
Environment for the Formation Of Labor Mobility

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Abstract

The article highlights the emergence of the problem of formation of labor mobility, taking into account the specifics of the challenges in the modern globalized world, which concern all spheres of social and economic life and create new requirements for the quality characteristics of the workforce. The authors establish that global integration, new technologies, automation of production, digitization and changes in the production organization and the greater role of market regulators on the labor market in combination with structural sectoral and professional changes are the key factors leading to shifts in labor relations and the spread of new forms of employment. Changes in the content, structure and forms of employment affect the value system of the modern worker and his desire to improve his economic, social or professional status via spatial, vertical or horizontal movements. Emphasis is placed on the advisability of the progress of labor mobility, which is one of the important self-regulators of the labor market, which under the conditions of rapid socio-economic changes enriches the qualitative characteristics of the workforce, increases their ability to adapt to structural and conjunctural changes in labor application, flexibly respond to market demands and fully pursue their interests regarding the development and use of their ability to work. Also, labor mobility reduces the risk of loss of sources of livelihood and decline in well-being and acts as a restraining factor as to interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts. The article deals with various factors affecting labor mobility and approaches to their classification, taking into account their nature, direction and nature of influence, and term and method of action. Considering the specifics of the functioning of labor market, as well as the trends in the economic system, the authors reveal the role of individual subjective and objective factors in the formation of labor mobility and the nature of their influence. Highlighted various qualitative characteristics of the individual that enable manifestations of labor mobility, such as social maturity, professional competence, cognitive skills, self-awareness, adaptive capabilities, motivation, creative abilities, critical thinking, cognitive flexibility, strategic thinking, and communication.

Keywords: *labor mobility, trends, factors, labor market, workforce, modern challenges*

JEL: J

Introduction

The world economy under the conditions of progressing globalization and integration is undergoing large-scale, multi-vector, ambiguous, contradictory changes. These changes open up new opportunities and create threatening challenges and dangers in all spheres of social activities, including the labor market.

The dynamics of the labor market is characterized by constant movement of the labor force, which in turn determines its conjuncture. Labor mobility is a complex phenomenon that manifests itself in various forms and is evaluated with various indicators. Modernity is characterized by the dynamism of both factors and the direction and nature of the use of labor force. Labor mobility means the possibility of change in the status of economic activity, profession, and territorial affiliation of the workplace, as well as dynamic social status in society. The efficiency of the labor market and the use of labor depends not only on the directions and intensity of labor flows, but also on the extent to which employees use their qualities and skills in work, which in turn contributes to successful development of the economy. The current condition of the labor market requires a search for ways to raise the labor activity of the population and the mobility of the labor force in certain forms of employment under the current instability of the socio-economic sphere in Ukraine.

An urgent problem of Ukraine's pre-war labor market was to ensure the labor activity of employees and sufficient labor productivity and work quality; a new type of work behavior; and individualized and socially significant social and labor relations, adequate to the requirements of informational and innovative development. The war and the intensification of hostilities in this country have led to an unprecedented forced mobility of the labor force with a simultaneous reduction of the scope of employment. Therefore, identifying theoretical foundations for the substantiation of the factors that contribute to the revival of labor mobility and the effective use of labor force acquires special importance.

Analysis of recent researches and publications

Studies of labor mobility have been carried out by a number of scientists in the context of sociology, psychology, philosophy, economics, demography, etc. The works by Bentein, Vandenberg, Hall, Sullivan, Feldman, Hirsch, Shanley, and Wiesner study various types of labor mobility and its

main determinants. The works by domestic scientists Z. Bauman, J. Bhandari, Y. Venige, O. Bilyk, N. Vargu, I. Gerasimova, E. Libanova, M. Lychkovskaya, M. Stryuk, I. Shtunder and others investigate various socio-economic, psychological and demographic consequences of mobility. However, the lack of systematic works that would identify theoretical foundations and principles of mobility regulation explains the interest in this phenomenon and in the process of labor movement.

The purpose of the article is to generalize the factors determining the direction and intensity of various types of labor movements, and to formulate theoretical approaches to regulating the environment for labor mobility.

Presentation of the main research material

The modern stage of social development is characterized by dynamic processes involving all spheres of life, including political, economic, social, and cultural aspects. Crisis phenomena caused by political and economic factors, as well as by worsened epidemiological situation, weaken the stability of socio-economic systems, but do not change the established trends of globalization and informatization of labor relations. It is these trends that raise new challenges to labor mobility. Research on labor mobility is motivated by the belief that knowledge sharing is a powerful source of innovation and economic growth. There are a number of studies analyzing the impact of technological and structural changes in the economy on the volume and structure of labor supply, which determine labor mobility. One should note the works by V. Martin (Martin, 2001), D. Jorgenson (Johnson, 2002) that investigate the connection between technological change in the economy and that in the structure of labor demand and supply. The key element of such studies is to substantiate the growing requirements for the qualification level of employees, the quality of human capital and the return on investment.

The developments on the labor market under the conditions of restructuring were studied in detail by specialists of the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2009), the European Commissioner for Employment (European Commission, 2009), and representatives of science in the post-Soviet countries (Nadraha, 2014, Hainanov, 2006). The vast majority of researchers point out that that, first of all, structural changes in economy increase the requirements for the educational level of employees, (which in turn increases the share of the population with tertiary education), and contribute to increasing economic activity and mobility. Research conducted by Mansfield (Mansfield, 1985), and Zander and Kogut (Zander, 1995) prove that labor mobility is an important source of inter-firm transfer of knowledge. Companies realize the opportunities that mobility can create and hire inventors to acquire technological

skills and reach distant technological fields (Palomeras, 2010 and Singh, 2011). However, companies experiencing layoffs may face a risk of losing skills and knowledge (or knowledge exclusivity), which reduces their competitiveness, sometimes even to the extent that their survival is threatened (Wezel, 2006).

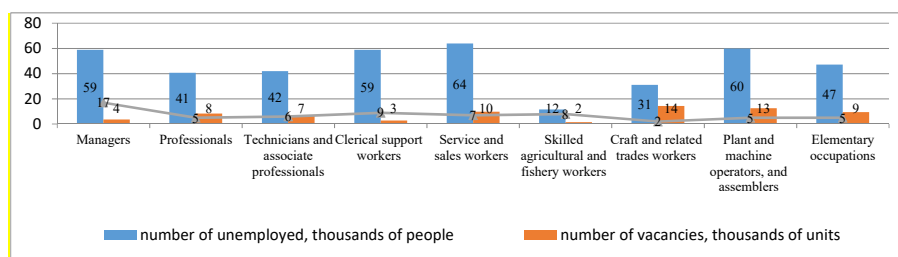
Empirical research (Louis, 1980) considers a few types of labor mobility. Thus, Nicholson and West (Nicholson, 1988) distinguish labor mobility based on three dimensions: *status mobility* (ascending, descending, external); *functional mobility* (ascending, descending, external); and *employer mobility* (internal and external). At the same time, experts distinguish between the professional mobility (Neal, 1999) that occurs both within the same profession (Tolbert, 1996) and that among various professional groups (Nicholson, 1988). Movement associated with employees changing their professions and specialties and mastering new areas of work application is considered as professional mobility. In modern conditions, professional mobility is essential for successful self-realization on the labor market. Weak professional mobility makes flexible orientation almost impossible under dynamic professional conditions, which leads to professional maladaptation and stagnation, loss of income sources, and a decreased well-being. In market conditions, professional mobility acts as a motivator, and a driving force for the generation and realization of human capital.

The multi-vector changes on the labor market become increasingly intense and alter the established parameters of the labor market. In modern conditions, the labor market must be rather flexible. An important characteristic of the labor market flexibility is labor mobility, which reflects adaptation of the labor market to structural and conjunctural changes. There are a number of empirical studies proving an increase in labor mobility in industrialized countries (Stahl, 2004), as well as a spread of destandardized employment (such as outsourcing, part-time and temporary work, and agency personnel) (White, 2004), and a decreased organizational commitment of the personnel (Bentein, 2005, Lance, 2000, Vandenberg, 1993), which are all signs of increased mobility and flexibility of the labor market. The literature provides various theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of different aspects of labor mobility and the analysis of its main factors. The basis of the conducted research is the study of various types of labor mobility, features and role of labor movements in the process of ensuring productive employment and balance on the labor market. Considered at the level of an individual, labor mobility represents a model for intra- and inter-organizational transitions during a person's working life (Hall, 1996, Sullivan, 1999). Also, one should distinguish between actual mobility, labor force movement and psychological readiness for labor mobility (Tykhonova, 2015).

Ukraine's pre-war labor market was characterized by significant structural disproportions, which were determined by socio-political instability, by the lack of coherence between various bodies of public administration, and by the structural, macroeconomic and institutional macroeconomic crisis. The sphere of employment in pre-war Ukraine had destructive characteristics manifested in rather high rates of unemployment in periods of low economic activity; structural disproportionality of employment; distortion of labor relations; and insignificant number of new jobs combined with their low quality. This is what intensified and encouraged professional mobility, as evidenced by the main indicators of the pre-war labor market in Ukraine. The deepest professional asymmetry was characteristic for employees and managers (17 persons applied for 1 vacancy), technical employees (9 persons); qualified agricultural workers (8 persons); and employees in trade and services (7 persons). Of the lowest demand on the labor market were the unemployed in the following professions: managers, economists, administrators, civil service specialists, lawyers, and sellers of non-food products.

Comparative analysis of supply and demand on the labor market in 2021

Fig. 1



Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine

The depth of the professional disparity, as estimated using the asymmetry coefficient based on the use of the indicator of load per one vacant job by professional groups, indicates a critical imbalance on Ukraine's domestic labor market, as the quantitative indicators are within 1.7-1.9. The professional structural imbalance of Ukraine's labor market is largely caused, on the one hand, by such groups of professions as legislators, managers, CEOs, and workers in trade and services, where the imbalance takes the form of excess of labor supply over its demand. And, on the other hand, it is skilled workers with tools and workers in the maintenance and operation of machines and equipment, for whom the number of jobs exceeds that of available labor.

Among the economic activities, where a relatively large number of vacancies corresponds to a relatively small number of officially unemployed, first of all, are processing industry and education. Another group is mainly represented by trade and public administration with high unemployment and a relatively small number of vacancies (Table 1).

Activities and professional groups with the largest imbalances between labor supply and demand in 2021-2022

Table 1

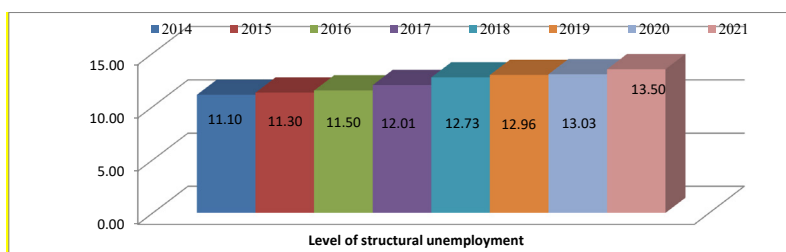
I, nature of imbalance: demand for labor exceeds its supply	II, nature of imbalance: demand for labor is lower than its supply
Professional groups	
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	Managers
Technicians and associate professionals	Service and sales workers
Economic activities	
Processing industry	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
Education	Public administration and defense; compulsory social insurance

Source: calculated based on data from Ukraine’s State Employment Service - Available at: <https://www.dcz.gov.ua>

Despite the hostilities, the first half of 2022 was characterized by a growing demand for the services of agricultural tractor drivers, motor vehicle drivers, support workers, food sellers, and accountants. However, the level of filling of these vacancies ranged above 70%. All this confirms the primitivization of Ukraine’s labor market and a considerable professional and qualification imbalance, which exacerbates the problem of structural unemployment. The emergence of the above phenomena is due to a mismatch between the structure of labor supply and that of the demand for jobs as a result of the disappearance of obsolescent professions and the emergence of new ones that meet the new challenges of modernity. Dynamic estimates of regional structural unemployment for the period 2014–2021 (Fig. 2) indicate that the existing (officially registered) unemployment in Ukraine at 11–14% is explained by disparities in the territorial structure of labor supply and demand, which can only be overcome with increased labor mobility.

Dynamics of structural unemployment in Ukraine, 2014–2021, % to registered unemployment

Fig. 2



Source: calculated by authors based on data from regional employment centers – Available at: <https://www.dcz.gov.ua>

The principal reasons of the existence and increase of structural unemployment may lie, first of all, in the organizational and technical renewal and modernization of the production, and fluctuations in aggregate demand for products of particular industries. Another significant impact on the scale and dynamics of structural unemployment is associated with inter-industry, intra-industry, inter-professional and inter-regional workforce mobility (Dolgova, 2009). The problem of structural unemployment is aggravated due to those local labor markets where monopolistic companies operate (Korovkin, 2012).

Structural unemployment emerges on the labor market and can be characterized both by an excess of vacant jobs over the number of unemployed, and by the opposite situation. The main thing here is the structural inconsistency of the quality characteristics. The above mentioned trends are evidence, on the one hand, of contradictions between the workforce quality and the employers' demands, and on the other hand, of the uncompetitiveness of the jobs themselves. Thus, the theoretical and practical guidelines for ensuring the proper quality and structure of professional training of qualified workers for the employers' demand, continue to fall short of the requirements of the latest high-tech equipment at Ukrainian enterprises, and remain insufficiently studied at the current stage of economic development.

In the absence of effective compensatory policy of technological substitution and creation of adequate opportunities for mastering new skills, a significant number of those who are at risk of being released may accept employment in jobs with lower skill level requirements and, accordingly, lower wages.

Analysis of structural change in the national labor market can be carried out using the generalizing indicators of structural change. The most

common are the coefficients of absolute structural changes, mean square coefficient of absolute structural changes, mean square coefficient of relative structural changes, Gatev's integral coefficient of structural changes, Salai's generalizing coefficient of structural changes, and the generalizing Ryabtsev coefficient. The authors carried out an index analysis of structural changes in terms of activities separately for the period 2010-2013 according to Ukraine's state Classifier of Economic Activities-2005 and for the period 2014-2020 - according to the state Classifier -2010. The obtained results are summarized in Table 2.

Structurally dynamic differences of Ukraine's national labor market by industry

Table 2

Indicator	Average for 2010-2013	Average for 2014-2020
Linear coefficient of absolute structural changes	0.205	0.249
Mean square coefficient of absolute structural changes	0.335	0.388
Linear coefficient of relative structural changes	2.63	2.887
Mean square coefficient of relative structural changes	0.3575	0.373
Gatev's integral coefficient of structural changes	0.0215	0.024
Salai's generalizing coefficient of structural changes	0.0196	0.022
Generalizing Ryabtsev coefficient	0.0125	0.016

Source: compiled based on the authors' calculations

Analysis of chain coefficients indicates insignificant chain changes in the structure of employment, that is, the sectoral changes are not very significant. According to the indicator of the linear coefficient of absolute structural changes, one can characterize the total cumulative change in all structural parts without considering the directions of individual changes. The obtained data suggest that the structural changes during the last analyzed period were more intensive. A generalized conclusion based on Gatev's integral coefficient of structural changes and Salai index of structural changes, can be a statement about the stability and homogeneity of Ukraine's employment structure. That is, the pre-war *sectoral structure of employment in Ukraine was rather stable and only slightly variable*, but such homogeneity is not indicative of sufficient employment opportunities and a low unemployment level in this country. Solving the problem of Ukraine's modern labor market with regard to ensuring an acceptable level of labor mobility is associated with efficiency and effectiveness of the social elevators. Under modern conditions,

one of the effective social elevators is the coherence and interaction between labor markets and professional education.

The strengthening role of market regulators on the labor market in combination with structural sectoral and professional changes in labor demand and the transformation of professional preferences and value orientations of the working population both determine the importance of issues related to the modernization of professional training. These changes call for new requirements for the workforce, one of which is labor mobility as an important self-regulator of the labor market, which, under the conditions of rapid socio-economic changes, raises the ability of the workforce to adapt to structural and conjunctural changes in the field of employment, to flexibly respond to the demands of labor market and to maximally realize their interests in the formation and use of their ability to work.

As labor mobility becomes an important part of work experience, the study of labor mobility becomes essential to understanding how individuals' careers develop. Labor mobility is also relevant for organizations, as intra-organizational mobility is essential for effective human resource planning and skills development (Anderson, 1981 and Greenhaus, 2000). A better understanding of labor mobility is also of primary importance at the macro level, as mobility can facilitate the dissemination of knowledge, innovation and technology among firms (Saxenian, 1996) and thereby promote the growth of intellectual capital in society.

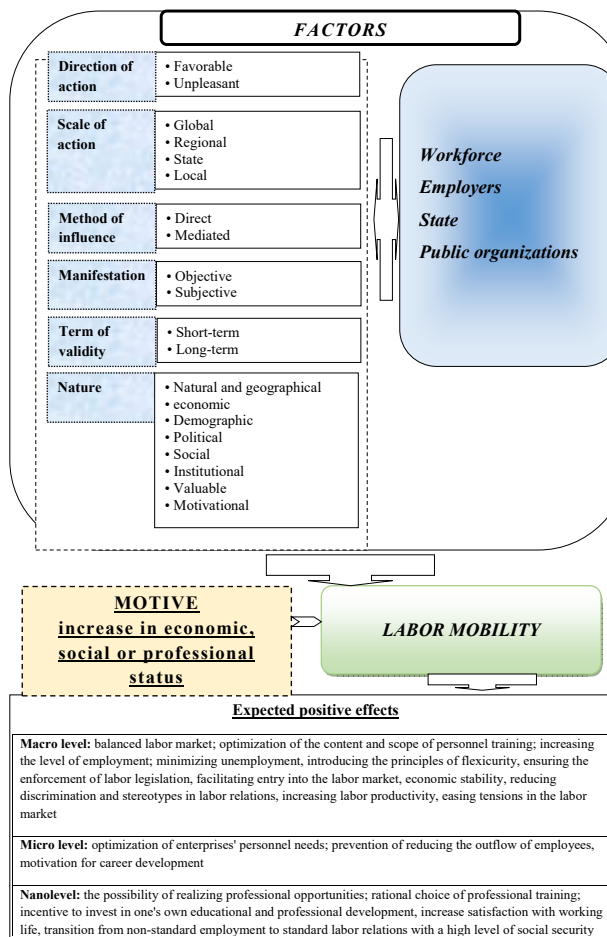
The factors whose action encourages labor mobility are divided into natural-geographical, economic, structural, demographic, political, social, institutional (Kanter, 1989), individual (Johnson, 2002), value based (Eby, 2000), motivational (Campion, 1994), and career related ones (Rosenfeld, 1992). For each of the levels and actors on the labor market, different factors dominate. Thus, the effect of mobility factors can be considered at different levels: global, national, regional and local. The other factors of labor mobility differ in the direction of their action (favorable and unfavorable), period of influence (short-term and long-term), and the directness of influence (direct and indirect).

Investigating the phenomenon of labor mobility, some authors distinguish between objective and subjective aspects of the factors of that phenomenon (Zaslavskaya, 1991, Gerasimova, 2015, Stunder, 2013). The objective aspect covers the scientific-technical, social, economic, historical, educational, and demographic sides of the phenomenon. That is, the objective basis of labor force mobility comprises the factors causing changes in the content and nature of labor, in particular, the changes in its object, purpose and methods (working conditions) and the process of changing professions

including such factors as the level of development of the production forces, structural and qualitative changes in economy, institutional factors, education, age, etc. The subjective factors include the worker's value orientations, relationships, needs, etc. (Fig. 3).

Conditions for the formation of labor mobility

Fig. 3



Source: Constructed by authors

One feature of the modern labor market is the complementarity of strategic goals of all its actors, which implies, on the one hand, focusing on global trends in the functioning of the global market, and on the other

hand, the need to adapt to the realities of the domestic market. And the most important adaptation tool here is the labor mobility, which could ensure social cohesion, inclusion, and creation of social capital. The formation of labor mobility is largely due to the state regulation of the sphere of development and use of labor. In this context, very important are the mechanisms of promoting labor competitiveness, as well as motivational and encouraging mechanisms to improve its qualitative characteristics. In the modern world, unjustified socio-economic inequality, impoverishment of the population and the absence of a proper system of “social elevators” that would facilitate the transition from one social stratum to another further aggravate social tensions in society and have a negative impact on the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the labor. Labor activity and labor mobility on the labor market should be based on a new social consciousness (in terms of values, ideology, culture, and ideas), which would mean the education of a positive attitude to work, increased work prestige, a greater role of the workforce in raising the country’s competitiveness, human dignity, safe working conditions, social justice, harmonic social and labor relations, reduced social tension, reliable social cohesion, a stable society, and broad opportunities for development. In today’s dynamic world, in order to maintain competitiveness, it is necessary to develop individual professional abilities, knowledge and skills throughout life, to experiment with career, to adapt to general well-being and to reduce income stratification.

Ensuring labor mobility should not only balance the sphere of employment, but also ensure proper and decent working conditions. Despite the variety of tools regulating the labor market, in our opinion, it is the priorities and standards of decent work that can serve as a system of targets to which the mechanism of state regulation of the labor market should be directed. Focusing on the standards of decent work should ensure the comprehensive nature of labor market regulation based on the interconnection and interdependence of its institutions. On the other hand, reaching the standards established in the decent work programs is only possible by combining the tasks of the labor market and the priorities of decent work.

A synergistic effect of such a combination should be primarily manifested in the elimination of “shortage areas” of decent work. And from this it follows that in regulating the labor market, the greatest attention should be paid to those institutions that today still fail to provide proper standards of decent work, in particular, to such institutional mechanisms as labor legislation, social partnership, social standardization, etc. On the other hand, the improvement of only certain institutions alone without corresponding changes in other institutions could not provide a necessary synergistic effect

of the collaboration of the labor market regulation mechanism with decent work programs.

The institutional environment affects the development of labor mobility by regulating the development of the working population, in particular, via the institutions of training and retraining. Of particular importance become the institutions implementing policies in the spheres of employment and labor migration, social protection against unemployment, and countering the spread of unemployment. The institutional influence on the development of labor mobility is carried out via the creation of the labor market infrastructure, mechanisms that ensure the relationship between the labor market and the market of educational services, improvement and optimization of the employment structure, etc.

It is also important to note the role of small and medium-sized businesses, which are the main component of the national economy. Small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as individual businessmen, perform an extremely important social function - job creation and are an important link in vocational training. They better respond to market needs, modernize production and conduct structural changes. They contact consumers faster and more efficiently; they shape a competitive environment that encourages the production of goods, services and job creation in the market economy. Besides, they generate and implement innovative ideas (commercial, technical, marketing, social, and others), and produce novelty goods and services of significant knowledge intensity, thereby setting the pace of economic growth and contributing to solving the problems of employment (Miroshnyk, 2020). However, at the same time, their dynamics pose new requirements on the flexibility and adaptability of the workforce. Due to the shortage of qualified personnel, including in narrowly specialized areas of knowledge, businesses begin to intensively fill the knowledge gaps “with their own efforts” or via new forms of additional education (second higher education, advanced training courses, seminars, business schools, business education), which are much faster in focusing on the needs of modern economy. In so doing, business acts as a factor in shaping the labor mobility.

The subjective aspect of labor mobility factors is based on the value orientations, employees’ needs, and interests and moral qualities causing changes in labor activity. Subjective factors also include relatively stable personal characteristics, propensities and psychological readiness to change professional activity, and reasons that allow or prevent breaking traditional patterns of professional behavior (Lychkovska, 2018).

Value orientations in a person’s consciousness, which are one of the reasons for the ambiguity between the development of employee’s abilities

and the ways of realizing these abilities, act as a motivator for labor mobility. Mobility opens up new opportunities to realize the person's own potential (physical, intellectual, spiritual), contributing to increased production efficiency. The organic relation between the efficiency of production and the level of the employee's skills, knowledge and abilities (Becker, 1993) calls for discovering in people all the best that is embedded in them and developing their creative abilities. The peculiarities of production in a market based economy require the employee to develop abilities that will contribute to his professional activity, the ability to quick decision making, and solution finding in non-standard conditions and in risky situations. Adequate behavior in a situation where it is necessary to make a balanced decision is by itself an impetus for labor mobility.

Summarizing their own reasoning and the academic point of view (Gerasimova, 2015), the authors argue that the qualitative individual characteristics enabling labor mobility include the following: *social maturity* (independence, responsible decision-making, social activity, openness), *professional competence* (high quality basic training, professional skill, interest in various fields of professional activity, active life position, professional flexibility, readiness for learning, self-learning, self-development, and self-education), *cognitive skills* (encyclopedic knowledge, professional knowledge, ability to independent acquisition of knowledge, developed cognitive abilities, erudition, education, creativity), *self-awareness* (the desire for internal self-improvement, a creative attitude to one's own development, the ability to reflect, self-regulation, self-determination, self-control, adequate self-esteem, readiness for self-discovery, creative self-improvement), *adaptive capabilities* (ability to adapt to changes in the labor sphere, high adaptability to various social situations), *motivation* (need for career and professional growth, internal need for professional mobility, motivation for self-education, focus on innovation and mastery of new aspects in the profession, purposefulness), *creative abilities* (individual qualities determining the success in creative professional activities, entrepreneurship at the workplace), *critical thinking* (the ability to analyze information to make rational decisions on its basis), *cognitive flexibility* (the ability to switch from one type of thinking to another), *strategic thinking* (the ability to focus on a goal-oriented approach), and *communicativeness* (social-communicative adaptability, the desire for agreement, readiness for cooperation and interaction).

Increasing tensions in Ukraine's labor market during the hostilities and prospects for post-war recovery both emphasize the urgency of labor mobility. In the current difficult conditions, the issues related to strengthening the adaptability and competitiveness of the workforce, as well as streamlining

its use, are a priority. The solution of these tasks largely relates to the development of labor force mobility. Increasing labor mobility is an important condition for vertical and horizontal balancing of labor supply and demand, increasing the number of available jobs, expanding the probability of successful implementation of acquired professional skills, increasing labor productivity, raising the living standards and ensuring overall economic stability. At the same time, labor mobility could mitigate the current deep income differentiation, reduce the general macroeconomic volatility and contribute to the mitigation of social tensions in society.

Conclusions

In the post-war economy, regulation of labor mobility should be focused on two separate aspects: domestic - internally displaced persons, and external - forced migrants abroad. This requires creation of proper conditions for the development of all types of internal mobility to encourage and support the demand for labor related to overcoming the consequences of the destruction in the economy, and rebuilding territories, enterprises, and the housing stock. At the same time, this revival should rely on a new basis, which will cause the need for new knowledge and skills. In parallel, it is necessary to carry out a structural transformation of the economy with corresponding changes on the labor market. The external segment calls to intensify measures aimed at the return of those who were forced to leave the country in war. Economic recovery, legitimization of work outside Ukraine and its inclusion in the domestic insurance record, and creation of proper conditions for employment with a decent payment, all are top priority tasks for Ukraine's socio-economic policy in the near future.

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