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Human Capital Multidisciplinary Research Center

# Russia's Creative Class: a Portrait in Numbers

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Human in the Era of Technological Transformations

*This digest was produced under the research project Methodological Foundations for Measuring the Socio-economic Characteristics of Creative Industries and the Creative Class*

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# Introduction

In recent years, the world has paid special attention to the development of creative industries – economic activities based on the links between creativity, culture and technology. They include music, movies and animation, video games, architecture, design, fashion, visual and performing arts, broadcasting, advertising, etc. [NRU HSE, 2021]. According to the most conservative estimates, the creative sector's contribution to global GDP is at least 3%, its share in world trade is estimated at about the same level [UNCTAD, 2022], and the share in employment reaches 6.2% [UNESCO, 2022].

One of the features of the creative economy is the decisive role of human potential in the creation of the final product. In this context, the term “creative class” is widely used [Florida, 2002], which is understood as a set of people employed in certain (creative) professions. Representatives of this class work not only in creative industries, but also in traditional industries, contributing to the creation of added value in the economy as a whole [Higgs et al., 2008].

To date, there has been no single approach to defining the creative class in the world. Different researchers and experts have different approaches. However, they unanimously agree that the creative class is one of the drivers in terms of developing new ideas, technologies, innovative products and services that create added value and contribute to the socio-economic development of companies, cities, regions and countries as a whole [Alfken et al., 2015; Batabyal, Nijkamp, 2010; Boschma, Fritsch, 2009; Florida, 2002; L’Heureux, 2015].

For the purposes of this study, the creative class is understood as a set of persons employed in professions related to creative and intellectual activities. This is a heterogeneous group that includes professionals in traditional creative areas (arts and crafts, painting, music, culture), as well as in high-tech areas – film industry, design, digital technologies.

The digest presents quantitative characteristics of Russia's creative class based on official statistics. They can be used for research and management purposes, including monitoring the implementation of the Concept for the development of creative industries and mechanisms for their state support in large and major urban agglomerations until 2030.[1]

[1] Approved by Instruction of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 2613-r of September 20, 2021.

# Methodology

To study the creative class in Russia, the team of the Institute of Statistical Studies and Economics of Knowledge (ISSEK) of the National Research University Higher School of Economics developed a theoretical and methodological framework (Table 1).

Table 1
**Theoretical and methodological framework for quantitative measurement of the creative class**

| Area of analysis | Professional structure of the creative class | Main characteristics | Skills and competences in demand |
|---|---|---|---|
| Key indicators | Number of people employed in creative professions (in creative and traditional industries) | Socio-demographic characteristics and employment conditions in the creative professions (creative and traditional industries) | The most important knowledge and skills for performing job duties of graduates of secondary vocational and higher education programs who had their first job in a creative profession |
| Methodological basis for measurement | Methodological framework: Classification of creative professions (based on the OKZ-2014)<br>Source: Labor Force Survey (LFS), Rosstat<br>Methods: descriptive analysis | Methodological framework: Classification of creative professions (based on the OKZ-2014)<br>Source: Labor Force Survey, Rosstat<br>Methods: descriptive analysis | Methodological framework: Classification of skills based on the ILO methodology (vocational/ technical, basic, universal).<br>Source: Sample survey of employment of graduates of secondary vocational and higher education, Rosstat.<br>Methods: descriptive and regression analysis |
| Theoretical and methodological premises | On the basis of international experience, a list of professions that can be classified as creative has been formed [Higgs et al., 2008; Bakhshi et al., 2013; Cruz, Teixeira, 2014] | The creative class differs from other professional groups by a number of characteristics (education, regional localization, working conditions, etc.) [Florida, Mellander, 2020; McAndrew, McKimm, 2010] | Creative activities may require certain skills and competencies [Higgs et al., 2008; Bridgstock, 2011; Mellander, Florida, 2021] |

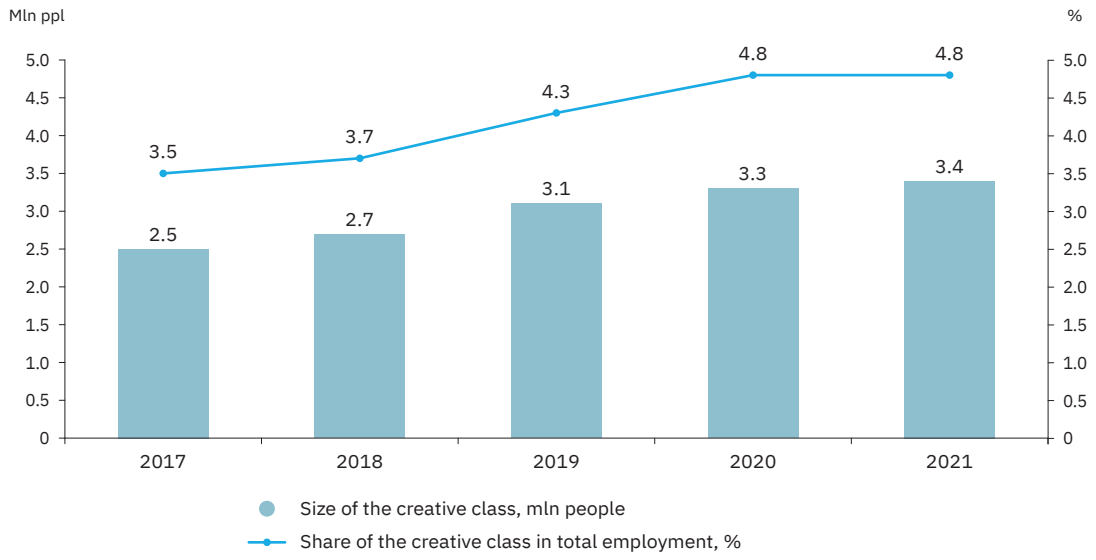
To analyze the scale, structure, dynamics and other characteristics of the creative class, we used the classification of creative professions developed taking into account the best foreign practices. The professional groups of creative workers were formed on the basis of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) with detailing up to the 4th digit. The Russian equivalent of ISCO-08 is the All-Russia Classifier of Occupations adopted in 2014 (OKZ-2014), which is used for codification of occupational groups in the LFS data. OKZ-2014 is harmonized with ISCO-08 by making clarifications reflecting the specifics of the Russian economy without violating the codes and concept boundaries of this international standard. 38 categories were classified as creative professions (Annex Table A).

# Findings

## Size and Composition of Russia's Creative Class

The size of the creative class in Russia in 2021 was 3.4 million people, or 4.8% of the total number of those employed, and it increased by almost a third in five years (Fig. 1). In 2017-2020, there was a systematic growth of this category of workers, which slowed down in 2020-2021 amid the effects of the pandemic. However, even during the COVID crisis, the number of representatives of creative professions grew by 3.4% in the creative industries and by 1.6% in traditional industries. Moreover, those who work outside the creative industries – in manufacturing, trade, etc., – until recently represented the fastest growing and most numerous category of workers, which suggests that the creative class is actively penetrating into different sectors of the economy. Similar trends occur in some other countries as well [Cunningham, 2014].

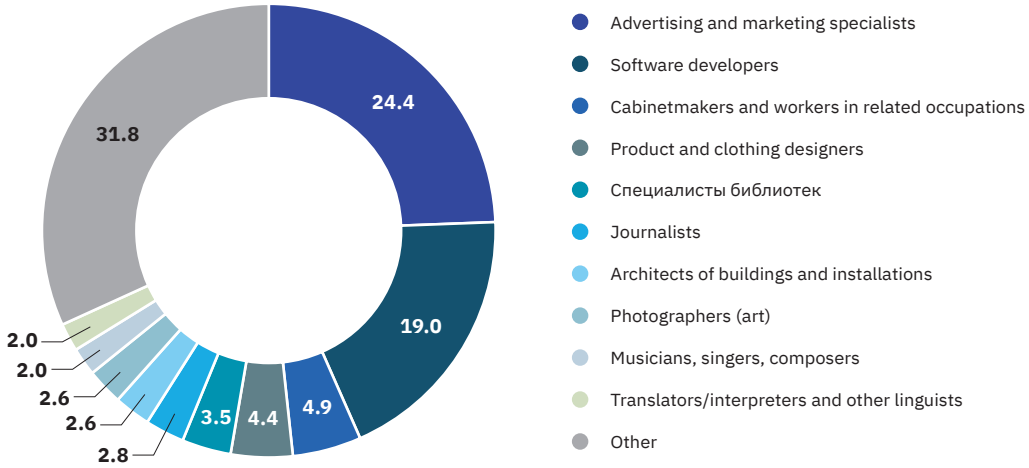
Figure 1
**Changes in the size of the creative class in Russia**




Source: ISSEK NRU HSE based on Rosstat data.

The creative class in Russia is very heterogeneous (Fig. 2). Thus, a little less than half (43.4%) of all those employed fall into two professions – advertising and marketing specialists (24.4%) and software developers (19%), while about 68% of those employed in this segment fall into ten creative professions. The main contribution to the scale and dynamics of the creative economy is made by specialists in modern professions, while representatives of traditional professions are becoming increasingly rare (cabinetmakers – 4.9%, archives and museums specialists – 3.5%, musicians, singers and composers – 2%).

Figure 2
**Composition of the creative class in Russia: 2021, %**




Source: ISSEK NRU HSE based on Rosstat data.

## Socio-demographic Characteristics and Employment Conditions

In general, the creative class is concentrated in capitals and major cities [Florida et al., 2011; Buettner, Janeba, 2016; Batabyal, Beladi, 2018]. In Russia, it is mainly concentrated in Moscow and the Moscow Region, St. Petersburg, administrative centers of the Krasnodar Territory, the Republic of Tatarstan, the Sverdlovsk Region, etc. (Table 2). In a number of constituent entities of the Russian Federation (Moscow Region, St. Petersburg, Krasnodar Territory, Republic of Tatarstan, Novosibirsk Region, etc.) the number of people employed in creative professions has been increasing over the last five years, which may indirectly suggest the accelerated development of creative industries in these regions In general, the creative class is concentrated in capitals and major cities [Florida et al., 2011; Buettner, Janeba, 2016; Batabyal, Beladi, 2018]. In Russia, it is mainly concentrated in Moscow and the Moscow Region, St. Petersburg, administrative centers of the Krasnodar Territory, the Republic of Tatarstan, the Sverdlovsk Region, etc. (Table 2). In a number of constituent entities of the Russian Federation (Moscow Region, St. Petersburg, Krasnodar Territory, Republic of Tatarstan, Novosibirsk Region, etc.) the number of people employed in creative professions has been increasing over the last five years, which may indirectly suggest the accelerated development of creative industries in these regions.

Table 2
**The largest regional clusters of creative professions,**
% of the total employment in creative professions

| Constituent entity of the Russian Federation | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Moscow | 25.6 | 25.7 | 24.6 | 25.9 | 25.1 |
| Moscow Region | 7.4 | 7.2 | 7.4 | 7.9 | 8.0 |
| St.Petersburg | 6.2 | 7.1 | 7.6 | 7.4 | 7.9 |
| Krasnodar Territory | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.4 | 3.2 |
| Republic of Tatarstan | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.5 |
| Sverdlovsk Region | 2.0 | 1.9 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.5 |
| Novosibirsk Region | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.3 |
| Rostov Region | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.2 |
| Nizhny Novgorod Region | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 2.2 |
| Samara Region | 3.4 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.1 |
| Republic of Bashkortostan | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 1.9 |
| Chelyabinsk Region | 2.6 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 1.9 | 1.7 |
| Krasnoyarsk Territory | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.4 |
| Perm Territory | 1.3 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.2 |

Source: ISSEK NRU HSE based on Rosstat data.

The analysis allows drawing up a socio-demographic portrait of a typical representative of the Russian creative class. Regardless of the specific year, it is a young man (25-34 years old) with higher education (Table 3). Some foreign studies arrived at a similar conclusion, – the average age of persons employed in the creative economy is 30-40 years [Hamblin, Harper, 2016; McAndrew, McKimm, 2010].

The age structure of the creative class changed over the time period under consideration: the share of workers under 35 years of age was decreasing, while the share of the 35-44 age group was increasing. This pattern is consistent with the trend towards a decline in the size of young cohorts in the Russian labor market as a whole. By 2030, due to the demographic crisis, the number of employees under the age of 40 may drop by 25% [Gimpelson, 2021].

Table 3
**Socio-demographic characteristics of the creative class in Russia,**
% of the total employment in creative professions

| | | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender: | male | 56.1 | 56.8 | 55.7 | 54.9 | 55.4 |
| | female | 43.9 | 43.2 | 44.3 | 45.1 | 44.6 |
| Age, years | 15–24 | 6.1 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 5.5 | 5.8 |
| | 25–34 | 42.2 | 41.3 | 42.0 | 40.4 | 39.5 |
| | 35–44 | 25.5 | 25.4 | 26.5 | 28.2 | 28.4 |
| | 45–54 | 17.0 | 17.2 | 15.7 | 15.8 | 16.1 |
| | 55–64 | 8.2 | 8.6 | 8.4 | 8.3 | 8.7 |
| | over 65 | 0.9 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 1.5 |
| Education | higher – Specialist, Master | 72.3 | 69.7 | 67.1 | 67.1 | 66.4 |
| | secondary vocational | 21.8 | 23.9 | 25.2 | 25.5 | 26.0 |
| | secondary general | 6.0 | 6.4 | 7.7 | 7.4 | 7.6 |

Source: ISSEK NRU HSE based on Rosstat data.

The analysis of the employment conditions of the creative class has shown that despite the established ideas about the predominantly flexible and irregular working hours for creative professions [Florida, 2002], in Russia they mostly have a standard 40-hour working week and work full time (tab. 4). This is explained by the structure of the creative economy in Russia, with its significant part made up of cultural organizations, mainly belonging to the public sector, as well as private companies (mainly in IT and advertising) using “office mode” of work.

Only about half of those employed in creative professions worked according to their diplomas. This confirms the opinion that it is not necessary to have specialized education to work in the creative sector: it “attracts” workers with a wide range of experiences and competencies. In particular, no specialized education is required to work in professions where applied skills are in demand, such as artists, designers, potters, blacksmiths, etc.

Table 4
**Employment conditions of the creative class**

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Place of work, % of the total number of those employed in creative professions | | | | | |
| At an enterprise, organization with the status of a legal entity | 86.3 | 85.4 | 83.0 | 83.0 | 82.6 |
| Business/entrepreneurship | 5.9 | 6.6 | 6.6 | 7.1 | 7.7 |
| Employed by individuals, individual entrepreneurs and in own households | 7.8 | 8.0 | 10.4 | 9.9 | 9.7 |
| Work schedule | | | | | |
| Average time, hours per week | 38.2 | 37.9 | 37.8 | 34.9 | 37.8 |
| Full-time or full-time work week, % of total employment in creative occupations | 92.0 | 91.0 | 90.3 | 89.8 | 89.0 |
| Work relates to the obtained profession, % of the total number of those employed in creative professions | | | | | |
| Yes | 55.5 | 56.1 | 52.2 | 51.0 | 51.1 |
| Rather yes | 15.0 | 14.8 | 15.9 | 16.7 | 16.3 |
| Rather no | 6.0 | 6.0 | 6.9 | 7.5 | 6.8 |
| No | 23.4 | 23.1 | 25.0 | 24.8 | 25.7 |

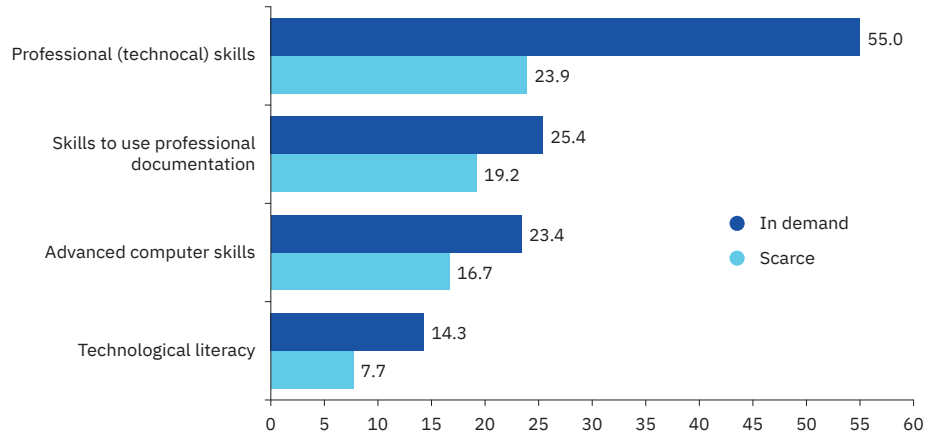
Source: ISSEK NRU HSE based on Rosstat data.

## Skills and Competences Most in Demand

The demand for different groups of creative class skills was assessed for graduates of higher and secondary vocational education programs whose first job was related to the creative profession. The most important were professional (technical) skills directly related to the work, skills of using professional documentation, and digital competencies (Fig. 3). These same groups of skills turned out to be the most lacking in general.

Figure 3

**Share of graduates who assessed specialized professional skills as scarce and in demand for their first job in a creative profession: 2021, %**

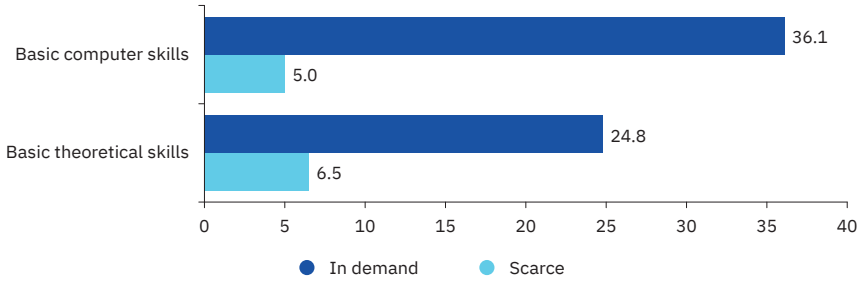



Source: ISSEK NRU HSE based on Rosstat data.

Basic skills of Russian graduates were generally in demand for work in creative professions, but were assessed as less scarce than specialized professional skills (Fig. 4).

Figure 4

**Share of graduates who assessed basic skills as scarce and in demand for their first job in a creative profession: 2021, %**

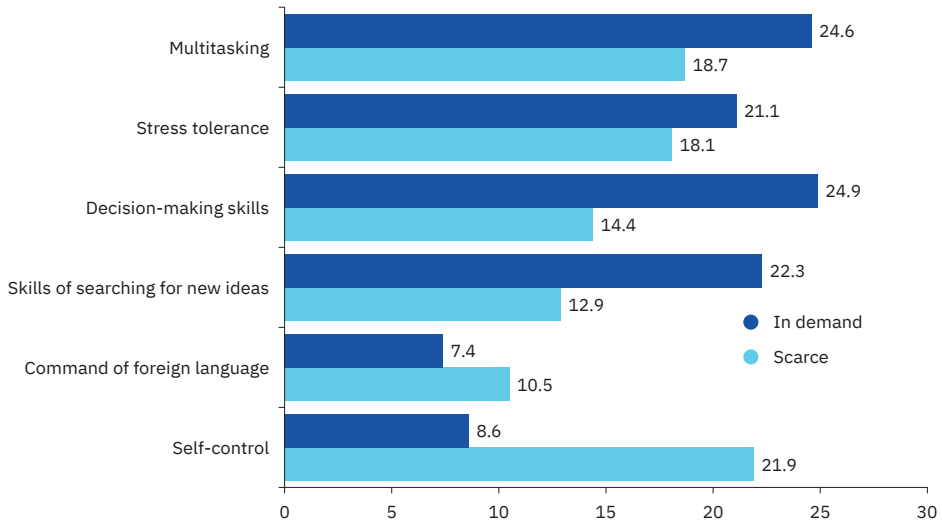



Source: ISSEK NRU HSE based on Rosstat data.

Among the universal skills, multitasking, decision-making skills, skills of searching for new ideas and stress tolerance were in the greatest demand in the “creative workplace” (Fig. 5). Some of them (multitasking and stress tolerance) turned out to be the most lacking. At the same time, graduates were most deficient in self-control and organization skills. The demand for, and importance of these competencies is explained by the specifics of creative activity, which is often associated with increased stress, the need to handle several cases simultaneously and make quick decisions.

Figure 5

**Share of graduates who assessed universal skills as scarce and in demand for their first job in a creative profession: 2021, %**




Source: ISSEK NRU HSE based on Rosstat data.

The probability of professional, basic or universal skills scarcity depends on certain characteristics of graduates. The constructed probit models helped to determine the degree of various factors' influence (Annex Table B).

Individuals with higher education experience difficulties with professional skills less often. This is explained, on the one hand, by the level of their skills, and, on the other hand, by their unobservable characteristics (high intelligence, desire to learn, etc.) which can strengthen professional skills. The lack of skills in the use of professional documentation is less characteristic of government-sponsored students in Moscow and St. Petersburg, those who work in their specialty, as well as those who are married.

Interestingly, in creative professions, the lack of basic digital skills is more often observed in women, while men are somewhat less likely to lack such skills. In general, this is consistent with the findings of a number of studies that demonstrated that women were trailing men in terms of frequency and time of using ICTs, as well as in terms of their self-assessment of computer skills [Cai et al., 2017]. Problems with basic theoretical skills are more often experienced by men and those who combined work and study, and to a lesser extent – by those who benefitted from government subsidies as students, as well as those working in the specialty.

As for universal skills, it is estimated that an increase in the number of hours worked slightly reduces the lack of ability to multitask: the more a person works, the higher his or her ability to perform several tasks simultaneously. Men are more stress-resistant in creative professions. Individuals with more years of work experience are also better able to cope with stress, as experience usually brings poise and the ability to work under stressful conditions.

# Conclusion

В исследовании впервые предпринята попытка количественно описать российский
The study is the first attempt to quantitatively describe the Russian creative class, taking into account the theoretical and methodological approaches and statistical classifications used globally. The size of this category of workers was determined, its socio-demographic characteristics and employment conditions were revealed. Additionally, the demand for and deficit of different groups of skills in representatives of creative professions are assessed using the example of graduates of higher and secondary vocational education programs. The findings can inform further research on the creative economy, as well as serve as a foundation for producing scientifically sound economic assessments of the development of the creative class in Russia and other countries.

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# Annex

Table A

**Occupation groups belonging to the creative professions**

| OKZ-2014 code | Creative professions group under OKZ |
|---|---|
| 1221 | Heads of sales and marketing services |
| 1222 | Heads of advertising and PR services |
| 1330 | Heads of information and communications technology services and units |
| 2161 | Architects of building and installations |
| 2162 | Landscape architects |
| 2163 | Product and clothing designers |
| 2164 | City planners and designers of transportation hubs |
| 2166 | Graphic and multimedia designers |
| 2431 | Advertising and marketing specialists |
| 2432 | Public relations specialists |
| 2511 | System analysts |
| 2512 | Software developers |
| 2513 | Web and multimedia application developers |
| 2514 | Application programmers |
| 2621 | Archive and museum specialists |
| 2622 | Library specialists |
| 2641 | Writers, poets and other literati |
| 2642 | Journalists |
| 2643 | Translators/interpreters and other linguists |
| 2651 | Artists |
| 2652 | Musicians, singers and composers |
| 2653 | Dancers and choreographers |
| 2654 | Film, theater and related art directors and producers |
| 2655 | Actors |
| 3112 | Civil engineering technicians |
| 3431 | Photographers (art) |
| 3432 | Set designers and decorators |
| 3521 | Specialist technicians in radio and television broadcasting |
| 7221 | Blacksmiths |
| 7312 | Makers, tuners and restorers of musical instruments |
| 7313 | Masters of jewelry and products made of precious metals and stones, crafts (lacquer miniature, art painting on metal and ceramics) |

(ending)

| OKZ-2014 code | Creative professions group under OKZ |
|---|---|
| 7314 | Potters and workers in related occupations |
| 7315 | Glass molders, stone carvers, grinders and polishers |
| 7316 | Painters, printmakers, engravers and etchers |
| 7317 | Workers in arts and crafts making wicker, woodwork and making products from similar materials |
| 7318 | Workers in arts and crafts who make products from textiles, leather, fur and similar materials |
| 7319 | Skilled manual laborers not included in other groups |
| 7522 | Cabinetmakers and workers in related occupations |

Source: ISSEK NRY HSE.

Table B

**Probit models of skills scarcity for graduates of higher and secondary vocational education programs working in creative professions: 2021**

| Variables | Professional/Technical | | | Basic | | Universal | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Professional (technical) job-related skills (1 = skill is scarce) | Skills in the use of professional documentation (1 = skill is scarce)) | Advanced computer skills to work with specialized software (1 = skill is scarce)) | Basic theoretical knowledge (1 = skill is scarce) | Computer skills to work with basic programs (1 = skill is scarce) | Ability to multitask (1 = skill is scarce) | Stress tolerance (1 = skill iis scarce) | Self-control (1 = skill is scarce) |
| Gender (1 = male) | 0.01<br>(0.00) | 0.54*<br>(0.03*) | -0.22<br>(-0.03) | 0.54*<br>(0.03*) | -0.71**<br>(-0.03**) | -0.06<br>(-0.01) | -0.32***<br>(-0.05***) | -0.06<br>(-0.01) |
| Age, years | 0.01<br>(0.00) | 0.02<br>(0.00) | 0.03<br>(0.00) | 0.02<br>(0.00) | -0.02<br>(0.00) | -0.03<br>(-0.00) | 0.01<br>(0.00) | -0.03<br>(0.00) |
| Marital status<br>(1 = married) | 0.27<br>(0.05) | -0.77**<br>(-0.05**) | -0.54<br>(-0.07) | -0.79**<br>(-0.05**) | -0.29<br>(0.0) | -0.15<br>(-0.02) | 0.01<br>(0.00) | -0.15<br>(-0.02) |
| Children<br>(1 = yes) | -0.07<br>(-0.01) | -0.05<br>(-0.01) | -0.14<br>(-0.01) | -0.04<br>(0.00) | -0.22<br>(0.01) | 0.09<br>(0.01) | 0.08<br>(0.01) | 0.09<br>(0.01) |
| Settlement type<br>(1 = urban resident) | 0.14<br>(0.01) | -0.01<br>(0.00) | -0.22<br>(-0.01) | -0.01<br>(0.00) | -0.26<br>(-0.02) | -0.26<br>(-0.04) | 0.04<br>(0.01) | -0.26<br>(-0.03) |
| Education<br>(1 = higher, 0 = secondary vocational) | -0.70***<br>(-0.12***) | -0.37<br>(-0.04) | -0.09<br>(-0.04) | -0.38<br>(-0.03) | 0.24<br>(0.02) | 0.07<br>(0.01) | -0.05<br>(0.00) | 0.07<br>(0.01) |
| Type of training<br>(1 = government-subsidized) | -0.02<br>(0.00) | -0.45*<br>(-0.03*) | -0.21<br>(-0.01) | -0.45*<br>(-0.03*) | -0.11<br>(-0.01) | 0.24<br>(0.04) | -0.12<br>(0.01) | 0.24<br>(0.03) |
| Relationship between profession and job<br>(1 = work in the profession) | 0.12<br>(0.01) | -0.53*<br>(-0.03*) | 0.28<br>(0.04) | -0.53*<br>(-0.04*) | -0.26<br>(-0.03) | 0.50**<br>(0.07**) | -0.03<br>(0.00) | 0.50**<br>(0.07) |

(ending)

| Variables | Professional/Technical | | | Basic | | Universal | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Professional (technical) job-related skills (1 = skill is scarce) | Skills in the use of professional documentation (1 = skill is scarce)) | Advanced computer skills to work with specialized software (1 = skill is scarce)) | Basic theoretical knowledge (1 = skill is scarce) | Computer skills to work with basic programs (1 = skill is scarce) | Ability to multitask (1 = skill is scarce) | Stress tolerance (1 = skill iis scarce) | Self-control (1 = skill is scarce) |
| Additional education (1 = employee received additional education) | 0.13 (0.01) | -0.03 (0.00) | 0.37* (0.04*) | -0.03 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.00) | 0.53*** (0.08***) | 0.06 (0.01) | 0.54*** (0.08) |
| Combining work and study (1 = working while studying) | -0.20 (-0.04) | 0.80** (0.05**) | -0.25 (-0.01) | 0.80** (0.05**) | 0.09 (0.01) | 0.09 (0.01) | -0.19 (-0.04) | 0.08 (0.32) |
| Work experiene, years | -0.01 (0.00) | 0.01 (0.00) | 0.06 (0.01) | 0.01 (0.00) | 0.02 (0.00) | -0.05 (-0.01) | -0.07** (-0.01**) | -0.05 (0.00) |
| Years after graduation, years | 0.04 (0.00) | -0.07 (-0.01) | -0.04 (0.00) | -0.08 (0.00) | 0.01 (0.00) | 0.09 (0.01) | 0.13** (0.02**) | 0.08 (0.00) |
| Number of hours of work, hours | -0.02 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.00) | 0.02 (0.00) | -0.01 (0.00) | 0.01 (0.00) | -0.07** (-0.01) | -0.03 (0.00) | -0.07 (0.00) |
| Employment status (1 = employee) | 1.12** (0.20**) | - | 0.43 (0.00) | - | -0.34 (-0.02) | 0.03 (0.00) | 0.01 (0.00) | 0.02 (0.00) |
| City of study (1 = Moscow or St.Petersburg) | -0.02 (0.00) | 0.01 (0.00) | 0.33* (0.04*) | 0.02 (0.00) | -0.22 (-0.01) | 0.43** (0.06**) | -0.07 (-0.01) | 0.43** (0.06**) |

Note: *p < .10, **p < .05, ***p < .01. Robust standard errors are used. All estimates are presented with weights.
Average marginal effects are in brackets.

Source: ISSEK NRU HSE.