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LABOUR MARKET OF UKRAINE IN WAR TIME: REALITY AND PROSPECTS

Abstract. The situation on the labour market of Ukraine is analyzed in the article. Significant changes in the functioning of the native labour market brought about by the full-scale war caused by russia are noted; today one of the main problems in the Ukrainian labour market is the professional and qualification imbalance and certain disproportions between the demand and supply of labour force. In particular, professional and regional disparities are deepening, which holds back the further recovery of employment; there is a problem of lack of qualified workers in private business, first of all. As a result of the economic upheavals, which are accompanied by large-scale internal displacement and refugee flows, there are huge losses of jobs and incomes. Attention is focused on determining the optimal mechanisms for regulating labor force mobility as a tool for regulating the labour market. The need for assistance to internally displaced persons in the near and long term was emphasized. It is currently impossible to accurately assess the international distribution of forced migrants from Ukraine, as migrants change their plans and country of destination, sometimes not even registering for temporary protection, but using the right to stay in EU countries for 90 days without registration. The role of education as a determining factor in the formation of human capital is noted, especially in conditions of unfavorable demographic development. A quality system of education, retraining and advanced training can help reduce labour shortages. Measures for the development of the workforce for the economic recovery and development of the country are proposed. The main condition for the return of refugees to Ukraine will be the availability of safe and attractive living conditions,

including the availability of work, housing and social infrastructure. But it should be taken into account that a long stay in the EU countries will contribute to the opportunities for Ukrainian citizens to settle down and gain a foothold in the host countries. At the same time, in the absence of better prospects in Ukraine, after the abolition of martial law, the process of population outflow may continue and even intensify.

Keywords: workforce; labour market; forced migration; migrants; military aggression; human capital

INTRODUCTION / ВСТУП

Formulation of the problem. Interrelationships between the labour market and the national economy of the country strongly influence their development. Moreover, in Ukraine at the current stage of its history, such an influence is of particular importance, which is due to the specifics of the modern period of development of the native economy. After all, almost exclusively from the native labour market, the Ukrainian economy receives the labour force it needs according to the corresponding qualitative and quantitative characteristics. And the possibilities of structural transformation of the Ukrainian economy largely depend on the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the available labour force. Moreover, employees and members of their families are at the same time consumers of goods and services. The magnitude of their demand directly depends on the level of wages, which, in turn, affects the dynamics of the national economy. The war increased risks and uncertainties, creating barriers to the free movement of factors of production, including workforce, leading to the destruction of labour market institutions and their effective functioning. Problems in the economy, combined with significant internal displacements and refugee flows, lead to large-scale losses in employment and income. Rising unemployment, social exclusion, gender inequality, discrimination at the workplace, including in relation to the youth, the spread of poverty is among the main negative social consequences of the war. The loss and damage of production assets and infrastructure, the interruption of supply chains of trade networks weakened the potential of the labour market, leading to «disruptions» and the loss of employment opportunities for most Ukrainians. Small businesses have fewer opportunities to financially support their staff. Relocation and forced migration have led to a change in the structure of the labour market, as well as the structure of offers and the saturation of specialists across regions. In the regions most affected by russia's military aggression, the number of jobs has decreased and competition has increased. Despite the revival of economic activity and the gradual return of

businesses to work, many businesses have not resumed their activities, and this is affecting the labour market.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Evaluation of the efficiency of labour market regulation, its theoretical and practical basis of functioning are studied in the works of I. Petrova, L. Shaulska etc. [18], [19]. Such scientists as E. Libanova, A. Kolot, N. Azmuk and others made an important contribution to the development and analysis of problems, related to the quality of labour resources [20], [21], [22]. It is appropriate to single out the publications, dedicated to the study of imbalances in the labour and educational potential of the country, caused by the war by O. Novikova, O. Khandiy and L. Shamilova [23], [24]. The policy of social quality in the post-war period was considered by V. Geets, V. Blyznyuk, and O. Nikiforchuk [25]. However, the vast majority of scientific works need a radical rethinking from the standpoint of the possibilities of their use under the fundamentally new economic conditions of Ukraine.

AIM AND TASKS/ МЕТА ТА ЗАВДАННЯ

The *purpose* of the article is to study the trends of the labour market of Ukraine as a result of the full-scale war caused by Russia and the prospects for its development and recovery.

In accordance with the specified goal, the *following tasks* are set in the article: to find out the key trends that increase the impact on the employment sphere; to investigate the reasons for the appearance of certain disproportions between the demand and supply of workforce; propose measures that would contribute to the economic recovery and development of the country and the formation of human capital.

THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS / ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ОСНОВИ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

The labour market is a rather complex element of the market economy, in which the interests of employers and workers are closely intertwined in terms of determining labour prices and operating conditions. This market depends significantly on the working population itself, as well as on the measures of active and passive state policy in the field of employment. The situation on the Ukrainian labour market has changed a lot today. Since the beginning of the war, the share of the shadow sector (including illegal or semi-legal employment) has increased. The loss and damage of production assets and infrastructure, the interruption of supply chains of trade networks weakened the potential of the labour market, leading to «disruptions» and the loss of employment opportunities for most Ukrainians. Although it is still very difficult to estimate the exact scale of losses in

the employment sector at the moment due to limited data and extremely uncertain, changing circumstances affecting the situation in Ukraine.

In general, it can be said, that despite the revival of economic activity and the gradual return of business to work, many enterprises have not resumed their activities, and this affects the labour market. Today, there are two trends – businesses returning to work are relocating to the west. Companies open new vacancies there, the army of the unemployed continues to grow due to the war, especially in those regions where active hostilities are taking place – in the East and South of the country.

RESEARCH METHODS / МЕТОДИ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

To solve the set goal, theoretical methods of scientific research were used, namely: *analytical* – to collect, generalize and process scientific information about the situation on the labour market in Ukraine; *abstract-logical* – to determine the factors that affect the destabilizing sphere of employment; *graphic* – for visual interpretation of theoretical propositions obtained from research results; *analogies and comparisons* – to determine the interrelated reasons that contribute to the emergence of certain disproportions between the demand and supply of workforce; *generalization* – for formulating conclusions based on research results.

RESEARCH RESULTS / РЕЗУЛЬТАТИ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

Significant changes in the functioning of the native labour market were brought about by the full-scale war caused by Russia. In particular, from 24.02.2022 to 17.03.2022, at least 411 educational institutions, 36 health care institutions, 1600 residential buildings, 26 factories or factory warehouses, 15 airports, 6 thermal power plants/hydroelectric power stations were damaged, destroyed or captured, tens of thousands of kilometers were lost roads and railways, 350 bridges and overpasses were destroyed or disabled [1], [4].

As a result, the activities of enterprises were completely or partially suspended, problems were caused in the organization of business operations and logistics, and consumer demand was reduced, namely:

- the activity of 86 % of companies was stopped, slowed down or limited, of which 48 % worked partially or almost did not work;
- only 13 % of companies worked as before, and a small share of native business (6 %) worked in a larger volume compared to pre-war times;
- 16 % of enterprises were completely or partially transformed;
- 21 % of enterprises are in the process of industry transformation, and 16 % have joined the transformation process [2], [4].

The hostilities forced about 27 % of the population to leave their permanent place of residence; including 36 % of the population aged 18–24 and 34 % aged 25–34. Due to the limitation of employment opportunities and in connection with the change of residence, the situation in the field of employment and income of the employed population worsened [1], [4].

As of the end of 2022, at least 5 million people have lost their jobs due to hostilities in Ukraine, and about 7 million people have been forced to leave the country. About 10 million workers were employed in the regions where hostilities are still ongoing [5].

It should be noted, that significant competition for jobs is currently expected on the national labour market. According to various estimates, the number of vacancies in Ukraine has decreased by 20 times compared to pre-war times [6].

It is worth noting that one of the tools of regulating the labour market is the determination of the optimal mechanisms for regulating labour force mobility. Labour mobility is an organic feature of the workforce, which characterizes its readiness and ability to change workplaces under the influence of objective and subjective reasons. Among the forms of labour mobility are voluntary and forced, and among the types – professional qualification, career (status), intra- and inter-organizational, branch and territorial. Territorial labour mobility associated with a change of residence is labour migration. Each of the mentioned forms of labour mobility can exist on two levels – potential and real. To establish the relationship between these levels, it is necessary to determine the potential degree of readiness and ability of certain groups of the economically active population to change the workplace (for example, by conducting a survey) and analyze the main factors that contribute to the transformation of potential mobility into real.

The deployment of hostilities forced a significant part of the population to leave their permanent place of residence: 22 % changed their place of residence within Ukraine; in particular, among the population aged 18–24 and 25–34 years – 36 % and 34 %, respectively, 6 % were forced to go abroad population of Ukraine [7]. According to estimates of the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), five million Ukrainians have already crossed international borders from Ukraine. As of mid-March 2022 alone, 70000 children became refugees in Ukraine every day. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), this means that 55 children fled the country every minute, that is, almost one child every second [8]. An accurate assessment of the international distribution of forced migrants from Ukraine is currently impossible, as migrants change their plans and country of destination, sometimes not even registering for temporary protection, but using the right to stay in EU countries for 90 days

without registration. Another social and humanitarian challenge to the distribution of available and potential labour is internal displacement.

According to the estimates of the International Organization for Migration, in the first month of the war 6,48 million people became internally displaced persons in Ukraine, among whom the share of the most socially vulnerable groups is significant [9]. Due to the duration of the hostilities, these numbers are not final, but the delay in time increases the likelihood that internally displaced persons will change their place of residence and look for permanent housing and employment. All this will lead to a change in the structure of labour supply and demand, which is a new challenge for the post-war labour market. As a result of economic upheavals, accompanied by large-scale internal population movements and refugee flows, there are huge losses of jobs and incomes of the population. According to International Labour Organization estimates, in the current situation of the active phase of the conflict, compared to the situation before the conflict, 4,8 million jobs have been lost, which is 30% of the jobs that existed in Ukraine before the beginning of the conflict. An immediate cessation of hostilities could rapidly improve the situation and restore 3,4 million jobs, reducing employment losses to 8,9 %.

In the event of further military escalation, employment losses could raise even further, up to 7 million jobs, or 43,5 %. In addition, the crisis had a significant impact on the Ukrainian social protection system, which was reflected in an increase in expenses and a decrease in income. In the context of the above, it is worth noting the economic losses associated with human losses as a result of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation. According to the State Statistics Service, GDP per person in 2021 amounted to UAH 131 944. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as of 24 of April 2022 year 5718 cases of death or injury of civilians were recorded in Ukraine: 2665 dead and 3053 wounded [10].

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than 6,2 million Ukrainians have left abroad since the beginning of the war (the same figure is used by the Ukrainian Ministry of Economy). Of them, more than 5,8 million ended up in Europe. The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine itself is estimated at 5 million people [11].

Taking into account the given data and assuming that the share of irreversible migrants will be about 50%, the total amount of economic losses related to the human losses of the war will amount to UAH 348,5 billion, or 6,3 % of GDP. And this is only in one year. In ten years, this is already 3,5 trillion hryvnias not received by the economy or \$97 billion (according to the NBU exchange rate, UAH 36,05/dollar). This is in addition to the destroyed housing

stock of 115 billion dollars, as well as to the losses of industrial enterprises and unearned profits – another 200–250 billion dollars.

The gradual recovery of the labour market in Ukraine continues from the beginning of 2023. But the unemployment rate remains higher than in the period before the start of the full-scale war and acquires the signs of a structural phenomenon. In particular, professional and regional disparities are deepening, which holds back the further recovery of employment. The consequences of the war (destruction, closure and relocation of enterprises etc.), the departure of refugees abroad and the increase in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) create a situation of mismatch in the geographical location of workplaces and labor force. As of May 2023, the unemployment rate was about 20 %. Private business is primarily faced with a lack of qualified workers. Despite the high level of unemployment, there is a shortage of certain specialties. The reasons for this phenomenon are:

a) departure of skilled workers, primarily women, to other countries as refugees;

b) mobilization of men to the Armed Forces (up to 1 million people of working age).

It should also be emphasized that, parallel to this, the darkening of the labour market is intensifying – the number of workers without official registration and with salaries «in envelopes» is increasing. As a result, such persons do not have social guarantees; their working hours are not included in the length of work experience. The increase in the size of non-formal employment was influenced by the requirement to register men in military commissariats for official employment. According to estimates of the State Employment Service of Ukraine, as of March 2023, about 3 million people were working without official registration, which is more than 20 % of the working population of Ukraine [12].

In the absence of significant shocks, the unemployment rate will decrease due to the intensification of economic activity. The process of restoring Ukraine's economy will allow the elimination of structural disparities, in particular thanks to investments in the affected regions and the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes.

First of all, migratory processes will remain a big problem in the medium and long term – the number of Ukrainians, who have the status of temporary protection in Europe, is currently 5,14 million people [13]. Another 250000 refugees moved to the USA and Canada [14], [15]. From a demographic point of view, these are mostly women with children, which significantly complicates the situation with the labour force in Ukraine in the future.

With the reduction of security risks, the return of refugees will accelerate, but the threat of return movement remains – family reunification or job search outside of Ukraine. The aging process of the population of Ukraine will accelerate (as of January 1, 2022 the average age in Ukraine was 42,2 years), which will reduce the potential of the labour force [16].

Education also plays a decisive role in the formation of human capital, especially in conditions of unfavourable demographic development. A high-quality system of education, retraining and professional development can help reduce labour shortages. But efforts to improve the quality and relevance of education, especially vocational, higher and adult education, are insufficient. Investments in human capital, such as adult retraining programs, were not a priority in Ukraine even before the war. The war also accelerated the depreciation of human capital, causing significant collective psychological trauma that would have long-lasting effects on people's mental and physical health, which in turn would affect labour productivity. Another problem is the inconsistency of the current state of workforce training with the needs of the economy. Plans of the education system for workforce training, developed even before the war, have not changed, which makes it difficult to adapt to modern market requirements. According to the State Employment Service, one of the main problems in the labour market is a professional and qualification imbalance and certain disproportions between the demand and supply of labour force [12].

Today, employers have the greatest demand for skilled manual workers. However, among the registered unemployed, 43 % have a higher education, and in some large cities this number reaches 60 % or higher. Moreover, the number of unemployed among former managers, professionals and specialists is three times higher than the number of corresponding vacancies. In order to stabilize the number and productivity of the labour force, it is necessary to prioritize the training of specialists, first of all, in economic sectors, which need recovery. This process should be carried out by the state in close coordination with business, which, in addition to the unpredictable situation due to the war, is also experiencing a well-known shortage of personnel.

It is worth noting that for the economic recovery and development of the country, it is necessary to focus on the development of the labour force, which will be able to ensure stable and sustainable growth, and direct efforts to the implementation of the following steps (Fig.).

1. Economic freedom – in particular, reducing the tax burden on small and medium-sized businesses and easing the administrative burden for entrepreneurial activity in Ukraine in order to stimulate economic growth.

2. Deregulation of the labour market and gradual departure from Soviet legislation to EU standards in order to reduce non-formal employment. A necessary component is a comprehensive reform of the labour legislation, which would take into account the impact of new technologies and prioritize the improvement of requirements for the qualifications of the workforce.

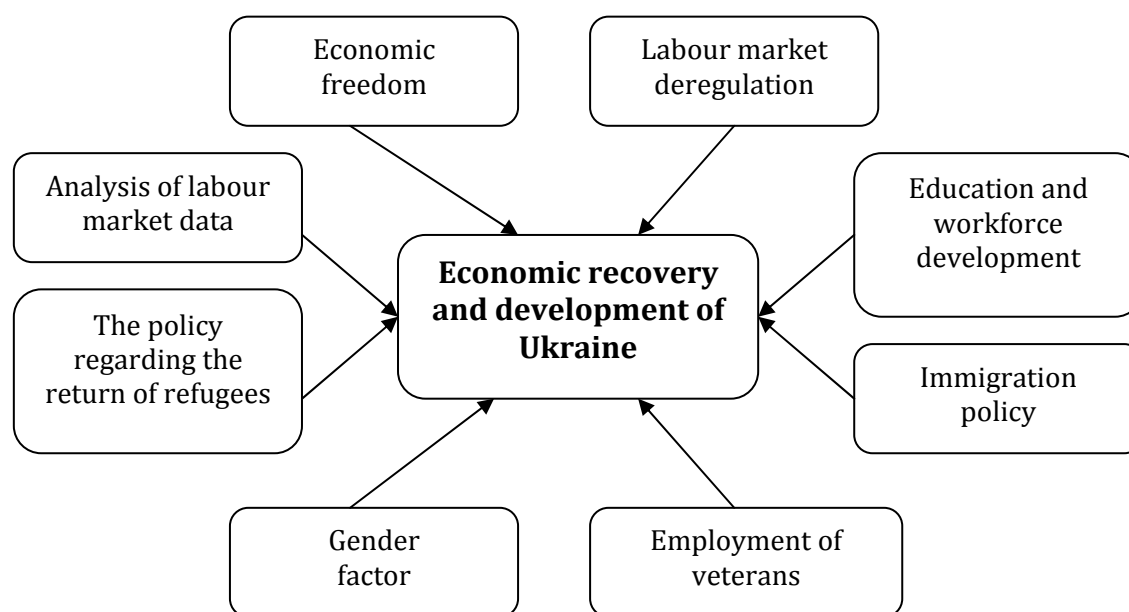


Fig. Directions of economic recovery and development of the country [17]

3. Education and development of the workforce – the support and development of human resources for reconstruction and innovative transformations in the national economy, including changing the system of training specialists in the direction of the transition from qualification requirements to professional standards based on competence and the introduction of dual education for the training of young specialists.

Skills development and effective implementation of the right and access to lifelong learning must be an integral part of the broader economic growth strategy and recovery and resilience plans. Private-public partnerships can be an important incentive for retraining adults.

4. Analysis of labour market data – in particular, the use of modern approaches and technologies to collect and analyze data on the skills of the workforce in different sectors and regions (abilities, experience, desire for professional development, demographics, training needs, etc.).

5. The policy regarding the return of refugees should be aimed at the return of Ukrainians, who have gone abroad; which is possible only under the conditions of adequate payment of labour, a safe working environment, an

innovative development model and a high level of state support (housing, infrastructure development, etc.). It should be noted, that the longer people stay abroad, the more difficult it will be to return them.

6. Immigration policy – to fill the labour shortage by attracting immigrants from other countries, in addition to encouraging Ukrainians to return from abroad. It will be important to simplify immigration laws, namely: foreigners face problems when obtaining work permits, foreign graduates have limited opportunities for legal employment, and there are also obligations to set significantly higher wages for workers from other countries compared to the average wage in Ukraine.

7. The gender factor – revising gender stereotypes in male-dominated professions and hiring more women can give a new perspective on the labour market.

8. Employment of veterans – implementation of programs to help veterans, in particular, veterans with disabilities in finding a job and receiving psychological assistance [17].

The situation on the labour market will depend on the duration of hostilities, as well as the return of Ukrainian migrants. The main condition for the return of refugees to Ukraine will be the availability of safe and attractive living conditions, including the availability of work, housing and social infrastructure. But it should be taken into account that a long stay in the EU countries will contribute to the opportunities for Ukrainian citizens to settle down and gain a foothold in the host countries. At the same time, in the absence of better prospects in Ukraine, after the abolition of martial law, the process of population outflow may continue and even intensify.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH / ВИСНОВКИ ТА ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ ПОДАЛЬШИХ ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ

During the war, the situation with the national economy in general and the labour market in particular, is difficult, and there is no need to talk about any kind of recovery until the end of the war in Ukraine. The country now survives mainly due to the patriotism of its citizens, who continue to work and defend their land, and thanks to the help from other states, thanks to which the state can support people, who find themselves in a difficult situation. At the same time, enterprises, which have the opportunity to continue working, have the duty to promote the employment of Ukrainians as much as possible. The more people find work in the current difficult conditions, the less the burden on the state budget will be due to fewer benefits and more taxes. And this is the main way to restore the Ukrainian economy.

Stabilization of the labour market in the post-war period is an extremely important task, taking into account the emergence of various population groups affected by the armed conflict, including internally displaced persons, including children and women, people with disabilities etc. The specific needs of these groups must be taken into account when planning and implementing sustainable reintegration processes, including employment. It should be important to develop an effective labour market management system (mechanisms and tools for its implementation), taking into account issues of education, development of special skills, as well as increasing the level of social protection and security, which determines **the prospects for further research**.

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РИНОК ПРАЦІ УКРАЇНИ В ВОЄННИЙ ЧАС: РЕАЛЬНІСТЬ ТА ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ

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Анотація. У статті проаналізовано ситуацію на ринку праці України. Зазначено суттєві зміни у функціонуванні вітчизняного ринку праці,

які внесла повномасштабна війна, спричинена росією; сьогодні на українському ринку праці однією з головних проблем є професійно-кваліфікаційний дисбаланс і певні диспропорції між попитом і пропозицією робочої сили. Зокрема, поглиблюються професійні та регіональні диспропорції, що стримує подальше відновлення зайнятості; є проблема браку кваліфікованих працівників в приватному бізнесі, в першу чергу. В результаті економічних потрясінь, які супроводжуються масштабними внутрішніми переміщеннями та потоками біженців, відбуваються величезні втрати робочих місць і доходів. Увагу акцентовано на визначенні оптимальних механізмів регулювання мобільності робочої сили, як інструменту регулювання ринку праці. Наголошено на необхідності допомоги внутрішньо переміщеним особам у найближчій та довгостроковій перспективі. Точно оцінити міжнародний розподіл вимушених мігрантів з України наразі неможливо, оскільки мігранти змінюють свої плани та країну призначення, інколи навіть не реєструючись для отримання тимчасового захисту, а користуючись правом перебування в країнах ЄС продовж 90 днів без реєстрації. Відмічено роль освіти, як визначального чинника у формуванні людського капіталу, особливо в умовах несприятливого демографічного розвитку. Якісна система освіти, перепідготовки та підвищення кваліфікації може допомогти зменшити дефіцит робочої сили. Запропоновано заходи щодо розвитку робочої сили для економічного відновлення та розвитку країни. Головною умовою повернення біженців в Україну буде наявність безпечних та привабливих умов для життя, в тому числі наявність роботи, житла та соціальної інфраструктури. Але слід брати до уваги, що тривалий час перебування у країнах ЄС сприятиме можливостям громадянам України облаштуватися та закріпитися у приймаючих країнах. При цьому, за умови відсутності в Україні кращих перспектив, після скасування воєнного стану процес відтоку населення може продовжитися і навіть посилитися.

Ключові слова: робоча сила; ринок праці; вимушена міграція; мігранти; військова агресія; людський капітал

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