



Regional  
Observatory  
of the Transition Process

# **Expectations of employees of mines and mining related companies towards the outplacement offer in connection with the planned decarbonisation**



Rzeczpospolita  
Polska



Regionalne  
Obserwatorium  
Procesu Transformacji

Unia Europejska  
Europejski Fundusz  
Rozwoju Regionalnego



# Trade Union of Miners in Poland

Prepared on the basis  
of a survey report  
by the research  
team of the Trade Union  
of Miners in Poland

**Brochure preparation:**

Dorota Wiktorowska MA

JUNE 2023



# Introduction

From July 2022 to May 2023, the Miners' Trade Union research team in Poland conducted a study on the *Expectations of employees of mines and mining related companies towards the outplacement offer in connection with the planned decarbonisation.*

The study brochure was developed as part of the project entitled *Regional Observatory of the transition* process co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the Regional Operational Programme of the Silesian Voivodeship for 2014-2020 and implemented under Measure 1.4. Supporting the innovation ecosystem (hereinafter: the Project). The leader of the project is the Marshal's Office of the Silesian Voivodeship.

The study was performed by a research team consisting of: Bożena Gawryluk Eng, Joanna Górczyńska MA, Dr.Marcin Tomecki, Ph.D Adam Bartoszek, Prof. of the University of Silesia, under the direction of Dorota Wiktorowska MA. Dominika Błasiak, Ph.D., was responsible for the substantive consultation on the part of the Silesian Marshal's Office.

The following **study aim** was formulated:

**Determining the expectations of mine employees and mining-related companies regarding components, implementers, time perspective and financing sources for outplacement programmes designed in connection with the change in professional activity during the energy transition of the Silesian Voivodeship.**

The study was conducted using a quantitative method. In this respect, the survey technique was used, and the test procedure was based on the use of:

- ▶ a web survey (CAWI)
- ▶ and a paper survey (PAPI).

1,162 respondents took part in the survey, including 389 mining plant employees i.e. 33.5% of the respondents and 773 employees of mining-related companies, i.e. 66.5% of the respondents.

The study area included mining-related companies and mines based in the Silesian Voivodeship.

## Introduction

The energy transition process aims to base the economy on the use of so-called "clean" energy sources. It particularly affects regions where employment and economic activity are based on coal mining.

One such region is the Silesian Voivodeship, which is the largest mining area in the European Union. The estimated number of employees working in mines and mining support companies of the Silesian Voivodeship is approx. 183,273 employees (including approx. 120,000 employees of mining-related companies and 63,273 mine employees).

In connection with the energy transition process of the Silesian Voivodeship, there is a fear that many people will be forced to change jobs or professions. It will become necessary to introduce outplacement programs that will support employees in changing their professional activity and allow them to go through the way of changing their jobs.

For this reason, it is reasonable to know the expectations of mine and mining-related company employees towards the outplacement offer in connection with the implementation of the energy transition policy of the Silesian Voivodeship. Trade Union of Miners in Poland, an organization involved in employee affairs since 1945, undertook this task. This study synthetically presents the obtained test results.

It should be added that the study was conducted in the period from July 2022 to May 2023, i.e. in the specific conditions of the energy crisis caused by the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. These events undoubtedly influenced the respondents' answers, as their optics changed, and in many cases even caused confusion.

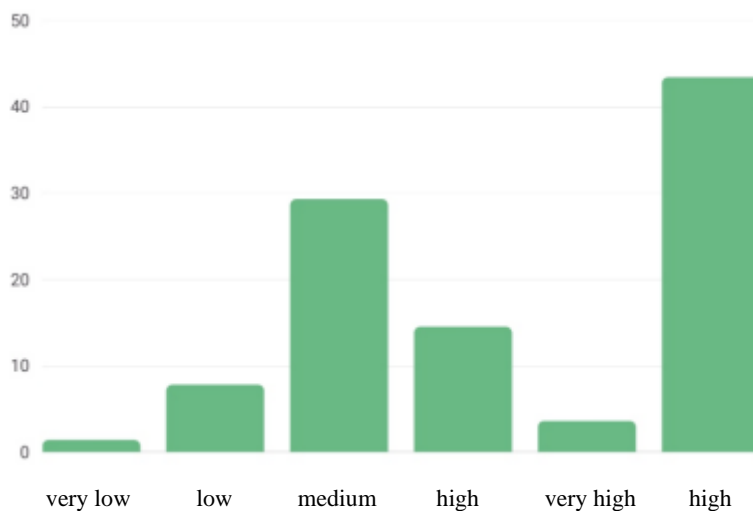
## The employment potential of mine and mining-related company employees

This chapter presents the study results, referring to the employment resource diagnosis of mine and mining-related company employees. The diagnosis aims to present the current situation in this area.

### Chances of finding employment with a new employer

The survey allowed us to determine how the respondents currently assess their chances of finding employment with a new employer. It turns out that mine employees are more sceptical about their chances of finding a new job. The differences in the distribution of both study groups' responses do not differ in a statistically significant way.

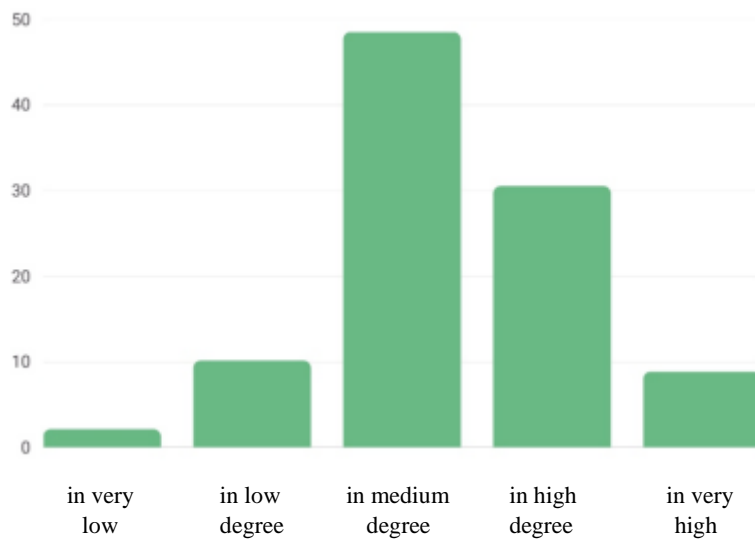
The chance evaluation of finding new employment and current jobs in the mining sector (data in %, N = 658)



### The degree of use of education on the labour market in the case of job change

The study results show a slightly weaker conviction of mine employees in terms of assessing their chances of using their current qualifications on the labour market in the event of an employment change. Employees from mining-related companies more often declare achieving this effect to a very high degree, and the staff from the mines predominates in declaring a sense of low and very low degree of such use.

The declared degree of use of education on the labour market in the case of a job change in the opinion of the surveyed crews of the mining sector (data in %)



### Use of professional competences/skills used in current job at another employer

Most of the surveyed mine and mining-related company employees think that they will use in their new job the professional competencies/skills that they currently use during their professional work. Such answers were obtained from 54.1% of respondents. 5.3% of respondents disagree. The remaining group, i.e. 40.5% do not know the answer to this question or did not provide it.

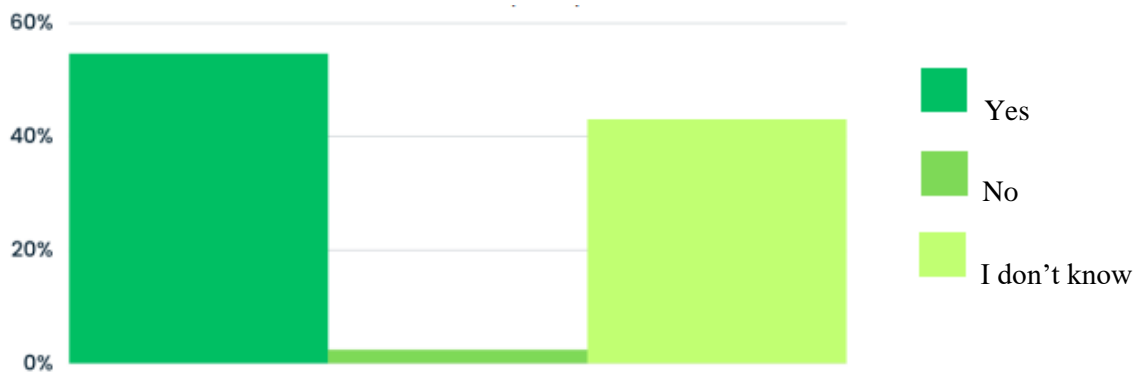
Declarative use of professional competences at another employer used in the current job



### The use of personal competencies, so-called "soft", at another employer used in the current job

The results show that 54.6% of the respondents considered that they would use personal competencies (i.e. the ability to communicate, manage, motivate others, etc.) that they use in the current job at the new employer. Negative answers were obtained from 2.4% of respondents. The remaining respondents, i.e. 43% cannot assess it - they do not know or have not given any answer.

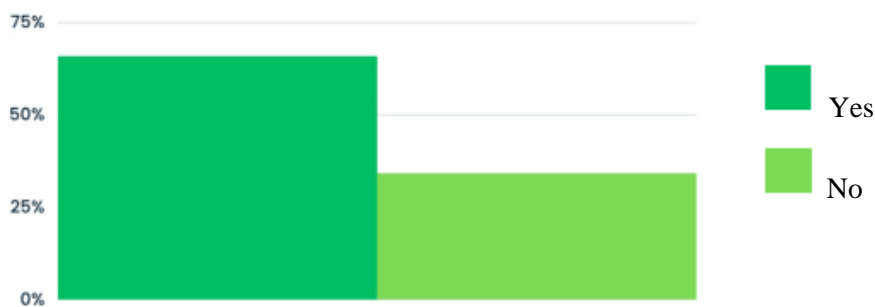
The declarative use of soft competencies at another employer used in the current job



### Self-directed job search skills

Among the surveyed community of the mining sector, 65.8% declare that they can independently look for new employment (i.e. prepare a CV, acquire and analyse job offers, to have a interview). The remaining people, i.e. 34.2% declare that they do not have such skills.

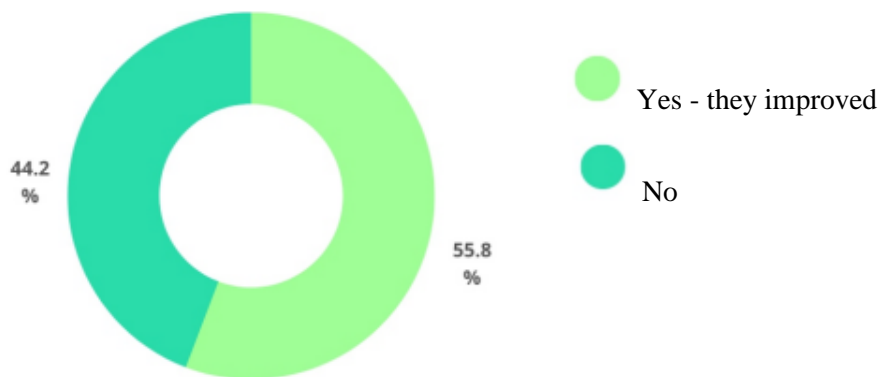
Declarative possession of independent job search skills



### Further training for mine and mining-related company employees

The obtained data indicate high activity in the field of further training for representatives of the mining sector in the region in the last five years. It is slightly higher among mine staff - 60.4% of the total population than in mining-related companies - 53.4%. In total, 55.8% of the surveyed community improved their skills through courses, training, or studies and gained new professional rights at that time.

Declarations of further training in the last 5 years by mine and mining-related company employees (data in %)



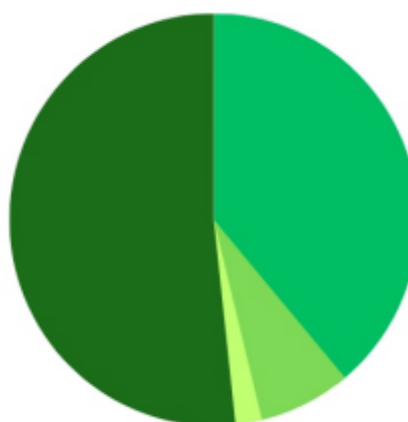
### Experience in running own business

Currently, over 2% of mine and mining-related company employees run their own business, and in the past, over 7% of respondents ran it. In turn, 38.9% of respondents have never conducted such activity. The remaining respondents did not answer the question.



Have the surveyed employees of the mining sector in the Silesian Voivodeship at risk of job loss ever run or run their own business (data in %, N=658)

- 38.9% - No, he/she has never run his/her own business
- 7.3% - Yes, he/she ran it in the past
- 2.1% - Yes, he/she currently conducts such activity and is employed at the same time
- 51,7% - Did not answer the question



### **Attitudes of mine and mining-related company employees towards changes in professional activity in connection with the energy transition**

In this part of the study, attention was focused on aspects related to the professional future of mine and mining-related company employees in connection with changes in their professional activity caused by the implementation of the energy transition process of the Silesian Voivodeship.

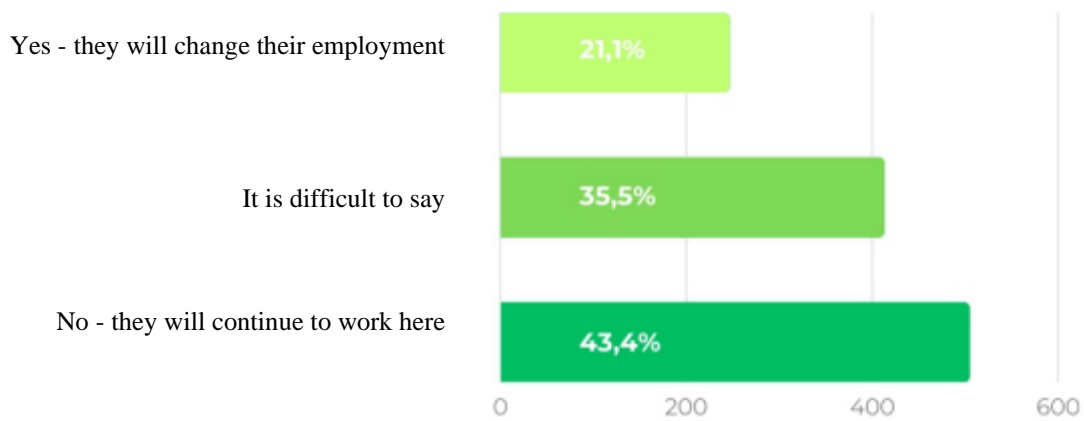
### **Predictions regarding changes in the professional situation of mine and company employees from the mining environment in the region**

Of the 1,162 surveyed mine and mining-related companies employees, over 40% believe that despite the decarbonisation in the region, they will still be employed in the mining sector (their professional situation will not change), 1/5 of respondents think that they will change their workplace, while over 1/3 - they were unable to give an unambiguous answer on this subject.

Do you expect to need to take up another job or change employment on the labour market? The structure of the obtained data is distributed as follows:

- ▶ 246 employees (21.1%) - yes - they will change their employment,
- ▶ 412 employees (35.5%) - it is difficult to say,

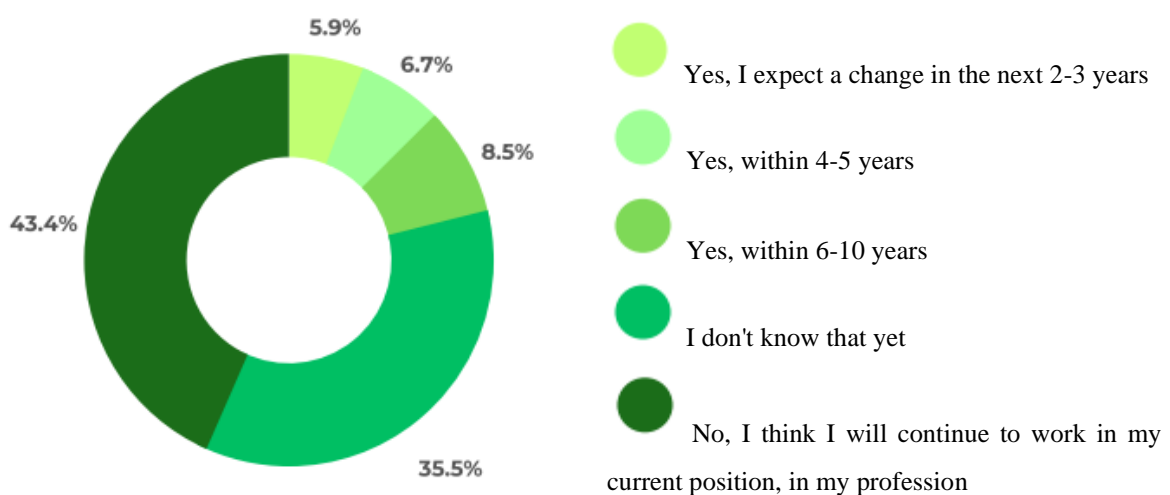
► 504 employees (43.4%) - no - they will continue to work here



### Projected duration of loss of employment

A total of one-fifth of the currently employed staff (23.9% of mine employees and 19.9% from other companies related to the mining industry) expect a change in their workplace. Considering the time in which respondents anticipate the need to change jobs and leave the mining sector, a higher percentage of employees expect this in the distant future, i.e. 6-10 years (8.5%), than in the nearer future, i.e. 4-5 years (6.7%) and 2-3 years (5.9%). These data do not differ statistically significantly due to both types of work environments.

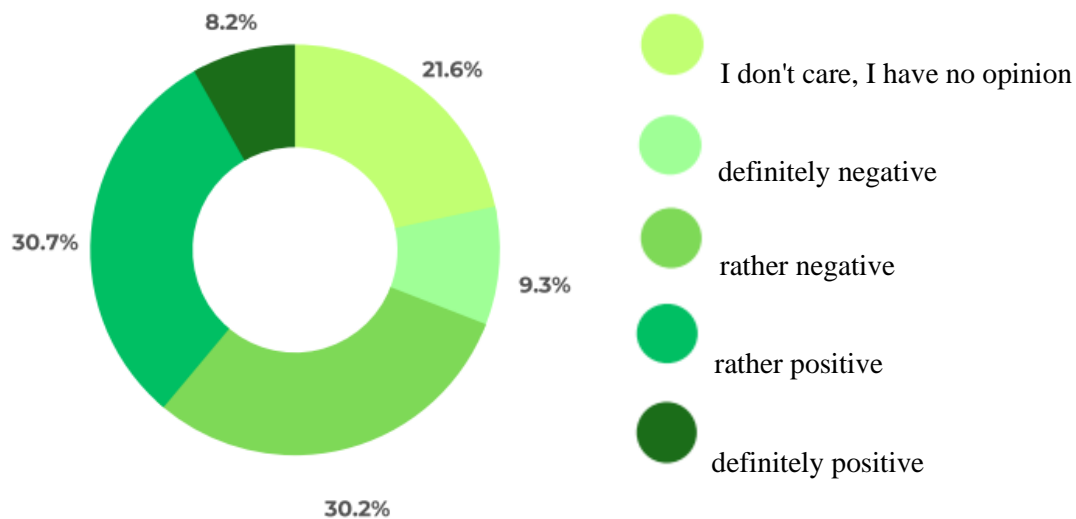
Opinions of the surveyed employees on the period in which they expect to change their place of employment or profession in connection with the transition of mining in the Silesian Voivodeship (data in %)



## The attitude of mine and mining-related company employees to change employer and employment

Almost the same percentage of mine and mining-related companies employees who expect to leave the mining sector (or are unsure about this matter) assess the change of employer positively (38.9%). 39.5% of respondents have a negative attitude to such changes, while 21.6% of employees have an indifferent attitude to it.

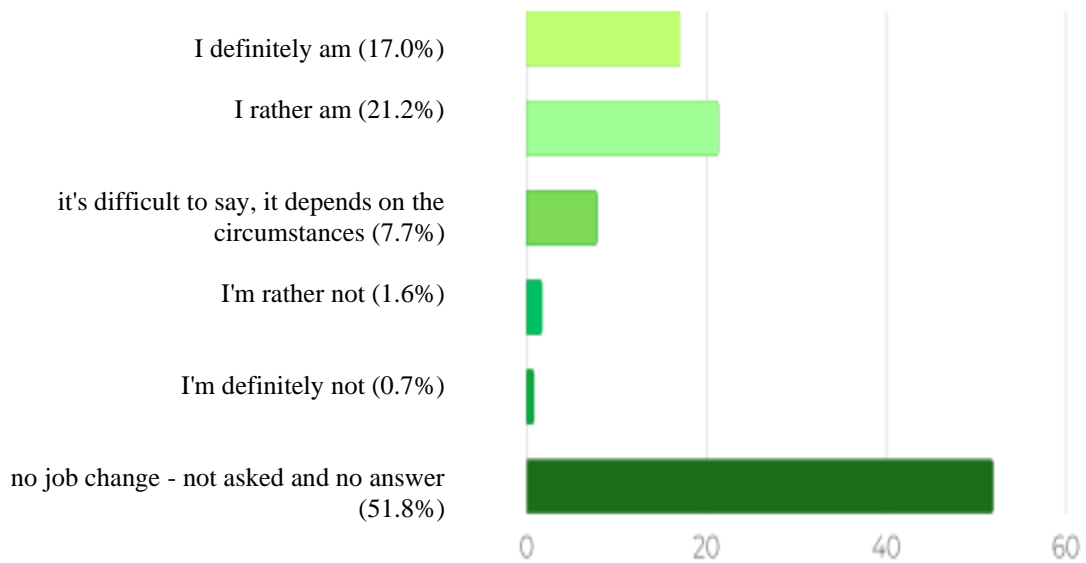
Attitude of employees to the loss of their current job as a result of decarbonization of the economy (data in %, N=658 people)



## The tendency of mine and mining-related companies employees to improve their qualifications

Of the surveyed mine and mining-related companies employees, 38.2% are interested in improving their professional qualifications. Approximately 8% make their decision about further education dependent on circumstances. Only 2.3% are not interested in activity in this area.

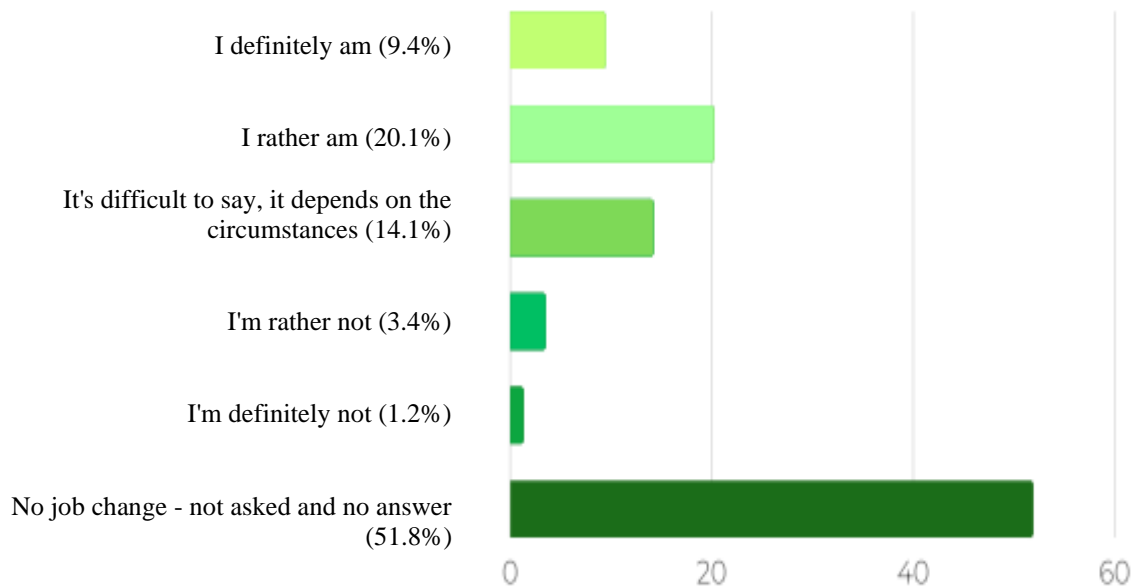
Employees' answers whether, if it is necessary to change their employer, they are interested in improving (completing) their qualifications related to the current profession?



### **Readiness of employees of mines and mining companies to retrain and move to other types of employment**

**Of the 1,162 surveyed mine and mining-related company employees, almost 1/3 - 29.5% are willing to change their profession by retraining.** At the level of mines, they represent 48.8% of the staff at risk of possible reductions, and in companies from their surroundings 53.7% who feel that they can be dismissed. It was found that in mines those definitely interested in retraining constitute 10.8%, compared to 8.7% of such declarations from staff employed in surrounding companies.

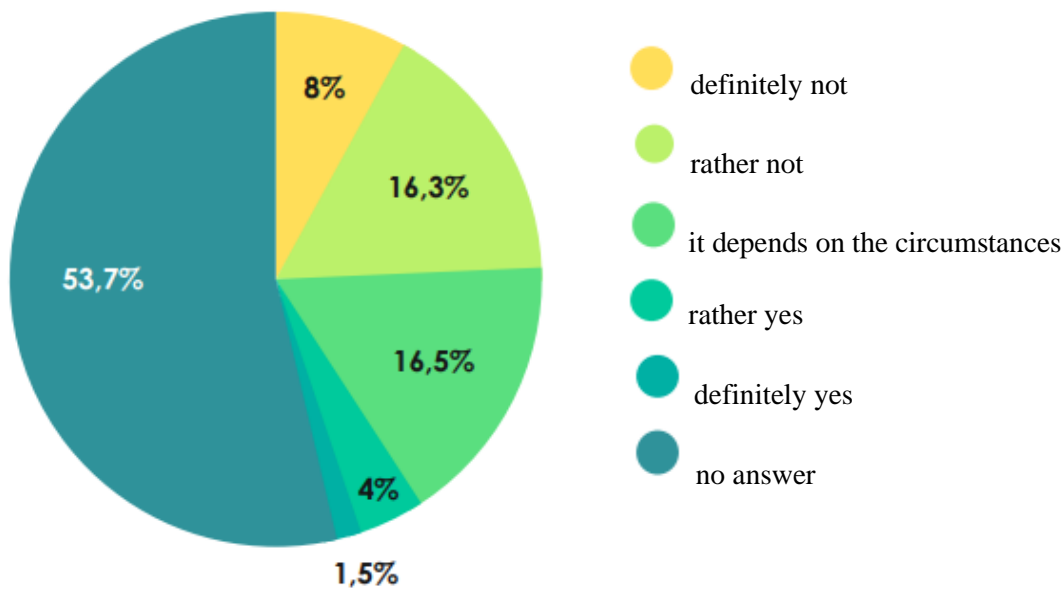
Employees' answers whether, in the case of the need to change their employer, they are willing to retrain (change of profession)?



### The interest of mine and mining-related company employees in opening their own business

Among the surveyed employees of the mining sector who expect to change jobs, there are more of them who do not plan to open their own business in the future. A total of 8.0% of respondents answered "definitely not", and "rather not" - 16.3%. 1.5% of all respondents are determined to adopt such a solution, and 4.0% of respondents are rather determined. Depending on the existing circumstances, 16.5% of the entire sample plans to start a business. The remaining people did not respond.

### Declaration of opening a business in the future



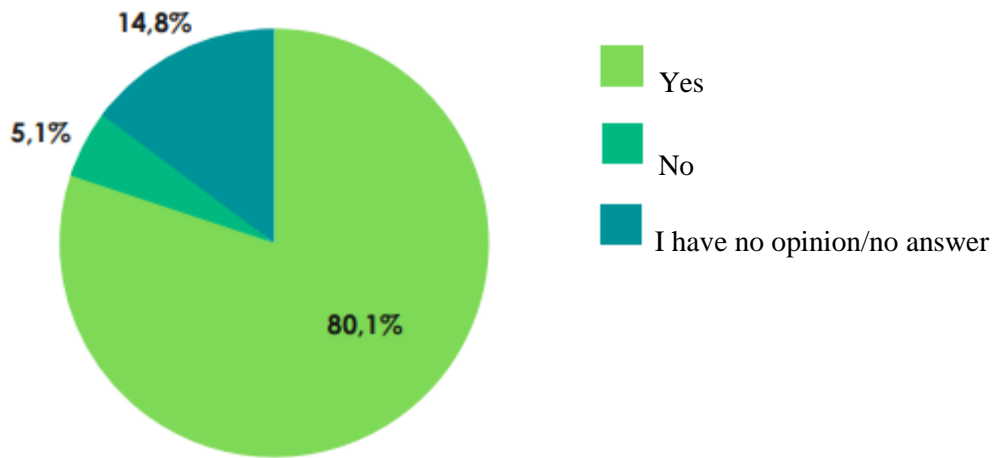
### Expectations of mine and mining-related company employees regarding support in changing their professional activity

The next part of the study presents employees' expectations in the field of outplacement activities, aimed at mitigating the negative effects of the energy transition and carrying it out in a just manner.

#### Employees' expectations in the field of support in changing professional activity

Of the 658 employees who expect to change their current employment, 80.1%, i.e. 527 people, expect support in finding a new job. Such expectations were more often expressed by respondents employed in mining-related companies - 82.4%, than in mines - 75.3%. Only 5.1% of employees do not count on receiving such support (including 7.1% of staff from mines and only 3.1% in mining-related companies). The remaining respondents have no opinion or did not mark the answer.

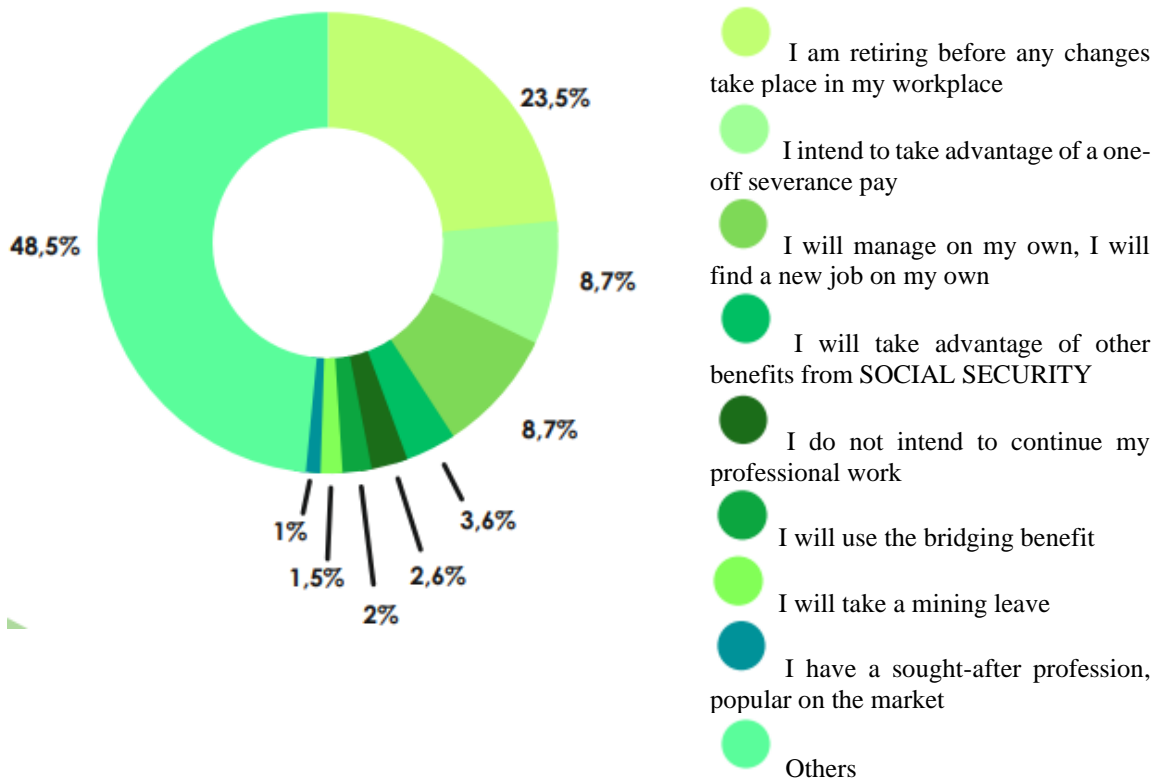
### Opinions on the expected support in changing professional activity



### Reasons for lack of interest in supporting the change of professional activity

It can be stated that the most important reason for the lack of interest in supporting the dismissed employees is the declared/planned retirement in both groups before the expected changes. The same small percentage of respondents believe that they will be able to find a new job on their own and that they intend to link their departure from work with the use of one-off severance pay. Among the expected redundancies, in the perspective of several years or uncertain of their professional situation, people expressing the above beliefs account for 15.3%.

The indications obtained in response to the question: Why do you not expect support?



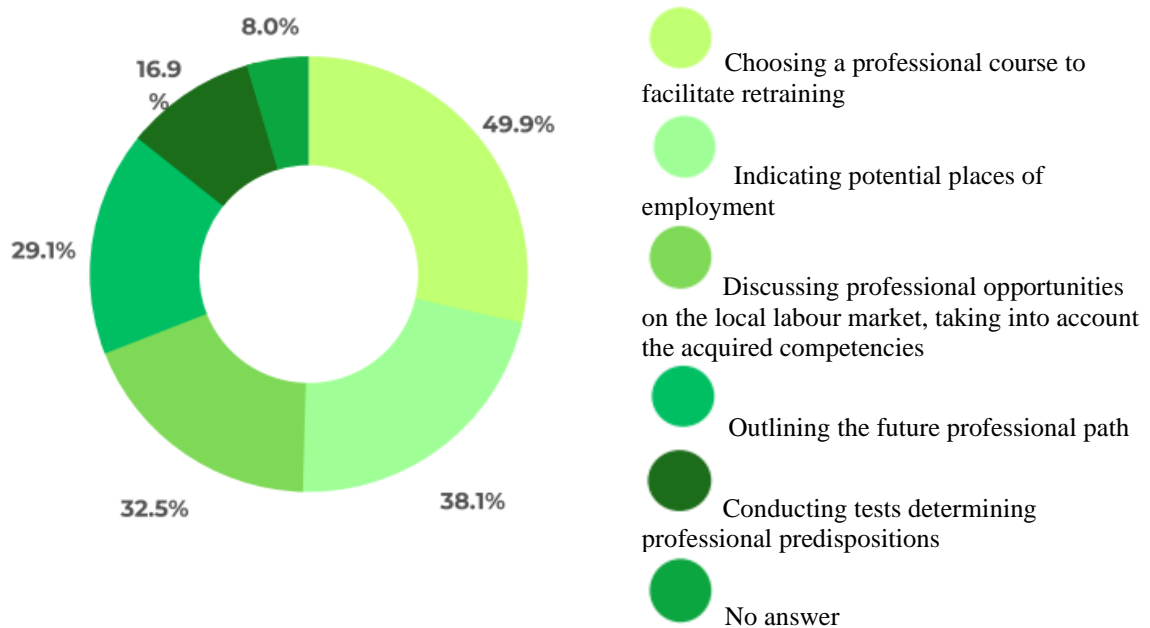
### Expectations of mine and mining-related company employees affected by the energy transition towards the support related to professional counselling

Of the 658 respondents allowing a possible change of employment - 276 people, i.e. 41.9% consider support for employees losing their jobs through professional counselling to be "very necessary", and 334 people, i.e. 50.8% - to be "rather necessary". This constitutes a total of 92.7% of affirmative answers regarding this form of support.



## Desirable aspects of professional counselling

Opinions of the surveyed employees on the most important forms of professional counselling provided as part of the support for people losing their jobs in the mining industry and its surroundings



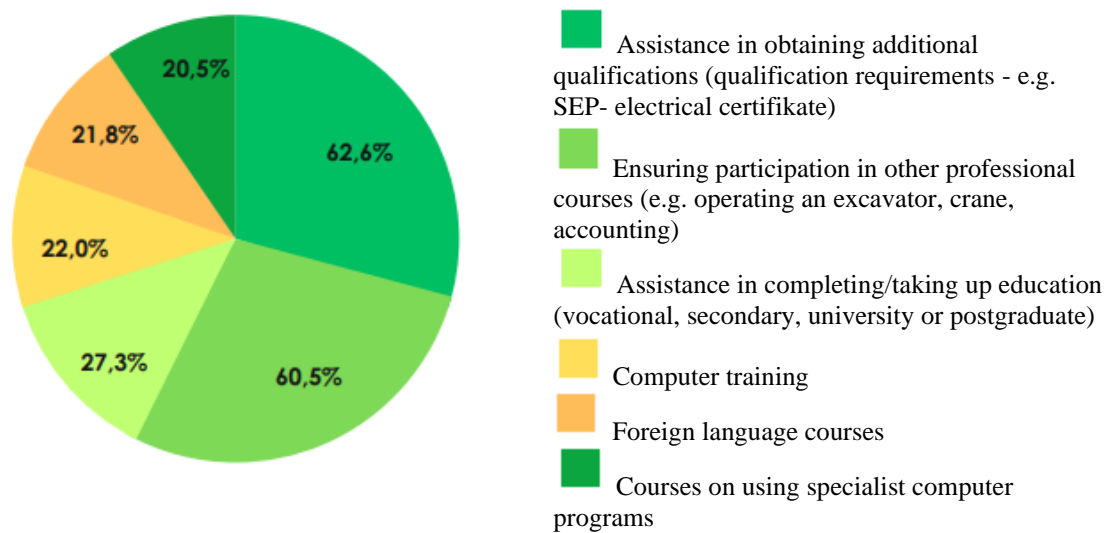
The percentages do not add up to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer.

## Expectations of mine and mining-related company employees affected by the energy transition toward support related to retraining or supplementing professional competencies and qualifications

Of the 1,162 surveyed mine and mining-related company employees, over 1/3 (35.6%) consider support in the form of retraining or supplementing professional competencies and qualifications to be very necessary, and 53.6% of the total respondents to be "rather necessary" (giving a total of 89.2% of affirmative answers), with 1% of statements "rather unnecessary".

## Desirable types of actions related to retraining or supplementing professional competencies

Opinions of employees waiting for help in retraining on the preferred actions related to supplementing professional competencies

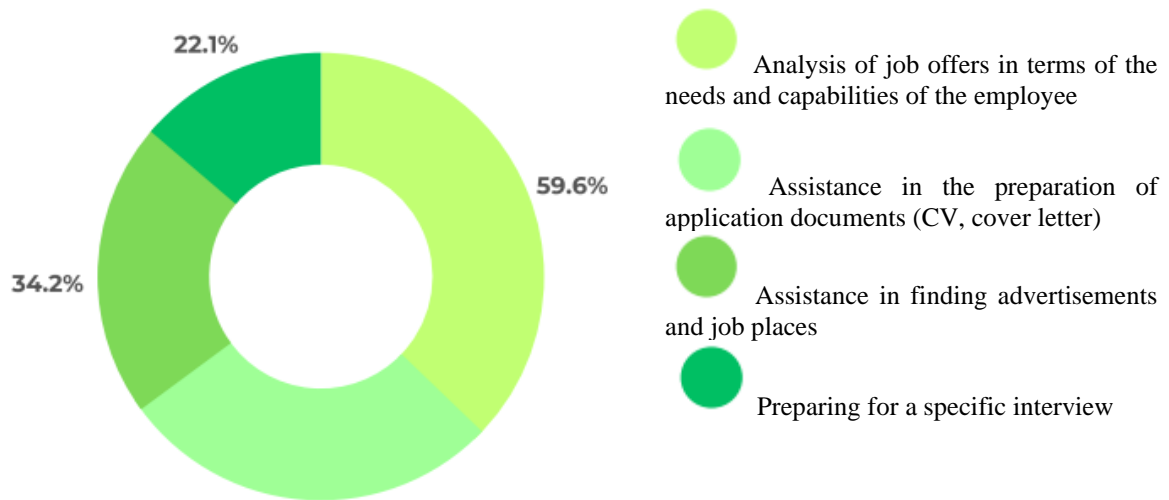


The percentages do not add up to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer.

The study results showed that 85.3% of employees in the mining sector consider assistance in the form of job placement to be necessary in supporting laid-off employees (with 1/3 of respondents definitely, and more than half - moderately). The assistance of employment intermediaries was considered to be "very necessary" by 32.1% of the total, while "rather necessary" by 53.2% of the total sample, and "not necessary" according to only 2% of the employees surveyed in this survey.

### Desirable types of actions related to professional intermediation

Preferred forms of employment intermediaries' activity for the activation of people changing employment in the hard coal mining sector and its surroundings.

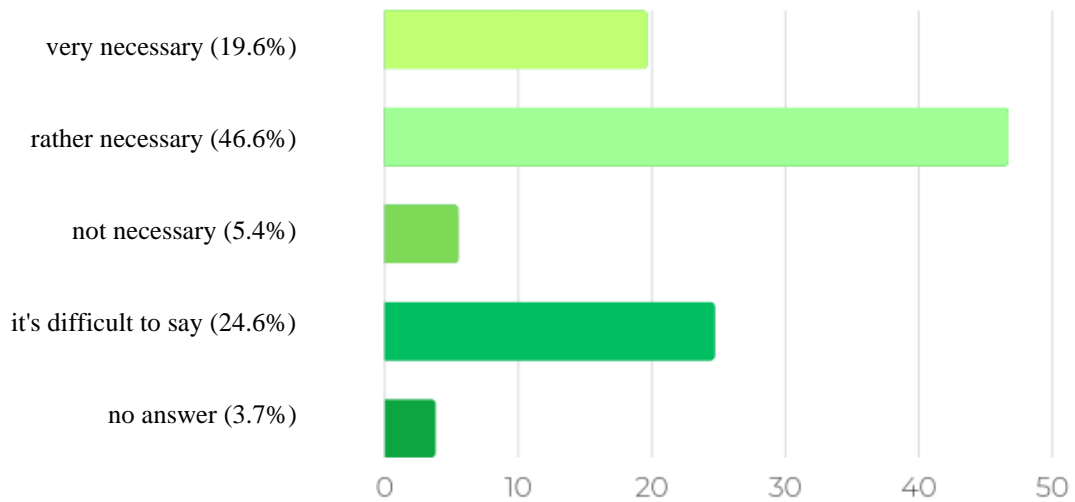


The percentages do not add up to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer.

### Expectations of mine and mining-related company employees affected by the energy transition towards support related to psychological assistance

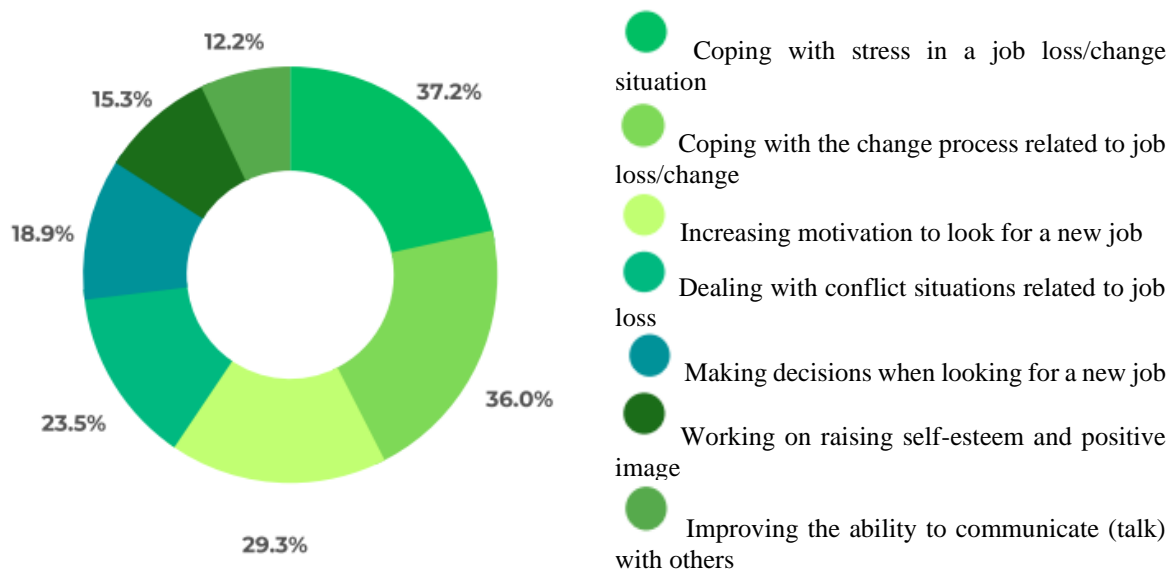
The need for psychological assistance during a change of workplace is noted by a total of almost 2/3 of the mining sector respondents. At the same time, 1/5 of all respondents (% working in the mine) express a definitely positive opinion in this matter, while almost half a moderate opinion. Psychological assistance is not necessary according to only 5.4% of all surveyed employees, with 24.6% of statements "it's difficult to say" and 3.7% of non-response.

## Opinions on expected support related to psychological assistance



## Desirable types of actions related to psychological assistance

Employees' opinions towards offering psychological assistance to people requiring a change of workplace and retraining - *which elements of psychological support for the dismissed employees seem to be the most important?*



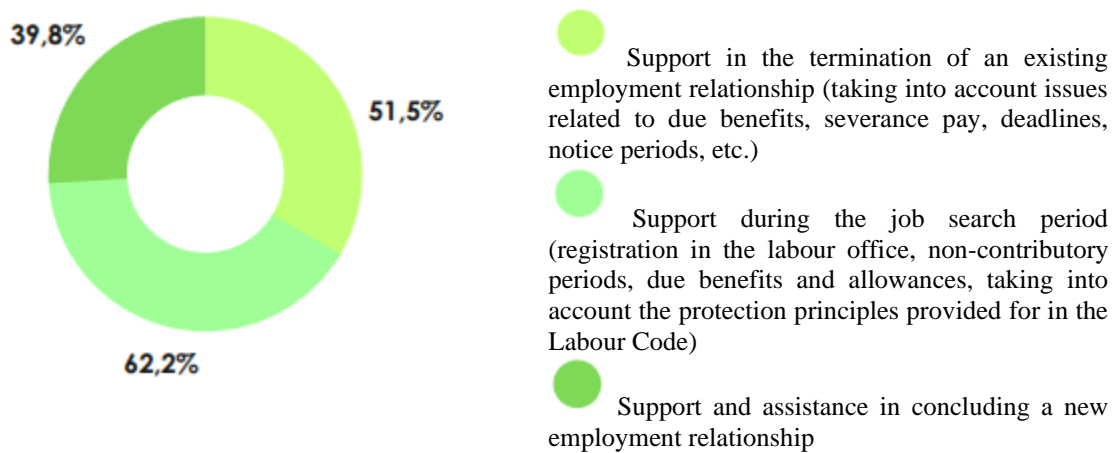
The percentages do not add up to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer.

### **Expectations of mine and mining-related company employees affected by the energy transition towards support related to legal aid**

A total of 86.7% of respondents in the mining sector note the need for legal assistance during a change of workplace. At the same time, 38.2% of respondents (24.7% employed in mines) definitely see such a need, and moderately - 48.5% of respondents. Only 1.9% of all respondents consider it to be not necessary.

### **Desirable types of actions related to legal aid**

Opinions on the scope of legal aid offered to people requiring job change and retraining

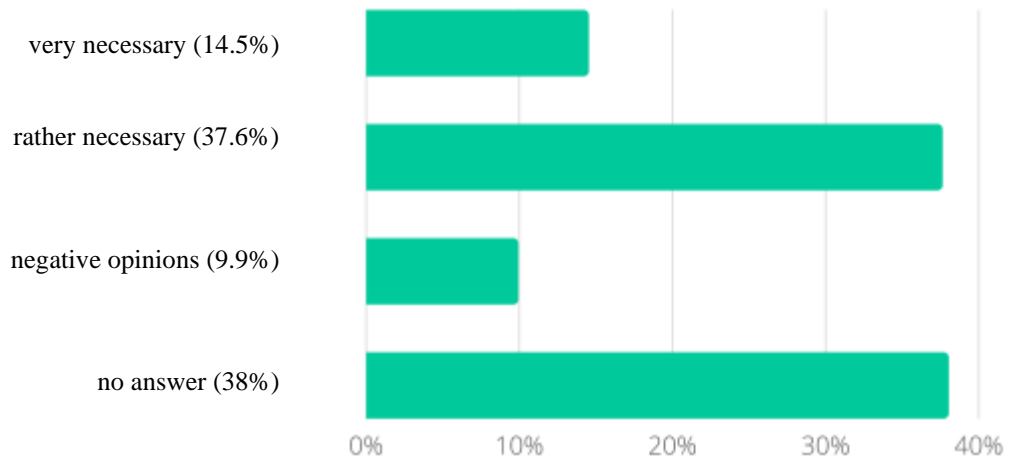


The percentages do not add up to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer.

### **Expectations of employees of mines and mining related companies affected by the energy transition towards coaching support**

The results show that 14.5% of all respondents expressed the opinion that coaching support is "very necessary" and 37.6% that it is "rather necessary". Negative opinions on support through coaching were 9.9% in total.

### Opinions on the expected support related to coaching



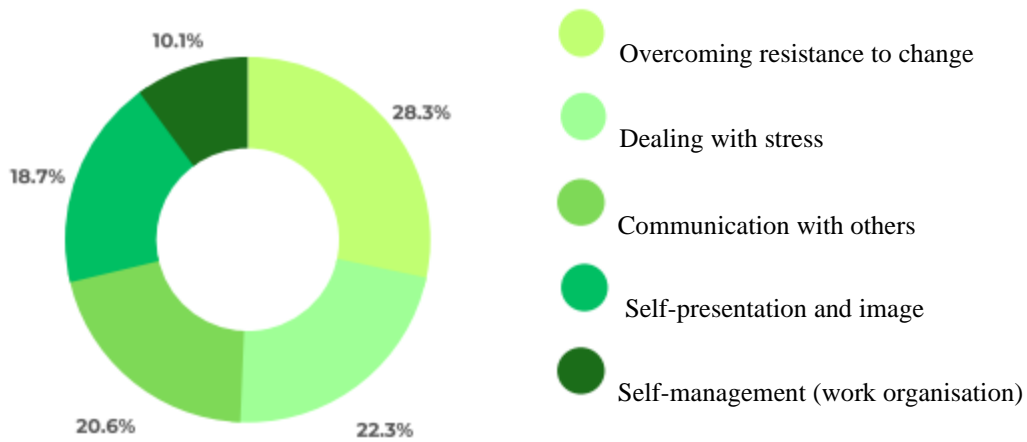
### Expectations of mine and mining-related company employees affected by the energy transition towards support related to development of soft skills

Responses on the expected support in the areas of development of effective communication skills, self-presentation, and time management at the stage of searching for a new career path, indicate a high level of such needs among respondents. 19.6% consider this kind of help to be 'very necessary' and 59.9% to be 'rather necessary'. Negative opinions on this type of support were a total of only 2.5%.



## Desirable types of actions related to the development of soft skills

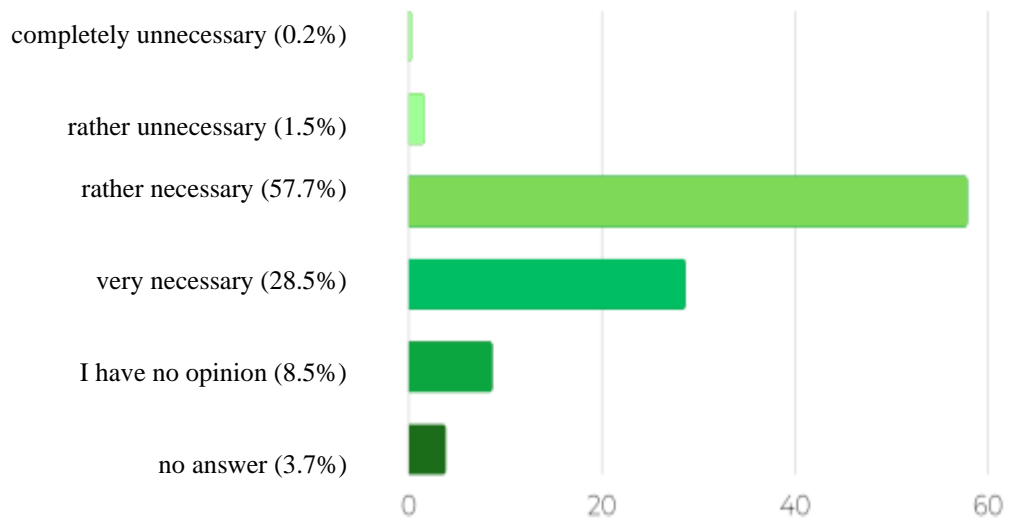
Opinions of employees waiting for help in retraining related to personal development



## Expectations of mine and mining-related company employees affected by the energy transition towards support related to the development of labour market skills

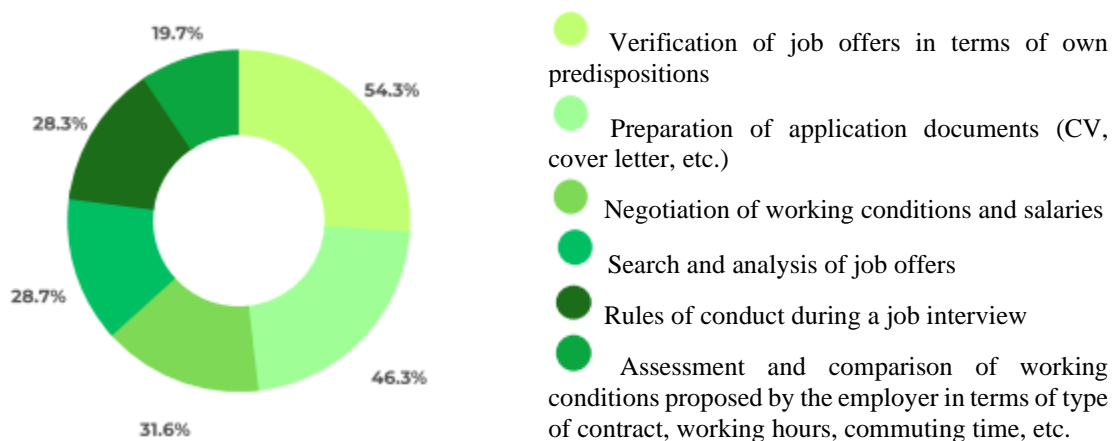
Assistance related to the development of skills related to moving around the labour market was considered to be "very necessary" by 28.5% of all respondents, while "rather necessary" by 57.5% of the entire sample. Developing such skills is "rather unnecessary" according to only 1.5% of all respondents

Opinions of mine staff and surrounding companies on support for the development of job search and movement on the employment market skills



**Desirable types of actions related to the development of skills to navigate on the labour market**

Opinions of employees waiting for support related to moving around the market



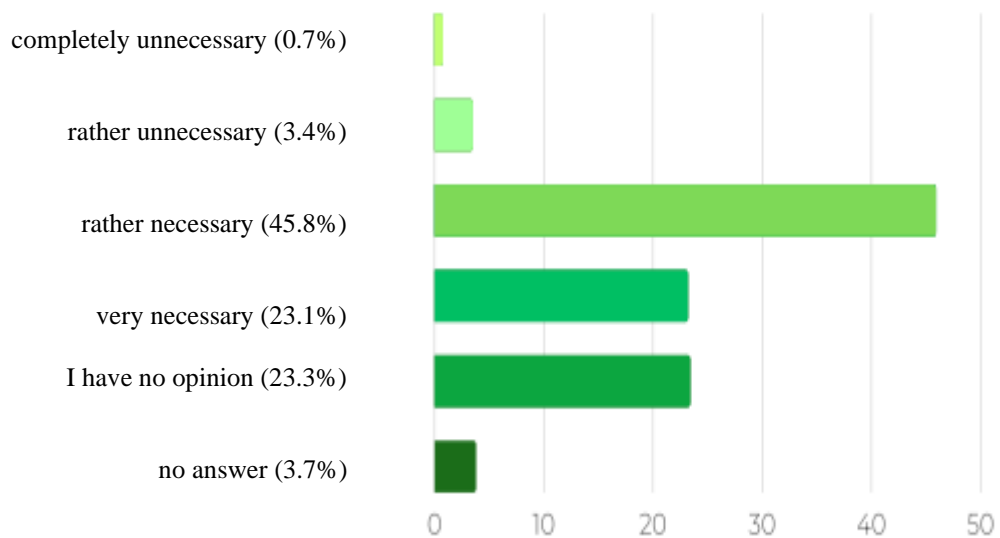
The percentages do not add up to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer.



### Expectations of mine and mining-related company employees affected by the energy transition towards support in setting up their own business

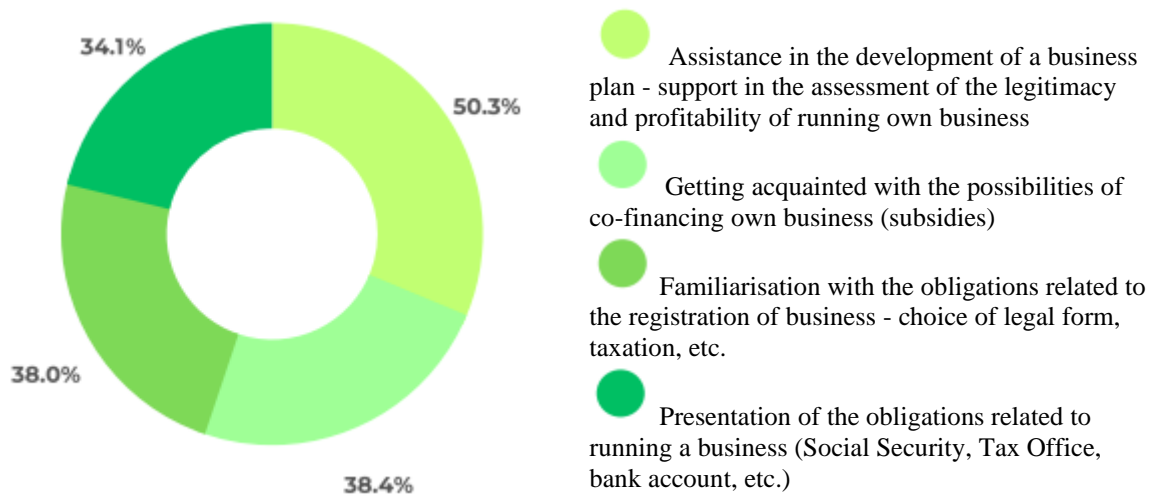
45.8% of the surveyed employees of mines and mining-related enterprises consider support in setting up their own business to be moderately necessary, and over 23% of the respondents (23.1%) consider it to be very necessary. Negative responses to this topic concerned a total of 4.1% of respondents. Quite a large percentage, namely 27% of respondents did not have an opinion on this topic.

The expectation of mine staff and surrounding companies regarding support for setting up their own business (data in %)



### Desirable types of actions related to assistance in setting up own business - employees' opinions on the scope of support for starting their own business

## Employees' opinions on the range of support for starting their own business



The percentages do not add up to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer.

### **Preferences of employees of mines and mining-related companies regarding selected aspects of the organization of support for employees leaving the mining sector**

This section presents the results of research relating to three aspects related to the organization of the process of supporting employees leaving the mining sector, regarding:

- ▶ entities organizing support,
- ▶ sources of financing supporting actions,
- ▶ the time of providing support.

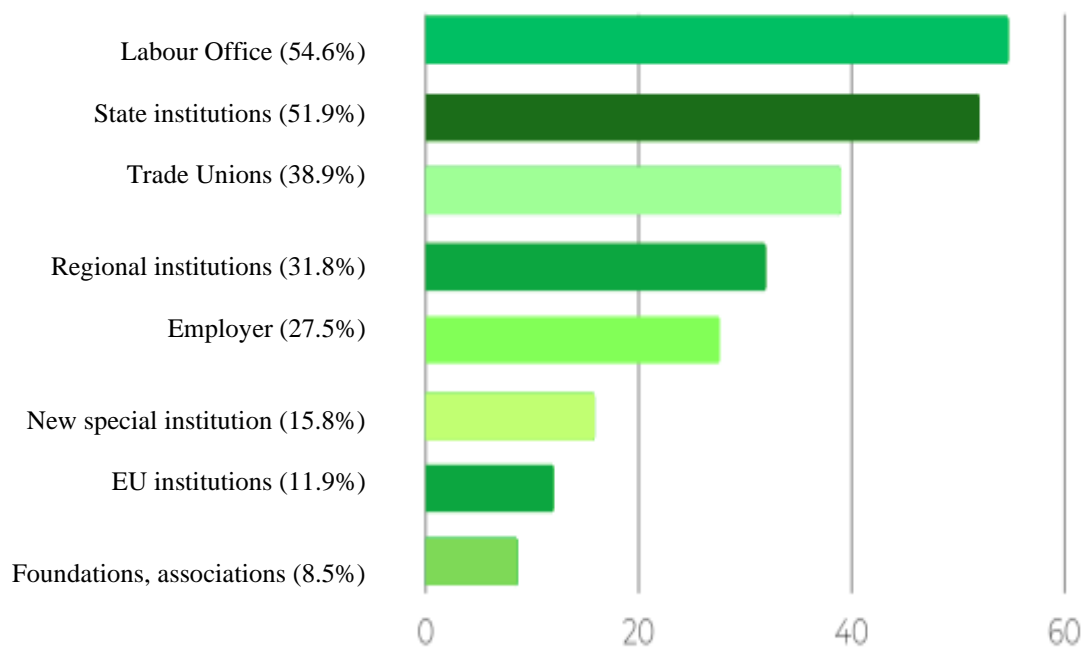


## Preferred entities organizing support for outgoing employees of mines and mining-related companies

The key entities that, according to all respondents (1162 people), should organize support for dismissed employees in the mining sector are:

- ▶ district labour offices (54.6% of indications),
- ▶ state institutions (51.9% of indications)
- ▶ and trade unions (38.9%).

Respondents' opinions on the institutions that should organize support aimed at dismissed employees of the mining sector

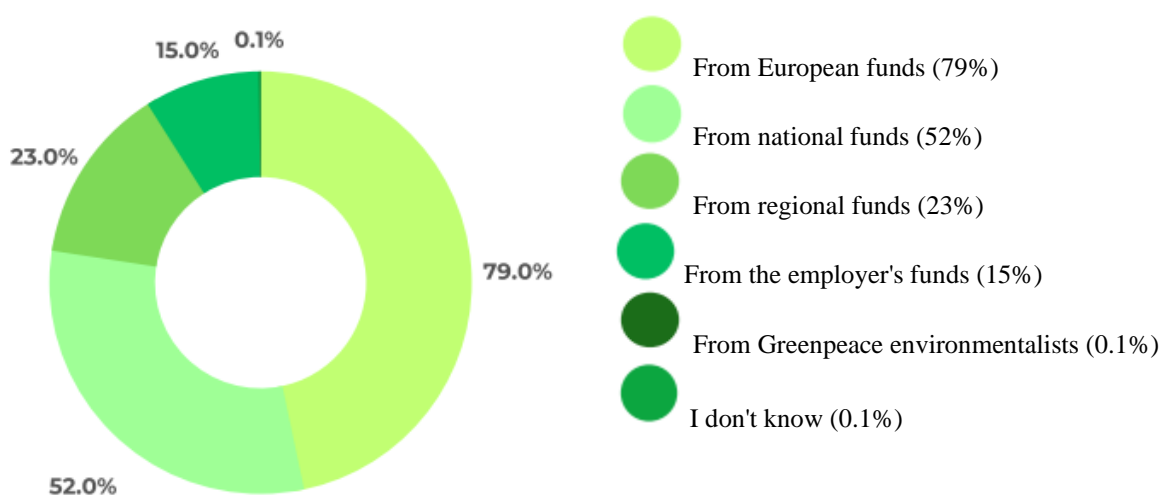


The percentages do not add up to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer.

## Sources of financing support for employees leaving the mining sector

The hierarchy of preferred entities that, in the opinion of the respondents, should co-finance the support of employees of the mining sector in the transition to other sectors of the economy is clear. First of all, European funds are expected - probably from EU aid funds, and then national funds from the state budget. Regional and employers' funds are indicated as complementary to the main financial streams.

Opinions of the surveyed employees on the sources from which funds should be obtained to co-finance support programs for people losing their jobs in the mining industry and its environment (data in %)



The percentages do not add up to 100% because the respondent could choose more than one answer.

## Support time

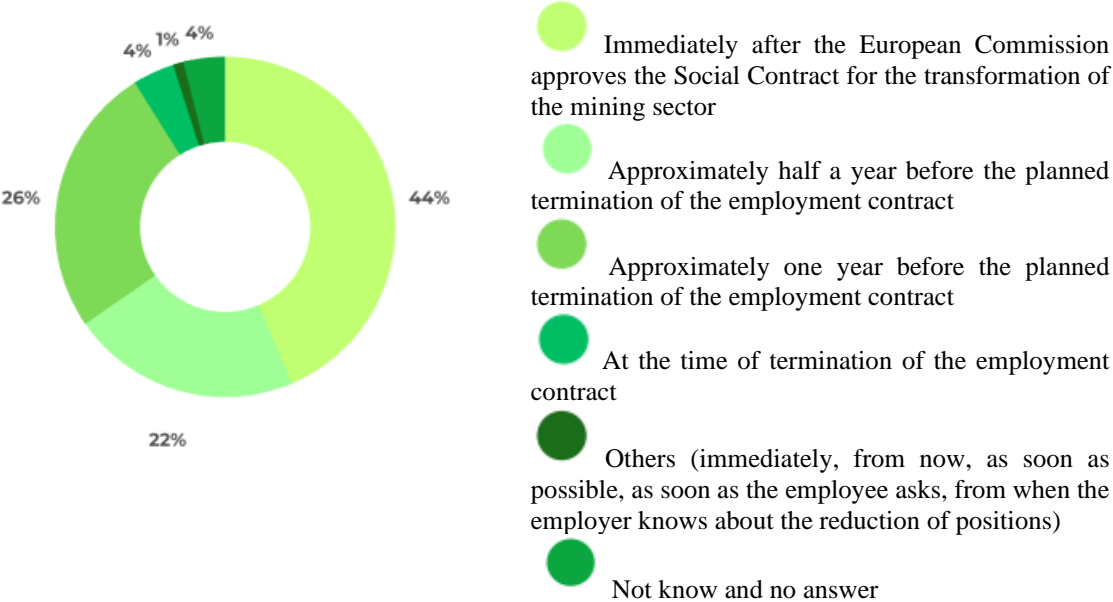
The results of the survey showed that 43.6% of respondents believe that support should be provided immediately after the European Commission approves the Social Contract<sup>1</sup> on the transition of the mining sector. Approximately 26% of mine crews and

<sup>1</sup> Social Contract on the transition of the hard coal mining sector and selected transition processes in the Silesian Voivodship signed 21 of may 2021 between the government side, the trade union side and mining municipalities, <https://www.gov.pl/web/aktywa-panstwowe/umowa-spoleczna>

employees of mining- related companies consider offering support to employees from reduced positions approximately one year before the planned termination of their employment contract to be appropriate. According to the respondents, the moment of termination of the employment contract is not the right time to provide support - in both cases - to employees of mines and mining-related companies - it was indicated by 3.6% of the respondents.



Opinions of the surveyed employees on the period in which support programs for people losing their jobs in the mining industry and its surroundings should be implemented (data in %)



## Conclusions

**The most important conclusions from the study are presented below:**

### **1. Employment potential of employees of mines and mining-related companies**

- ▶ The respondents were found to be highly active in further training.
- ▶ Employees of mines have a slightly weaker conviction than employees of mining-related companies about their chances of using their current qualifications on the labour market if they need to change employment.
- ▶ Employees of mines are slightly more critical of their chances of coping with the labour market when looking for a new job.
- ▶ Most of the surveyed employees of mines and mining-related enterprises threatened with dismissal, can look for a new place of employment on their own.
- ▶ A small number of respondents are currently self-employed or have been self-employed in the past.

### **2. Attitudes of employees toward changes in professional activity**

- ▶ In connection with the energy transition process, most of the surveyed employees in general expect a change in their workplace or are uncertain in this respect.
- ▶ Opinions are divided on the attitude of employees of mines and mining-related companies to the change of employer and place of employment. A similar percentage of negative (39.5%) and positive (38.9%) feelings were obtained, and 21.6% of employees are indifferent to a possible change of employment.
- ▶ Of the surveyed employees of mines and mining-related companies, almost half are interested in improving their professional qualifications, and almost 1/3 are willing to change their profession by retraining.

### **3. Expectations of employees in terms of support in changing professional activity**

- ▶ Most of the respondents expecting to leave their jobs or do not know whether this will happen soon, expect specific support from employers, facilitating the change of professional activity and transition to a new workplace.

- ▶ The vast majority of all surveyed employees of mines and mining-related enterprises recognize that employees of the mining sector who lose their jobs should be supported by external entities in finding new employment.

#### **4. Employees' expectations regarding the individual components of outplacement actions**

- ▶ Most of the surveyed employees, who allow a change in their employment, see the need for support in the form of professional counselling. They considered three key forms of counselling for them: support in choosing a professional course, assistance in identifying potential jobs, and discussing professional opportunities in the local labour market, taking into account their competencies.
- ▶ Most of all respondents considered support in retraining or supplementing their professional competencies and qualifications to be necessary. They considered the most important three forms of assistance in this area: support in obtaining additional qualifications, ensuring participation in other professional courses and support in supplementing and starting education (at school or university).
- ▶ Most of the respondents were interested in receiving legal assistance. As part of this assistance, the respondents considered the following to be the most important: support during the job search period, taking into account registration at the labour office, as well as counselling support regarding labour law and social security law.
- ▶ The need for support in terms of developing skills to move around the labour market was declared by the majority of all respondents. According to the respondents, the most important action is to verify job offers in terms of their own predispositions and expectations.
- ▶ Most of all respondents see the need to use employment agencies.
- ▶ The need for psychological assistance during a change of workplace is noted by a total of almost 2/3 of the mining sector respondents.
- ▶ Less than 3/4 of all respondents consider support in setting up their own business to be necessary, with the most important element being assistance in developing a business plan and assessing the profitability of starting a business.
- ▶ The demand for psychological assistance is relatively smaller, but also of significant interest (over 3/5 of all respondents). In this area, respondents most often indicated that they expect support in coping with stress in the event of loss/change of job, in coping with the process of change and in increasing motivation to look for a new job.

- ▶ Respondents also expressed the need for support in the development of personal skills and coaching.
- ▶ As the most important components of support related to personal development, the respondents indicated: overcoming resistance to change, coping with stress, and the ability to present oneself and shape one's image.

## **5. Preferences in the organization of the support process for employees from reduced positions in the mining industry**

- ▶ According to the respondents, the key entities that should organize the process of support for employees from reduced jobs in the mining industry are district labour offices and state institutions.
- ▶ Trade unions, according to the respondents, should also play an important role in this process. Approximately 1/3 of the respondents count on regional institutions and employer activity.
- ▶ The respondents express a critical attitude towards the idea of establishing a new, purposeful institution organizing the process of support for dismissed employees.
- ▶ The reluctance of employees to the organization of support by the EU institutions was noticed.
- ▶ Non-governmental organizations (foundations, associations) are the least popular in organizing possible assistance to dismissed employees of the mining sector.
- ▶ Respondents indicated that the main sources of funding for support, for people losing their jobs in the mining industry and its surroundings, should be EU and national funds.
- ▶ The respondents most often indicated that the aid should be granted immediately after the approval of the European Commission of the Social Agreement. The respondents also indicated about a year or about half a year before the planned termination of the employment contract as the appropriate moment for assisting.



## **Summary**

The research carried out is the contribution of the Trade Union of Miners in Poland to shaping knowledge about the needs and motivations of mine crews and mining-related companies, and thus to building a constructive social dialogue around the main challenges facing the energy and socio-economic transition of the Silesian Voivodeship, including those related to the need to change the work or profession of many employees of the mining sector.

The research team hopes that the study, the report and this brochure synthetically present the diagnosed problems and that the involvement of representatives of various institutions with the support of trade unions will allow employees to go through this difficult process more easily.