

II. ECONOMIC SCIENCES

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THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN UKRAINE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Introduction. Today, the unemployment rate is closely linked to the epidemiological situation in Ukraine. Hospitalization and morbidity rates are rising rapidly every day, forcing the authorities to introduce quarantine restrictions. It leads to the stagnation of economic activity with mass layoffs, financial deficits, loss of market access, complex regulation, and additional tax pressures.

Objectives of the paper are to investigate the dynamics of unemployment in Ukraine during COVID-19 pandemic, and to analyze the data published by Ukrainian statistical centers.

Results of the research. Since Feb-March 2020, the number of unemployed in Ukraine has been increasing. As of January 2021, the number of registered unemployed in Ukraine is 23% higher than in January 2020. In total, about 200,000 Ukrainians have lost their jobs since the beginning of quarantine due to the coronavirus. And this is only according to official data.

As of February 1, 2021, the State Employment Centre registered 488,000 unemployed people. The leaders are Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Poltava and Vinnytsia regions. This figure is 114.9 thousand or 23.5% higher than on the same date last year. At the same time, the number of vacancies in the economic downturn decreased to 16.4 thousand, ie almost 24% less than in February last year.

On the other hand, there is a demand for workers in agriculture, forestry, trade, and services. Also opened vacancies in the field of logistics:

- courier,
- driver,
- loader,
- auxiliary worker,
- stacker-packer,
- warehouse manager.

The State Employment Centre states that workers in the areas of health care, social assistance, and law enforcement are also needed at work.

There is also a growing demand for professionals:

- accountants;
- accountants;
- doctors;

- electric gas welders;
- road workers;
- locksmiths-repairmen;
- electricians.

During the lockdown in Ukraine, the number of unemployed increased by almost 100 thousand people. Firstly, workers (mostly in services and sales) lost their jobs during the quarantine. The Cabinet of Ministers has allocated almost 1.3 billion hryvnias in unemployment benefits and more than 4.7 billion hryvnias in compensation for salary expenses for small and medium-sized businesses [1].

The official unemployment rate in Ukraine remained at 6% over the past four years. According to the State Employment Centre, as of May 2017, 374 thousand unemployed were registered, in May 2018 – 326 thousand people, in 2019 – a little more than 311 thousand people. At the time, there was even a noticeable trend to reduce unemployment. The situation changed dramatically in March 2020 after the introduction of quarantine due to coronavirus. In May 1,475 thousand unemployed people registered in centers. Thus, the official unemployment rose by 32%.

The dynamics of unemployment in Ukraine is going up – in February 2020, 373.1 thousand unemployed were registered, in March 2020 – increased to 376 thousand people. At the beginning of April 2020, when the quarantine was already underway, the number of unemployed decreased by 7% to 349 thousand people, but at the beginning of May, it rose sharply to 475 thousand people (+ 47% compared to May 2019). The biggest number is for the processing industry – more than 60 thousand people (+ 60% compared to the injury in 2019) and for agriculture, forestry, fisheries – 64 thousand people (+ 25%). If we look for the industries with the highest layoffs from April to May, the worst indicators are for the hotel and restaurant business (added 125% of the unemployed) and in electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning (+ 103%). In the IT sector, from April to May, the number of registered unemployed increased by 60%, and real estate professionals accounted for 57% [2].

Conclusion. During the COVID-19 pandemic in Ukraine, about 200,000 official jobs were lost, perhaps more considering a big share of “grey” employment. In perspective, the unemployment numbers will grow until economy adapts to quarantine restrictions. The adaptation comes in stages as the example of cafes and restaurants proved. To prevent staff reductions, many restaurants introduced an online ordering and take-out service. In the same way, the beauty salons can start offering the services at customer’s homes. These are just a few examples of adaptation that help reduce unemployment, improve the financial situation and attract new staff.

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CURRENT SITUATION IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IN UKRAINE

Introduction. Most experts agree that current agricultural sector is one of the most important composites of the economic system in Ukraine. It is a main budget-generating source and ranks second in the commodity structure of exports. Ukrainian agriculture meets the domestic demand for quality food products. Ukraine has about 60% black soil, a favorable climate, skilled agricultural workers. However, the share of agriculture in the gross domestic product (GDP) is 8.9% or UAH 360 billion. As numbers show it does not slow down in the COVID -19 crisis.