

## Labor Market of Zakarpattia Region: Current State and Assessment of Structural Transformation of Employment

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### Abstract

*The article analyzes the main trends in the functioning of the labor market of the Transcarpathian region in the transformation of the region's economy to market relations. Considerable attention is paid to the analysis of two main elements of the mechanism of the labor market - labor supply and demand, the interaction of which ensures its equilibrium. The dynamics of job creation in the spatial and the professional qualification section is analyzed. The main factors influencing the development of the field of employment are identified. Considerable attention is paid to the study of factors that shape the supply of labor in the region. Based on the current level of unemployment and the load on one vacancy in terms of natural and economic zones of Transcarpathia, a typology of local labor markets was implemented and three types were identified in their composition – balanced, unbalanced and diversified, with the definition of each characteristic.*

*The analysis and assessment of the structural transformation of employment in the formation of a diversified economy of the region. The dynamics of cross-sectoral redistribution of labor is analyzed, the reasons for the deformation of the employment structure related to the concentration of a significant number of people employed in agricultural production and the curtailment of many industrial enterprises and the loss of their city-forming function and centers of advanced technologies and innovations.*

**Keywords:** Labor Market, Social And Labor Relations, Employment, Structure.

### INTRODUCTION

Economic transformations in Ukraine are accompanied by profound, systemic changes in the field of social and labor relations and employment, the core of which is the labor market. The special place in the labor market in the institutional structure of a market economy, according to Robert Solow, is due to "its functioning affects the interests of many people, and such a pathological defect as unemployment is a phenomenon that greatly disappoints people, knocks them out from the track" [1].

The processes of privatization and privatization of state property, development of the corporate, group, and individual private property have a decisive influence on the formation of the labor market in Ukraine. The consequence of these processes was the formation of a diversified economy, increased competition in social and labor relations, which caused profound changes in the sectoral

structure of employment, the formation of new organizational and legal forms of management, opened space for many forms of employment – self-employment, entrepreneurship, employment. Fundamental changes in the system of basic relations have significantly intensified the study of processes occurring in the field of social and labor relations, employment, and the labor market. Research on labor issues at the regional level has been especially intensified, as it is within the framework of regional policy that the most complete consideration of specific conditions of development and functioning of social and labor potential, specifics of employment and trends in local labor markets becomes possible. The legitimacy of this conclusion is confirmed by a significant number of scientific publications that have significantly enriched knowledge in the field of labor use, approaches to the formation of mechanisms for regulating labor relations in a transformational economy, the functioning of the labor market on new system-forming principles of economic activity relations.

One of the first scientific publications, which laid the foundations for a new vision of the essence of mechanisms for regulating labor relations in market conditions, was the collective work of scientists from the Institute of Regional Studies of NAS of Ukraine "Social and labor potential: theory and practice", which considers labor potential in the social dimension. According to the authors, man is a subject of any economic system, which in turn is determined not only by rigid economic relations, but develops under the influence of many social forces, at the epicenter of which is a man. This formulation of the problem lays the foundation for the socialization of the human essence, as the main condition for its development and self-realization. The socialization of labor potential has become a methodological basis for the analysis of the labor market, employment, the formation of mechanisms for regulating labor relations in many scientific publications [2-6].

At the same time, scientific research of local labor markets, which have a segmented nature, is intensifying, as relatively autonomous labor markets with their patterns of labor movement and jobs are being formed within them. This segmentation reflects the existing division of labor and the demand for economic agents [7, 33].

Due to the segmentation of local labor markets, a significant element of specification is introduced into their analysis, which is important for the development of a strategy for their regulation. A relatively new type of segmentation of labor markets is their classification of the nature of depression, which allowed at the local factor level to identify impulses of depression and classify them on a dominant basis in demographic, structural, functional, and chronological depressed labor markets [8]. Accordingly, a strategy for their regulation is formed, comprehensive, and targeted programs for the development of labor potential are developed, supported by the necessary resources, innovation, and investment policy is implemented, the process of forming the institutional component of regulating sub-regional labor markets are carried out.

Scientific publications on the problems of the modern period of labor use are largely determined by the processes of decentralization of management, which corresponds to the logic and course of reforms in Ukraine aimed at decentralizing power and strengthening local self-government by creating united territorial communities [9, 32]. Under the new conditions, the emphasis of the research is shifting to solving the main tasks facing the newly created communities, in particular: "development of effective management entities working to create new jobs and a city-forming facilities, intensification of organizational techniques of local economic development leads to greater activity of local business [10, 31], the formation of a mechanism of economic coordination of communities, which lays a solid foundation for the economic model of the community and its basic components – labour relationships, competence, morality, and trust [11, 24].

**The goal of the article** is to analyze the current trends in the functioning of the labor market of the Transcarpathian region in terms of structural transformation of the economy and the changes in the sectoral structure of employment caused by this process.

### **1. Current trends in the labor market of the Transcarpathian region**

The current stage of development of Ukraine's economy is characterized not only by significant differentiation of economic space, but also by the specifics and features of regional labor markets, the level of entrepreneurial activity of the economically active population, and opportunities for

productive employment. This means that the state, regional employment policy should be based on the uneven development of the regions, and, accordingly, different opportunities for the implementation of employment policy. This conclusion is confirmed by the analysis of existing differences in the reproduction of the population in close connection with employment trends of the economically active population, qualitative characteristics of labor potential, which indicates the lack of universal recipes for strategy and tactics of effective employment policy. At least this means that specific labor markets are formed in the spatial and sectoral aspects, as the latter is a mirror image of the situation in the country's economy and its regions. Hence the increased interest in the analysis of problematic labor markets, which include the Transcarpathian region.

The analysis of dynamic changes in the regional labor market is based on the use of the equilibrium method of research, i.e the search for a situation that ensures its equilibrium. In this situation, a balance is reached between two key elements of the mechanism of the labor market - labor supply and demand, the ratio of which characterizes the labor market situation under the influence of which the choice of employment policy alternatives and tools to its regulation. Of course, the balance of supply and demand for labor is theoretical abstraction, because, in reality, such a coincidence is very rare. However, this abstraction allows us to identify the most important patterns of functioning of the market mechanism.

One of the most important indicators that characterize the situation in the regional labor market is the demand for labor, which reflects the structure of social labor needs provided by the wage and the livelihood fund [12, 16], or the total number of occupied and vacant jobs [13, 17], the need employers in workers for the production of goods and services in accordance with the demand in the economy [14, 18]. One of the indicators that characterize the demand for labor in the regional labor market is the number of vacancies that are offered to replace various forms of ownership and the workload per vacancy. Analysis of the dynamics of demand for workers in the labor market of the Transcarpathian region for the period from 2010 to 2018 indicates its growth, which amounted to 124.9%. The growth in demand for labor was largely due to the development of employment in the cities. For example, out of 1164 vacancies announced in 2018, 37.2% are in Uzhhorod and Mukachevo, including the Mukachevo district [15, 19]. At the same time, in six districts of the mountainous natural and economic zone, there were only 235 vacancies or 20.2% of the total. This is evidence of deepening disparities in the development of employment in local labor markets and unequal opportunities to realize the labor potential of the urban and rural population in the region, which is transformed by the mobility of the rural population, which is the core of labor migration and unemployment in the spatial context. The consequence of this is the presence of a high share of sub-regional labor markets with limited labor demand, which, according to expert estimates cover all mountainous areas and a significant part of the foothills of the natural and economic zone of Transcarpathia.

The structural transformation of the region's economy is accompanied by corresponding changes in the demand for labor in terms of professional qualification groups of the economically active population.

**Table 1: Demand for labour by certain categories of employee in the Transcarpathian region, persons**

	2010	2015	2018	
			Total	The percent till 2010
The need for workers, total. Including:	932	239	1164	124,9
Workers (qualified specialists, professionals)	595	187	932	156,6
Officials (executives, managers, administrators)	257	9	45	17,5
The simplest professions (including people without a profession)	80	13	187	233,8

Calculated on the basis of the data – statistical bulletin “Labour in the Transcarpathian region 2012”, p.32, Transcarpathia 2018, p.63

Analysis of the data shown in Table 1 indicates the presence of significant differences in the demand for labor of different occupational categories of workers. Due to the positive trend of increasing demand for skilled labor during the analyzed period, the demand for the simplest professions, including those without a profession, more than doubled. As a result, there are significant disparities between the demand for skilled and low-skilled labor, which can be explained by the slow adaptation of the region's economy to market conditions and the growing transaction costs of enterprises associated with attracting highly skilled workers. On the other hand, the availability of vacancies is not a convincing argument for significant employment opportunities, as some vacancies concern jobs with unsatisfactory working conditions, low wages, and, as practice shows, they are not filled for a long time.

The second component of the labor market situation is the supply of labor, which is formed under the influence of a number of factors, the main of which are people of working age. But for the period from 2010 to 2018, the number of registered unemployed in the region decreased by 45.8%. A significant decrease in unemployment occurred in Uzhhorod (-55.9%), Mukachevo (36.4%), and the vast majority of district centers. Against the background of declining unemployment, the workload per vacancy remains high, especially in the mountainous areas of the region. In particular, the unemployment rate in the Velykoberezhnyansky district in 2018 exceeded the regional average by more than 5 times, Mizhhirya - 9, Volovets -2 times. In the foothills of the natural and economic zone of the region, the highest load per vacancy was recorded in Irshava - 17 people and Tyachiv district - 15 people per vacancy.

The existing disparities between labor supply and demand in the region's sub-regional labor markets give grounds to distinguish three main types.

Unbalanced labor markets, which are characterized by a disproportion between labor supply and demand, and the unemployment rate exceeds the regional average, and the main form of unemployment is structural (Velykoberezhnyansky, Volovetsky, Irshavsky, Mizhghirsky, Rakhiv, Tyachiv districts).

Balanced - local labor markets, in which labor uses rates correspond to or close to the regional average with the dominance of frictional unemployment (Berehiv, Vynohradiv, Perechyn, Khust, Svalyava, Mukachevo, Uzhgorod districts).

Diversified - with a developed sectoral structure of the economy, which provides productive employment, due to the dynamic development of the market sector of the economy with the unemployment rate, which is much lower than its natural level (Uzhgorod, Mukachevo).

The implemented typology of sub-regional labor markets are important for the formation of a regional employment strategy, which should be targeted, as the region has formed separate rural areas, where it is impossible to solve the problem of employment at the expense of its own resources. This requires the development of state employment programs for the rural population, aimed at creating an effective business environment in rural areas, stimulating investment in the development of employment, supporting cooperative forms of work, organizing family farming, actively promoting the functioning of commodity farms. The development of various forms of labor activity in rural areas is an unalterable condition for solving the problem of employment of the rural population and the use of competitive mechanisms in the field of social and labor relations.

## **2. Assessment of the structural transformation of employment**

The market transformation of the Transcarpathian economy is accompanied by an intensive sectoral redistribution of employment. These processes are contradictory, and in some cases forced, due on the one hand to the adaptation of the regional economy to market relations with the market-specific institutional structure of the economy, and on the other - the dominance of latent processes in social and labor relations - high levels of unregistered employment, hidden unemployment, devaluation of labor, arrears of wages in certain sectors of the economy, unjustifiably high employment of the rural population in person the farm, the payment of wages in "envelopes" massive labor migration and more.

The result of these processes has been a significant reduction in employment in priority areas of the region's economy. During the period from 2010 to 2018, the employment rate decreased by 5.4%, in particular, the number of people employed in industrial production decreased by 10.5%, transport, and communications - by 23.8%, health care - by 10, 8%, employees of scientific organizations - by 50.8%. Due to the general decrease in the number of the employed population, employment in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries increased by 5.5%. The number of people employed in public administration and defense and social insurance remains stable.

The decrease in employment in priority areas of material production, including forestry, machinery, and instrumentation is due to three main reasons: the reduction in production due to the transformation crisis of Ukraine's economy, lack of effective market levers simulates production, bringing the economy closer to market standards. Under the influence of these processes, there was a large-scale release of workers and their spontaneous redistribution to other areas of activity, primarily related to self-employment and informal work. The paradox of the situation in the field of social and labor relations is that it did not cause an increase in employment in the real sector of the economy and an increase in unemployment, the number of which as of 01.01.2019 amounted to 56.1 thousand people or 10% of the total number of the economically active population [16, 25]. Hence, it is quite obvious that in these conditions, the population largely compensated for job loss and reduced income through self-employment in areas of employment that are not taken into account and not reflected in official statistics [17, 26]. The conclusion was confirmed by large-scale employment in the trade and the provision of various services, which was formed without the participation of the state, solely through personal initiative and adaptive resources of the population. This segment of the informal economy has become the main area of employment and income for 77.2% of employees in the wholesale and retail trade, and 83% of employees of the catering organization of the total number of employees in the relevant activity [18, 29]. The extent of employment in trade and services can be judged by the number of USREOU entities by legal status. For example, in Uzhhorod and Mukachevo, the number of business entities with the status of a legal entity and without the status of a legal entity amounted to 42.2% of their total number in the region. A significant number of people employed in trade and services are also confirmed by the high share of employees who are in employment with the company, i.e. they are permanent employees who make up the core of labor collectives. As of January 1, 2019, the share of full-time employees in the trade sector was 51.6%, and in catering organizations - 72.4%. From the above, it is clear that in urban settlements and settlements there was a spontaneous redistribution of labor from urban enterprises, which formed the economic basis of the urban economy, in trade and services, which became a kind of socioeconomic shock absorber for the population in economic transformation. Against the background of cross-sectoral redistribution of labor, there have been significant changes in the size of enterprises, where the leading role is played by small enterprises, which today account for 96.1% of their total number. Analysis of structural processes in the economy of cities and towns of the Transcarpathian region can not have an unambiguous assessment.

On the one hand, the dynamic development of the non-productive sphere brings the structure of the region's economy closer to the accepted market standards, where this area accounts for 60-70% of GDP, and on the other hand - the curtailment of large and medium-sized industrial enterprises, which in the past, led to the loss of production potential, reduced investment activity, competitiveness, which exacerbated the inconsistency of the existing structure of the economy too, the need to develop innovative and post-industrial economy [19, 30]. The reduction of industrial production has narrowed the opportunities for the introduction of research and development, as a result, the number of innovative industrial enterprises is decreasing from year to year and in 2018 amounted to only 9% of their total number. Accordingly, the number of employees involved in research and development is decreasing. Thus, only recently the number has decreased from 678 people in 2016 to 175 people in 2018. The current situation requires serious adjustments to the strategy of industrial production in the region, which is an unalterable condition for the development of labor and professional activity, increasing the competitiveness and mobility of workers, increasing productivity, ensuring effective employment.

The transformation of the existing system of agricultural production as a historically formed segment of the region's economy, which in the form of market relations has retained its structural status is accompanied by profound changes in social and labor relations and employment of the rural population. Their result was the formation of three main organizational forms of management in the countryside: agricultural enterprises, family farms, and personal farms. These types of farms laid the foundations for the development of diversification of agricultural production, changed the nature and content of labor, created the basis for multiple forms of employment of the rural population. Today, agricultural enterprises employ 1/3 of the working population, and personal farms and farms employ 3/4 of the region's rural population.

Thus, under the influence of the processes of privatization and privatization of property, there was a large-scale cross-sectoral redistribution of labor, and the sphere of agricultural production became the main area of employment for almost every fourth employed worker in the region.

An objective analysis of structural processes in agriculture, where the dominant form of management, and therefore employment, is the family-individual structure - indicates, on the one hand, the specifics and features of agricultural production, as a historically formed segment of the region's economy, which operates in conditions scarcity of land and clear vertical zoning, which reduces the potential for increasing agricultural production, and on the other hand artificially overestimating the high p level of employment of the rural population by classifying it as an employed rural family, which owns or uses more than 0.25 hectares of land. Given the fact that almost 60% of private farms have a semi-natural, non-commodity nature, we can agree with the opinion that "a significant part of the rural population is classified as employed on a formal basis" [20, 31].

This makes it clear that for a large part of the rural population, the problem of finding a new field of employment and changing work motivation in order to adapt to market relations has objectively arisen. According to expert estimates, for 46% of the working population of the village, social adaptation was accompanied by professional mobility, retraining, the need to learn a new profession. However, for a large part of the economically active population, labor migration has become the main form of labor mobility.

In Ukraine and its regions, there is no objective information on the scale of labor migration, and the discrepancy between unofficial data on the scale of stationary migration of Ukrainian citizens reaches more than five times the range of 1.5 to 7 million people, which prevents critical understanding of migration risks strategic importance for the development of the Ukrainian state [21, 30]. If we take into account that the main contingent of labor migration is the population of small towns (33%) and rural areas (58%), it becomes obvious that in Transcarpathia as the least urbanized region, where, according to expert estimates in the orbit of labor migration processes included about 170 thousand people, this problem becomes particularly acute [22]. Moreover, today these processes do not take place against the background of a surplus of able-bodied population, as it was in the past, but on the basis of intensifying the processes of depopulation of the population, which leads to the inevitable loss of human potential.

In these conditions, the development of new areas of activity in rural areas, modernization and diversification of the economy, creating conditions for multifunctional development of rural areas is of paramount importance. It is first of all about the organization of industrial production, development of productions on the processing of agricultural products in places of compact residence of the rural population. An extremely important problem is the development of non-agricultural labor activities, production, and social infrastructure, which will lead to an increase in business activity, the development of market-adapted areas of employment.

## CONCLUSIONS

Transformation of social and labor relations and employment of the population of Zakarpatska region is accompanied by the asymmetry between the key elements of the labor market mechanism - demand and supply of labor. This gap is especially noticeable in the sub-regional rural labor markets, as a result of which unequal conditions are created in the opportunities to exercise the right to work in the rural and urban population. This situation has created conditions for large-scale labor migration, the

core of which is formed by rural residents, which leads to loss of human capital and deformation of the sex and age structure of the region's population.

The analysis of the sectoral structure of employment, determined by the transformation of the region's economy to market relations, is accompanied by an intensive cross-sectoral redistribution of labor from industrial production in agriculture, where the main organizational and legal form of employment is personal employment. The sphere of labor application in trade and the provision of various types of services is developing at a dynamic pace, which brings the sectoral structure of the region's economy closer to the standards of a market economy.

The contraction of the absolute majority of industrial enterprises in the region is correlated with a decrease in the number of employees and a narrowing of the scope of employment in industrial production. The current trend has led to the loss of industrial enterprise city-building functions and centers of innovation and investment activities, which they performed in the past.

Analysis of the main trends in the labor market and employment in the region indicates the need for public authorities to apply a set of measures aimed at implementing active employment policies, supporting entrepreneurial activity, stimulating investment in human capital development, improving institutional infrastructure, regulating social and labor relations creating conditions that ensure the realization of the human right to work.

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