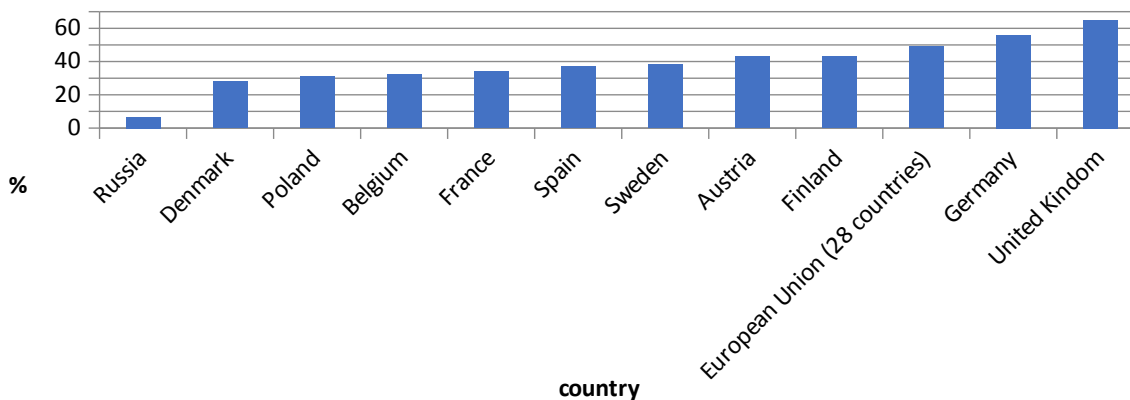


Figure 5. Share of self-employed among creative and performing artists, authors, journalists and linguists, 2014 (%).

Source: For Russia – the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions; for other country – the Eurostat.

Time spent at work is also an important determinant of the worker's position in the labor market. Full-time employment often comes with benefits (social security such as a maternity leave, medical insurance etc.) that are not typically offered to part-timers. In the EU, 70% of artists and writers said they had a full-time job, which is lower than the corresponding proportion in Russia: 83.3% (Figure 6).

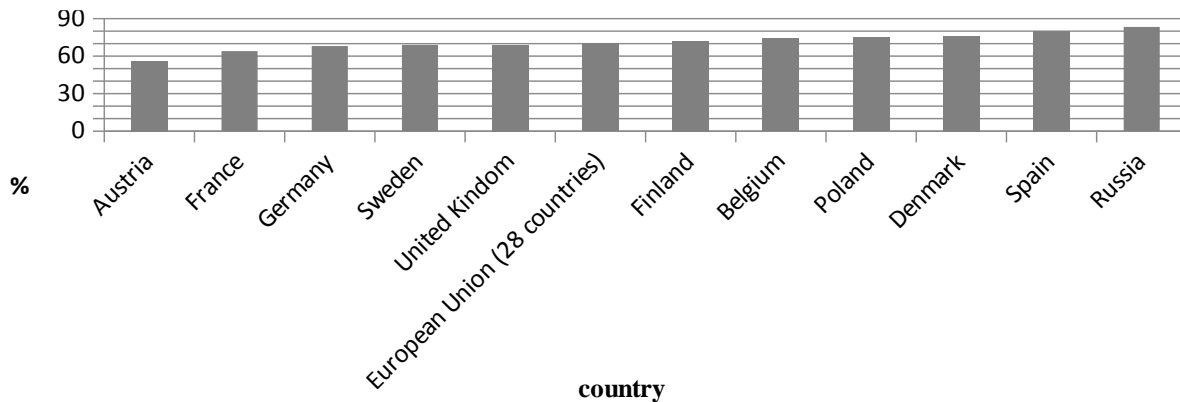


Figure 6. Share of persons working full-time among creative and performing artists, authors, journalists and linguists, 2014 (%).

Source: For Russia – the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions; for other country – the Eurostat.

It is not surprising that more than 80% of artists and writers in Russia had a full-time job. It is partly due to the features of the labor market in Russia where nonstandard types of employment (e.g. part-time contract job, fixed-term employment) are not very common (Nestandartnaya..., 2006). Partly, it is a result of Russian cultural policy that defines organizational structures and everyday work routines (policy favors long-standing projects and, as a consequence, full-time and permanent employment).

Part-time workers differ from full-timers not only regarding working conditions but also with respect to wages. Part-time employment may induce individuals to consider getting a second job to increase their income. Thus, second job may be an indication of (self-perceived) precarious employment.

At the EU-28 level, the share of artists and writers having only one job was 5.8% lower (89%) compared to Russia (94.8%) in 2014 (Figure 7). It may be related to the significant differences in the share of self-employed people in these occupation groups in these countries.

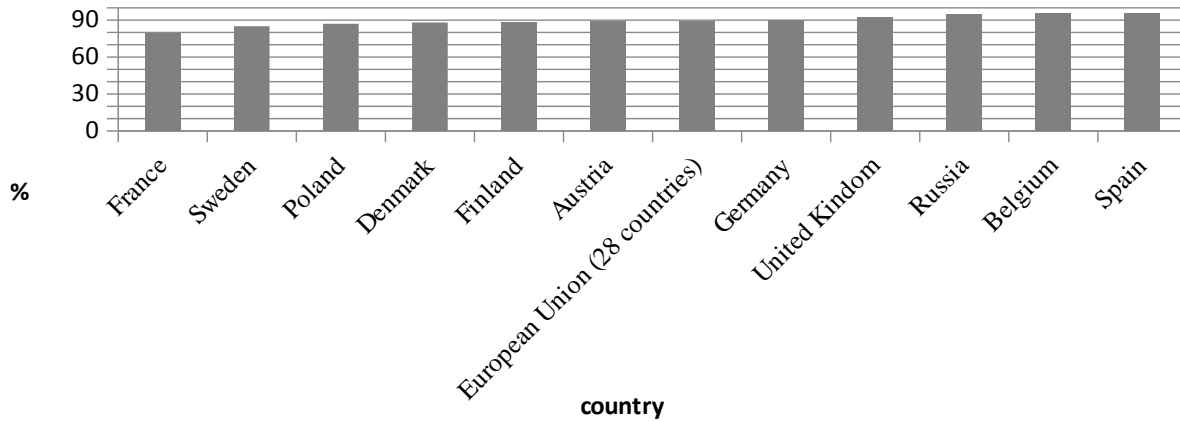
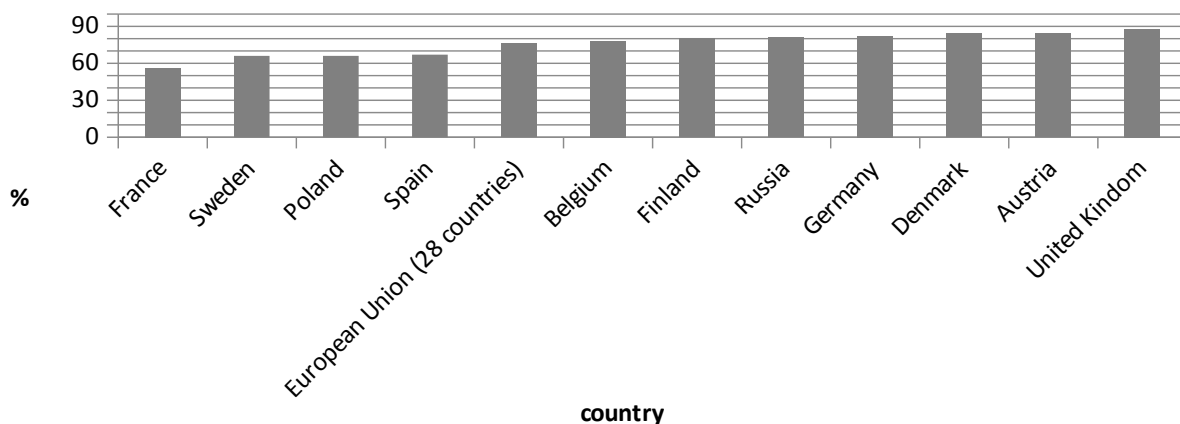


Figure 7. Share of employed persons with one job only among 'creative and performing the artists, authors, journalists and linguists', 2014 (%).

Source: For Russia – the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions; for other country – the Eurostat.

Artists and writers stood less chance of securing an employment contract in the EU than in Russia. In the EU, 76% of artists and writers had a permanent employment contract in 2014, while the figure was 81% in Russia. However, the situation was more favorable for artists and writers working as employees in Denmark, Germany, Austria and the United Kingdom than in Russia.



Share of employed persons with permanent job among creative and performing artists, authors, journalists and linguists, 2014 (%).

Source: For Russia – the comprehensive monitoring of living conditions; for other country – the Eurostat.

In general, the obtained data indicates a high level of formalization in the cultural labor market in Russia compared with European countries. These variations partly result from differences in state cultural policy in Europe and Russia. In

Russia today the creative and cultural sphere can be divided into “commercial” and “non-commercial” organizations, with the prevalence of non-commercial character of cultural entities (Belova, 2002, p. 14). An overwhelming part of non-commercial organizations are supported by the state or even state-owned and involved in the production of traditional culture (Ruutu et al., 2009). The traditional culture covers theaters, museums and libraries, etc. with specific organization of the workflow.

Workers of such cultural institutions are usually enrolled in indefinite contracts with a health insurance, paid vacations and maternity leaves, but have relatively narrow space for creativity and limited opportunities for initiatives. The obvious drawback of this type of work system is that a lot of promising initiatives and projects cannot break the stalemate due to overcoming bureaucratic obstacles.

By contrast, in other European countries state support targets small businesses and self-employment formats (e.g., the German social security system for self-employed artists and journalists) (van Liemt, 2014). These policy measures force cultural workers to look at art as a commercial industry with expected profitability and help to boost development of the creative economy.

Conclusion

Our results show that the occupational characteristics of cultural workers vary dramatically over Russia and Europe. In particular, part-time and self-employment as well as the existence of a second job are not key features of Russian cultural workers. By contrary, individuals involved in the creative and cultural sphere in the EU are less likely to be in full-time employment and more likely to be self-employed or part-timers than in Russia.

These differences are partly a consequence of organization of cultural labor in Russia and Europe. Russian cultural policy focuses on the development of public cultural institutions. On the contrary, European state support for creative and cultural industries aims to develop small businesses and self-employment formats. The disparities in policy are notable, for example, in the self-employment figures of artist and writers in Russia and the EU.

But what does this mean for the development of creative and cultural industries in Russia? The conclusion of this study speaks about the impossibility of emulating the European experience without serious structural changes in the sphere of cultural employment and labor policy as a whole. Creative and cultural industries depend on talented start-uppers who bring in fresh initiatives to this sector of the economy. Successful creative projects are impossible without fertile ground for private entrepreneurs and self-employed individuals. And as our findings show that is not the Russian reality now.

The Russian creative and cultural sector is hostage to a situation created by an undeveloped legal system, bureaucratic load, a complex business taxation system, and an inadequate business infrastructure, all of which impede the development of entrepreneurship in Russia (Kravchenko et al., 2015). Entrepreneurs in Russia nowadays face more uncertainty and risk than those in the EU countries. This is not a situation conducive to the emergence of new and innovative projects in Russian creative and cultural sphere. Measures aiming to develop the Russian creative economy should include small business support and promotion of entrepreneurial activity.

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Appendix 1

Table 1A. Occupations that are fully cultural: ISCO-08, RCO-14, RCO-93.

The International Standard Classification of Occupations-08		Russian Classification of Occupations-14		Russian Classification of Occupations-93	
2161	Building architects	2161	Building architects	2141	Architects and engineers for transport and city construction
2162	Landscape architects	2162	Landscape architects	2141	Architects and engineers for transport and city construction
2163	Product and garment designers	2163	Product and garment designers	3471	Designers
2166	Graphic and multimedia designers	2166	Graphic and multimedia designers	3471	Designers
				2452	Sculptors, painters and other related specialists
2354	Other music teachers	2354	Other music teachers	2359	Other teachers
2355	Other arts teachers	2355	Other arts teachers	2359	Other teachers
2621	Archivists and curators	2621	Archivists and curators	2431	Archivists, custodians of museums and other related specialists
2622	Librarians and related information professionals	2622	Librarians and related information professionals	2432	Librarians and related information professionals and other related specialists
2641	Authors and related the writers	2641	Authors and related the writers	2451	Journalists and related writers
2642	Journalists	2642	Journalists	2451	Journalists and related writers
2643	Translators, interpreters	2643	Translators, interpreters and other linguists	2444	Translators, interpreters and other linguists

	and other linguists				
2651	Visual artists	2651	Visual artists	2452	Sculptors, painters and other related specialists
2652	Musicians, singers and composers	2652	Musicians, singers and composers	2453	Musicians, singers and composers
2653	Dancers and choreographers	2653	Dancers and choreographers	2454	Dancers and choreographers
2654	Film, stage and related directors and producers	2654	Film, stage and related directors and producers	2455	Actors, film, stage and related directors and producers
2655	Actors	2655	Actors	2455	Actors, film, stage and related directors and producers
2656	Announcers on radio, television and other media	2656	Announcers on radio, television and other media	3472	Announcers on radio, television and other media
2659	Creative and performing the artists not elsewhere classified	2659	Creative and performing the artists not elsewhere classified	3474	Circus performers
3431	Photographers	3431	Photographers	3131	Photographers, technicians and operators of equipment for recording images and sound
				5148	Photographers
3432	Interior designers and decorators	3432	Interior designers and decorators	3471	Designers
				5510	Workers engaged in artworks
3521	Broadcasting and	3521	Broadcasting and audio-visual technicians	3131	Photographers, technicians and operators of

	audio-visual technicians				equipment for recording images and sound
				3132	Technicians and operators of equipment for radio, television broadcasting and telecommunications
				3139	Other technicians and operators of optical and electronic equipment
4411	Library clerks	4411	Library clerks	4141	Library clerks
7312	Musical instrument makers and tuners	7312	Musical instrument makers and tuners	7312	Musical instruments makers, tuners and restorers
7313	Jewelry and precious-metal workers	7313	Jewelry and precious-metal workers	7270	Workers engaged in the production of abrasives, synthetic diamonds, superhard materials and products made of them and natural diamonds
				7313	Workers engaged in the manufacture and restoration of jewelry from precious metals and stones, as well as the manufacture of artistic products in the traditions of folk arts and crafts (lacquer miniature, art painting for metal and ceramics)
7314		7314	Potters and related workers	7270	Workers engaged in the production of

	Potters and related workers				abrasives, synthetic diamonds, superhard materials and products made of them and natural diamonds
				7321	Potters, moulders and pressers of porcelain and abrasive products
7315	Glass makers, cutters, grinders and finishers	7315	Glass makers, cutters, grinders and finishers	5510	Workers engaged in artworks
7316	Sign the writers, decorative painters engravers and etchers	7316	Sign the writers, decorative painters engravers and etchers	5520	Restoration workers
				7322	Molders, pressers, grinders and polishers of glass, glass blowers
				7335	Manufacturers and restorers of natural stone products (granite, marble, etc.) in sculpture production
				5410	Film-production workers
				5510	Workers engaged in artworks
				5520	Restoration workers
				7323	Engravers and glass scavengers hydrofluoric acid
				7324	Painters on glass, ceramics, the artists of decorative painting, graphic the artists
				7460	Workers engaged in production of toys and teaching materials

7317	Handicraft workers in wood, basketry and related materials	7317	Handicraft workers in wood, basketry and related materials	5520	Restoration workers
				7331	Manufacturers and restorers of artistic products made of wood, capo-root, birch bark and similar materials
				7424	Basket, furniture and related professions workers
				7460	Workers engaged in production of toys and teaching materials
7318	Handicraft workers in textile, leather and related materials	7318	Handicraft workers in textile, leather and related materials	5520	Restoration workers
				7431	Workers engaged in the manufacture of fiber in cotton, linen, silk-winding, wool, hemp-jute production and cotton wool production
				7332	Manufacturers and restorers of artistic products from textiles, leather, fur and the like
				7432	Weavers, knitters and other manual workers in the textile industry
7319	Handicraft workers not elsewhere classified	7319	Handicraft workers not elsewhere classified	7460	Workers engaged in production of toys and teaching materials
				5520	Restoration workers
				7333	Manufacturers and restorers of artistic metal products (except precious)
				7334	Manufacturers and restorers of artistic products made of bone, horn, amber



					and similar materials
				7460	Workers engaged in production of toys and teaching materials



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