QUALIFICATION GAP IN THE UKRAINIAN LABOUR MARKET IN THE CONTEXT OF WAR: REGIONAL ASPECT

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Abstract. *The aim* of the article is to assess the impact of the war on the state of regional labour markets and the qualification gap for professions requiring higher education. *Methodology.* In the course of the research, the author used general scientific (analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, analytical grouping) and special (abstraction, modelling, benchmarking studies, etc.) methods of studying economic phenomena and processes. *Results.* A study was carried out on the labour market situation among individuals with higher education across the following professional groups: executives and managers; and professionals and specialists in six Ukrainian oblasts (Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv, and Khmelnytskyi) and the city of Kyiv, with regard to the existence of a qualification gap. Given that employers' requests primarily shape the job market, the situation for groups of professions requiring higher education was studied, and the availability of the relevant unemployed was compared over time. The qualification gap was determined based on the following considerations. If an employer publishes a need for a specialist in a particular profession (qualification), then if there are unemployed people in the same profession, it means that they do not meet the employer's needs. If they did, then there would be no unemployed. The author proposes a methodology for quantifying the level of the qualification gap, analysing it in dynamics and for any region (regardless of the number of labour force and size) based on the determination of the gap coefficient. It was used to make a comparative assessment of the existence, level and dynamics of changes in the qualification gap for 6 oblasts of Ukraine and the city of Kyiv for specialists with higher education. Possible causes of the qualification gap are identified and analysed. *Practical significance.* The results have practical implications and can be used to develop measures to overcome the qualification gap in the labour market for people with higher education in times of war and with due regard for the needs of the country's post-war recovery. *Relevance/Originality.* The novelty of the study is that it proposes a methodology for quantifying the level of the qualification gap, which allows for comparative assessments, regardless of the quantitative characteristics of the labour force and jobs (size) in the region. This made it possible to analyse the situation with the qualification gap in each of the analysed regions and the city of Kyiv, to compare them by this indicator and to identify possible causes of the phenomenon and the impact of migration processes. The analysis showed that there is a potential to overcome the qualification gap both during the war and at the stage of post-war reconstruction of the country.

Keywords: qualification gap, labour market, employment, unemployment, wages, people with higher education, disparities.

JEL Classification: C23, E13, O11, O13

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1. Introduction

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has caused a deep economic crisis that will have lasting consequences for the national labour market. During the period of martial law, the shortage of skilled workers becomes a crisis. According to the World Economic Forum in 2023, 50% of the world's population needs to acquire new skills to meet the changed requirements caused by the introduction of new technologies. By 2030, it is projected that this figure will rise to 90%. This will require a concerted effort to engage all labour market participants, a thorough analysis of the current skills gaps in the workforce, and the formulation of recommendations to facilitate the country's post-war recovery.

The skills gap is usually caused by rapid technological change, dynamic labour market demands, imperfect education and training systems, and other factors that lead to a mismatch between the skills available and those required by employers. In the context of the war, these imbalances are further exacerbated, which aggravates the problem of the skills gap. Therefore, there is an urgent need to find ways to overcome it both during the war and in the process of post-war recovery of Ukraine.

2. Theoretical Framework and Related Studies

The problem of individual skill levels has been addressed long before the full-scale invasion. In their study, the authors systematically compare existing measures of skills mismatch in terms of their impact on labour market outcomes. They also propose a new measure that addresses a significant limitation of the existing indicators. The authors find that the importance of skill mismatch for individual earnings varies considerably depending on the mismatch measure used (Perry, 2014).

The article notes that the key factors of economic and social development are the qualifications and competence of the population, as well as investments in education and training. Acquisition of qualifications and vocational training increase labour productivity and income, as well as promote active participation of each person in economic and social life (Zhuk, 2014).

The study emphasises that in the next decade, a critical shortage of talent will not be able to meet the needs of the labour market. Such an imbalance could negatively impact economic development, put additional pressure on governments and lead to increased unemployment for millions of people (Olson, 2015).

Cappelli P. H. (2015) notes that over-education is a persistent and even growing phenomenon in the US labour force in terms of skills.

The problem of demand for and supply of qualifications has received much attention. The article examines the theoretical and applied aspects of the problems of qualification mismatch with modern labour market requirements. The paper clarifies the essence of the main concepts that characterise qualification mismatches and proposes their typology. The interrelationships between the level of education and qualification mismatches at enterprises and their impact on productivity are studied. The study identifies the interdependence of socio-economic development and the matching of qualifications to market needs (Ilich, 2015).

Research on the skills gap is diverse and extensive, providing a deeper understanding of the challenges and changes in recent years. The growing demand for additional training for engineering graduates in India is indicative of the imbalance between academic education and industry requirements. This article discusses the gap between education and industry and proposes an approach to address it through the concept of learning factories (Lennart Bütha, 2017).

Government leadership in stimulating training and aligning university curricula with industry requirements will guarantee a successful transition to Industry 4.0 and ensure a continuous supply of skilled professionals to the labour market (İsmail Cem Sezera, 2024).

Artificial intelligence is having a dramatic impact on all market sectors, so manufacturing companies need new approaches to quickly prepare for future challenges. The digital transformation of manufacturing is forcing employees to adapt their work habits and requires a review of the methods of education and training of future professionals (Pinar Bilge, 2019).

Immigration has an impact on migrants and reveals differences between socio-economic groups, as well as their possible connection to concerns about labour market competition (Bernd Hayo, 2024).

Discrimination in the labour market is linked to better education, which agrees with the idea that learners invest in education to increase their productivity in the labour market (Andy Dickersona, 2024).

Reductions in the unemployment rate increase the likelihood of employment for workers, as can be seen when comparing labour markets with different unemployment rates (Stefan Sacchi, 2024).

The risk of unemployment is inevitable due to changes in the labour market caused by automation and digitalisation (Lucía Mejía Dorantes, 2024).

The transition to a green economy is having a significant impact on the labour market and the skills required for sustainable development. The green economy opens up new opportunities for job creation, but this transition requires the development of new knowledge and skills (Anne Marie Thake, 2024).

The article (Inmaculada Garcia-Mainar, 2019) examines the signalling function of over-education in Spain, a country with a high unemployment rate and

a large number of over-qualified people, where the labour market is highly segmented.

The authors investigate and find that the relationship between output and changes in employment, working hours, vacancies and wages has been changing, with the response of employment, wages and vacancies becoming less pronounced over time (Irina Panovska, 2024).

In a sample study, the authors found that the main factor behind the gender pay gap in the Ukrainian energy sector is the unequal access of women and men to the qualifications necessary to increase wages (Tyshchenko, 2022).

The authors of the article found that negative trends in the global and national markets lead to a decline in the quality of human capital of the labour force and negatively affect the structure of the national labour market (Yurchuk, 2021).

The present study analyses the volume and characteristics of external labour migration in Ukraine. The study reveals a tendency towards an increase in the number of potential labour migrants within the population. The impact of external labour migration on the efficiency of the Ukrainian labour market is considered, and areas where migration processes can be coordinated to preserve the country's labour potential are outlined (Luhova, 2021).

The authors found that changes in the structure of vacancies, the nature of work, and the professional competencies of the workforce indicate that the digitalisation of the economy is a complex process that opens up both new opportunities and challenges, including in relation to employment (Nazarova, 2024).

Sydorenko V.V. notes that in Ukraine today there is a structural imbalance in the labour market, when job candidates do not have the professional competencies and skills required by employers. The professional and qualification imbalance of the labour force is one of the key problems that hinders the effective functioning and development of the national labour market (Sydorenko, 2024).

In the article, the authors summarise the reasons for inefficient interaction between labour and education markets and outline ways to overcome educational and qualification imbalances. They identify the possible benefits and risks arising from the impact of globalisation, the knowledge economy and the development of the information society on employment and unemployment, and emphasise the need for state regulation of the labour market (Chorna, 2020).

Ilich L. M. (2017) considers the interaction of labour and education markets as a mechanism for coordinating the actions of all market participants, which allows to balance the supply and demand for skilled labour, creates the necessary conditions for the reproduction of human capital and promotes sustainable socio-economic growth.

The study by Kuznetsova N. B. (2021) identifies the role of technology, education and training as the main factors causing the skills gap, and formulates the main reasons for the deepening of this gap in the global context.

Skills mismatch arises from an imbalance between labour supply and demand, and quantifying this gap is based on an analysis of the mechanisms that cause it (Brun-Schammé, 2021).

The authors create a universal model of the skills gap that can be adapted to any profession and provide quantitative results that allow assessing the employee's suitability for the position and identifying existing skills gaps (McKenney, 2019).

The article presents a new framework for identifying key stages of labour force qualification in a system that requires certain changes, and proposes an innovative approach to managing employee skills and developing training modules related to these qualification stages using a modular system (Slim Zidi, 2024).

The main contribution of this study is to develop methods to systematically map the skills, experience and qualifications that employers expect from data scientists. This creates a data-driven pathway to employment, helping to avoid skills gaps and mismatches in the profession that plays a key role in Industry 4.0 (Francesco Smaldone, 2022).

The study focuses on the impact of the war on the labour market, in particular, on the fact that the war in Ukraine accelerated market transformations, created significant uncertainty in the factors affecting it, and exacerbated the imbalance between supply and demand, which was already considered a crisis before the invasion (Kulishov, 2024).

Serohina N. (2023) noted that the level of employment is a key indicator of the state of national security.

The article is devoted to the problem of labour market imbalance (Vasyl'yeva, Horoshkova, Shvydka, 2023).

Despite the large number of publications, it would be advisable to conduct a comparative analysis of the impact of the war on regional labour markets in the context of the qualification gap.

3. Methodology

The skills gap arises from the mismatch between the skills that employers expect from employees and those that they actually possess. On the one hand, this disproportion makes it difficult to fill vacant positions and implement priority projects, leading to an increase in the number of open positions. On the other hand, this mismatch leads to jobseekers whose skills do not meet the requirements of employers remaining unemployed. Thus, if the same positions in the labour market are simultaneously listed among vacancies and among the unemployed,

this indicates an imbalance that can be qualified as a qualification gap. This is the approach used by the authors of the study.

The paper presents a methodology for quantifying the level of the qualification gap, analysing it in dynamics and for any region (regardless of the number of labour force and size) based on the determination of the gap coefficient.

The research also used general scientific (analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, analytical grouping) and special (abstraction, modelling, benchmarking, etc.) methods of studying economic phenomena and processes.

4. Results and Discussion

It is the contention of the present study that, in instances where an occupation is concurrently characterised by vacancy and staff shortage, this is indicative of a skills gap. In order to assess the impact of the outbreak of war on the situation with the qualification gap for professions requiring higher education, the state of the labour market was studied for the years 2021-2023. The lack of official data for 2024 rendered it impossible to analyse the indicators for that year. Three groups of professions were selected for the study: "Legislators, senior civil servants, executives, managers (administrators)"; "Professionals"; "Specialists" in accordance with the current Classifier of Professions of Ukraine (DK 003:2010), approved by Order of the State Committee of Ukraine for Consumer Protection and Food Safety No. 327 on 28.07.2010 as amended on 16.01.2024 (https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/rada/show/va327609-10#Text).

The study was conducted in the context of 6 oblasts of Ukraine (Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv, and Khmelnytskyi) and the city of Kyiv. The oblasts were selected based on the following considerations. They include those that have been partially occupied since the beginning of the war (Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv), those that are dangerous because they are close to the contact line (Dnipropetrovsk and Odesa) and those that have provided "shelter" to refugees, namely Kyiv and Khmelnytskyi oblasts and the city of Kyiv.

Given that the problem of the qualification gap is relevant for almost all countries of the world, and that this phenomenon leads to significant economic losses, it is important to assess the level of this phenomenon in Ukraine. The fact is that even before the war, there were certain imbalances in the labour market in Ukraine, which became more pronounced with the outbreak of war. The traditional indicators used to assess labour market imbalances are the number of vacancies and unemployed, the employment rate, etc. They make it possible to study the imbalances

in the labour market, but not to assess the skills gap. Thus, there is a need to develop methods for assessing the qualification gap. Hence, the following assessment algorithm is proposed. As noted above, the qualification gap is manifested by the simultaneous existence of both vacancies and unemployed people in the labour market within the same occupation or occupational group. In order to estimate it, a gap coefficient is suggested, the determination of which is outlined herewith. The official statistics of oblast employment centres in the regions (cities) of Ukraine by occupational groups contain data on the total number of vacancies and unemployed for the year, as well as the corresponding numbers as of 01.01. of the year following the year under study. The comprehensive data for the year are derived as the aggregate of monthly indicators that undergo change: employers offered vacancies, the unemployed partially filled them, new vacancies arose, and new unemployed individuals appeared. The data as of 01.01 can be regarded as the result of the year: changes took place, but not all vacancies were filled, and not all unemployed people found work. In order to facilitate the determination of the share of the number of vacancies as of 01.01 of the following year in the total number of vacancies offered during the year, it is recommended that the relevant data be collated. In a similar fashion, the proportion of the unemployed as of 01.01 of the following year in the total number of unemployed registered during the year should be ascertained. The resulting ratio can be interpreted as the qualification gap ratio, defined as the ratio of the share of vacancies at the end of the year (in the total number of vacancies) to the share of the unemployed at the end of the year (in the total number of unemployed).

The minimum values of the coefficient indicate a significant disparity in qualifications at the end of the year, as evidenced by the higher proportion of the unemployed population compared to vacancies. Conversely, as the coefficient increases, the scenario may witness enhancement, as the proportion of the unemployed population will undergo a decline in comparison to the proportion of vacancies.

Such a coefficient, which is a dimensionless value, will allow comparing the situation with the skills gap for regional labour markets of different sizes (the size is characterised by the number of vacancies and unemployed).

Utilising the proposed methodology, the present study has examined the situation with the qualification gap and its dynamics in 2021-2023 for three groups of professions: "Legislators, senior civil servants, executives, managers (administrators)"; "Professionals"; "Specialists" in six oblasts of Ukraine and the city of Kyiv. Due to the absence of final official data on employment and unemployment for 2024

(except for the figures as of 01.01.2025), this year was not included in the analysis.

As illustrated in Table 1, the study has calculated the indicators of the qualification gap in the 2021-2023 period. These indicators are then compared with the traditional indicators of the number of applicants for one vacancy in general and as of 01.01. of the year following the year under analysis.

In Zaporizhzhia Oblast, the number of applicants for one vacancy for professionals is similar to the oblast level, while for other groups it is higher. Since the outbreak of war, the indicator has increased significantly for all groups. Comparison of this indicator as of 01.01 of the following year shows a significant increase for the groups "Legislators, senior civil servants, executives, managers" and "Specialists", while it decreased for "Professionals". The situation with the qualification gap for "Legislators, senior civil servants, executives, managers" was improving, for "Professionals" it improved significantly in 2022, but

Table 1

Results of the comparative assessment of the labour market and the qualification gap in the oblasts of Ukraine

Year/Oblast	Number of applicants per 1 vacancy in the oblast in general	Executives, managers			Professionals			Specialists		
		Number of applicants per 1 vacancy	Number of applicants per 1 vacancy as of 1.01. of the following year	Qualification gap	Number of applicants per 1 vacancy	Number of applicants per 1 vacancy as of 1.01. of the following year	Qualification gap	Number of applicants per 1 vacancy	Number of applicants per 1 vacancy as of 1.01. of the following year	Qualification gap
Zaporizhzhia										
2021	2	5	33	0,14	2	26	0,09	3	18	0,14
2022	4	8	55	0,16	4	18	0,22	5	61	0,08
2023	4	7	30	0,21	2	17	0,15	4	29	0,15
2024			12			22			8	
Dnipropetrovsk										
2021	2	3	16	0,20	1	4	0,34	2	5	0,29
2022	2	4	16	0,26	2	3	0,70	2	6	0,36
2023	2	3	4	0,75	1	1	1,07	1	2	0,79
2024			5			1			4	
Kharkiv										
2021	2	4	17	0,27	1	5	0,31	2	5	0,35
2022	3	10	26	0,37	3	11	0,31	3	18	0,18
2023	2	3	13	0,25	1	3	0,36	2	5	0,31
2024			5			1			2	
Odesa										
2021	2	3	12	0,26	1	3	0,42	2	4	0,37
2022	2	4	13	0,32	1	3	0,46	2	8	0,23
2023	1	3	6	0,47	1	2	0,52	1	3	0,40
2024			2			2			2	
Kyiv										
2021	1	4	17	0,24	1	5	0,30	2	6	0,29
2022	2	6	22	0,26	2	4	0,51	3	10	0,26
2023	2	3	5	0,67	1	1	1,07	2	2	0,84
2024			3			1			1	
Kyiv (city)										
2021	1	4	9	0,42	1	2	0,69	1	1	0,64
2022	2	6	11	0,54	1	1	1,29	2	2	0,72
2023	1	3	4	0,83	1	1	0,49	1	2	0,49
2024			2			1			1	
Khmelnytskyi										
2021	2	3	26	0,12	1	7	0,20	2	11	0,16
2022	2	4	13	0,31	2	4	0,43	2	7	0,31
2023	1	3	6	0,52	1	3	0,50	1	3	0,55
2024			3			2			3	

slightly deteriorated in 2023. With regard to specialists, the situation deteriorated significantly with the outbreak of war, and in 2023 it improved to the pre-war level. Thus, there is reason to believe that the level of the qualification gap in Zaporizhzhia Oblast has decreased for specialists with higher education since the beginning of the war. This phenomenon may be attributed to the fact that, following the occupation of nearly 78% of Zaporizhzhia Oblast, specialists from these regions who possessed higher education and were consequently classified as internally displaced persons (IDPs) were able to meet the demand for their qualifications from employers.

In Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, the number of applicants per vacancy for professionals and specialists is similar to the oblast level, while for executives and managers it is higher. Since the outbreak of war, the indicator has increased for all groups. Comparison of this indicator as of 01.01 of the following year shows that it remained unchanged for the group "Legislators, senior civil servants, executives, managers", and a slight increase for "Specialists" and "Professionals". The situation with the qualification gap for all groups was improving. Therefore, there is reason to believe that since the beginning of the war, the qualification gap for specialists with higher education has decreased even further due to the fact that IDPs from other oblasts preferred Dnipropetrovsk Oblast as safer compared to, for example, Zaporizhzhia Oblast and a larger number of IDPs moved there.

As for Kharkiv Oblast, the number of applicants for one vacancy for specialists is the same as the regional level, for executives and managers it is higher, and for professionals it is lower. In the first year of the war, the indicator increased for all groups. Comparison of this indicator as of 01.01 of the following year shows its growth for all groups in the first year of the war. The situation with the qualification gap was different for all groups: for executives and managers, it increased and then decreased, for professionals, it initially remained unchanged and then increased, and for specialists, it initially decreased and then increased, but not to the pre-war level. Hence, there is reason to believe that since the outbreak of the war, executives and managers have been more active in finding employment and their skills have been more acceptable to employers. The situation was similar for professionals. On the contrary, the level of employer satisfaction among specialists has significantly decreased. In 2023, despite an improvement in the number of applicants for one vacant position, the qualification gap widened. The authors posit that this phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that individuals possessing higher education, who were residing in the region, departed the area due to the war, thereby leading to heightened employer dissatisfaction and an expansion in the existing qualification gap. Conversely, professionals and specialists have experienced a contrasting scenario, marked by a decline in unemployment and a concomitant narrowing of the qualification gap.

In Odesa Oblast, the number of applicants for a vacancy for specialists is the same as the oblast level, while for executives, managers and professionals it is higher. In the first year of the war, this figure increased, but not significantly, and in 2023 it decreased. As for the qualification gap, its size was decreasing (the coefficient was increasing), which gives grounds to conclude that the quality of the labour force is improving and it meets the requirements of employers. Thus, there is reason to believe that, unlike in other oblasts, the majority of people with higher education have found jobs within the oblast. (Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv, and Khmelnytskyi)

The above conclusions about Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk and Kharkiv oblasts are confirmed by the data for the city of Kyiv, as well as Kyiv and Khmelnytskyi oblasts. The primary influx of IDPs was directed towards these regions. This phenomenon resulted in an increase in the number of applicants for each vacancy in 2022, followed by a subsequent decrease in 2023 (as job seekers secured employment). Concurrently, there has been a decline in the qualification gap (an increase in the coefficient) for the majority of individuals with higher education.

It is imperative to direct particular attention towards a comparative analysis of the situation with regard to the level and dynamics of the qualification gap in 2021-2023 in the oblasts under analysis. The findings of the study are outlined in Figures 1 through 3.

As demonstrated in Figure 1, the pre-war qualification gap was most pronounced in the Khmelnytskyi Oblast, with elevated levels also observed in the Zaporizhzhia and Dnipropertovsk oblasts (indicated by low values of the coefficient). The situation was better in Kharkiv, Kyiv and Odesa oblasts. The best situation was in the city of Kyiv. This is quite logical, since even before the war, the best specialists were looking for work in the capital and found it, meeting the requirements of employers (greater opportunities for satisfaction). In the context of Khmelnytskyi Oblast, the situation manifested distinct characteristics. A significant proportion of the skilled workforce sought employment opportunities within the capital or internationally, thereby resulting in a pronounced discrepancy in the level of qualification. Since the onset of hostilities, internally displaced persons (IDPs) have exerted a notable influence. As noted, these were, for example, IDPs from the occupied part of Zaporizhzhia Oblast who were heading either to the unoccupied part of the region, or to the safer Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, or

Figure 1. Qualification gap (coefficient) for executives and managers

to Kyiv Oblast and Kyiv city. At the same time, some IDPs from all oblasts of Ukraine moved to western Ukraine (including Khmelnytskyi Oblast), which led to a significant reduction in the qualification gap. In 2023, positive dynamics in reducing the qualification gap were observed in all oblasts except Kharkiv Oblast. This, the authors believe, can be explained by the increased level of insecurity and, as a result, the flow of IDPs to other oblasts of Ukraine.

As for professionals, the situation was almost the same as for executives and managers in Odesa, Kyiv, and Khmelnytskyi oblasts. The situation was different in Zaporizhzhia Oblast, where the qualification gap grew slightly, and in Kharkiv Oblast, on the contrary, it decreased. This can be explained by migration flows.

As for Kyiv, the significant increase in the qualification gap in 2023 can be explained by the abnormal reduction (to a coefficient of more than 1) of the gap in 2022. The value of the coefficient of 1.29 (greater than 1) indicates that the number of applicants and vacancies coincided (employers were satisfied with the skills of job seekers), and moreover, there were instances when there were vacancies but not enough people willing to take them (shortage of unemployed). This deficit was offset in 2023. A similar situation occurred in the subsequent year, 2023, in Dnipropetrovsk and Kyiv oblasts (coefficient 1.07), suggesting the likelihood of a similar outcome to that of the city of Kyiv in 2023 (following the unusual year of 2022).
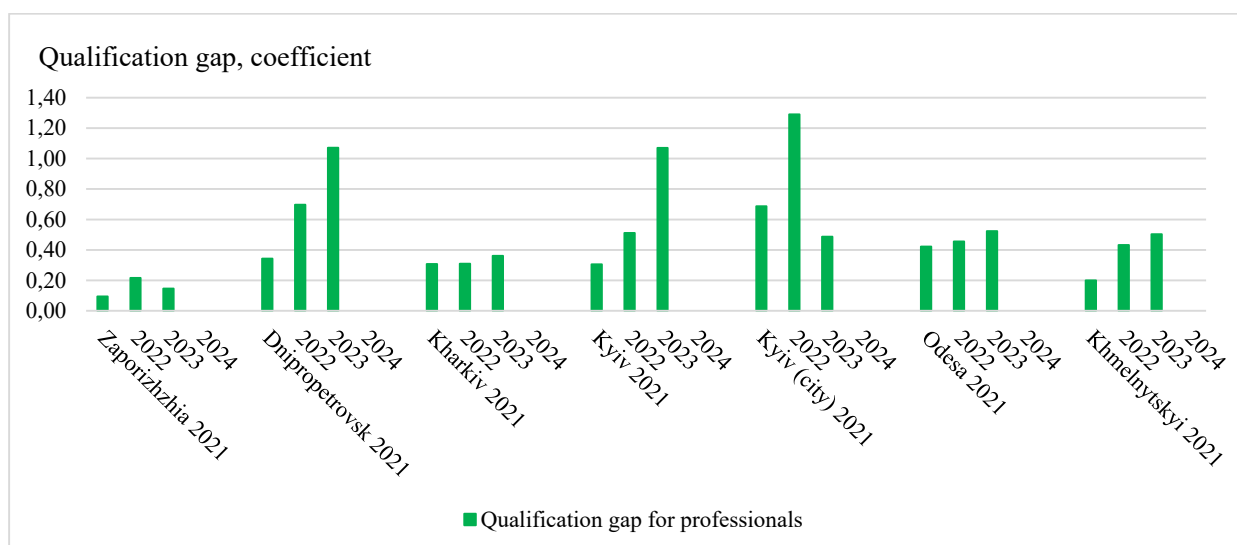

Figure 2. Qualification gap (coefficient) for professionals
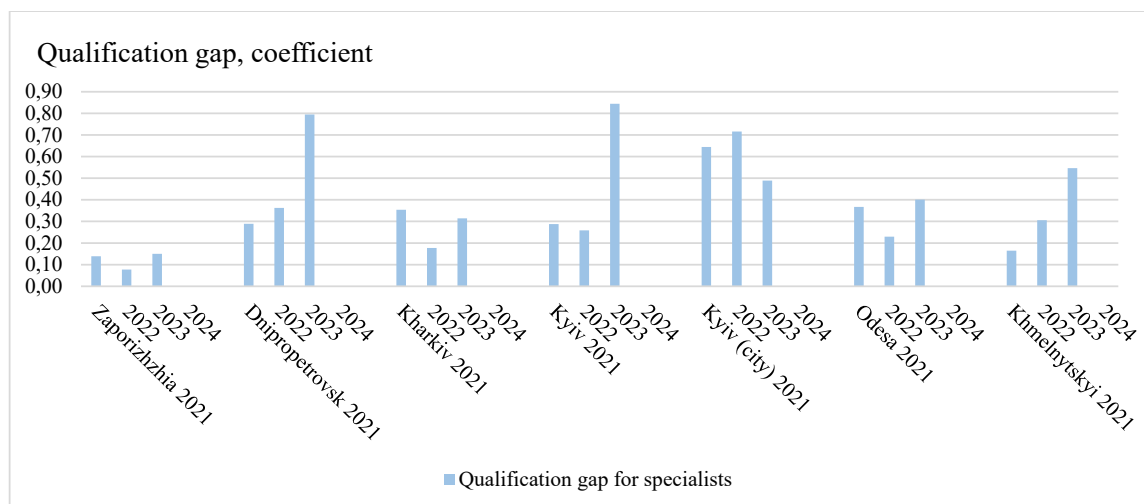
Figure 3. Qualification gap (coefficient) for specialists

With regard to the question of specialists, a similar situation is observed, and accordingly, explanations for its occurrence can be proposed. The growth of the qualification gap in Kyiv can be explained by the fact that there was a certain "saturation" of the need for such specialists, but a significant reduction of the qualification gap (coefficient 0.84) in Kyiv Oblast shows that those who did not find a job in Kyiv were able to find it in the Oblast (the qualifications of the unemployed satisfied employers).

5. Conclusions

The present study examined the labour market situation for individuals with higher education across a range of occupational groups, including legislators, senior civil servants, executives, managers, and professionals and specialists. The investigation was conducted in six oblasts of Ukraine (Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv, and Khmelnytskyi) and the city of Kyiv.

It has been proven that if an occupation falls into both the "vacancy shortage" and "personnel shortage" categories, this indicates the existence of a skills gap. This is a situation where employers in the labour market create vacancies that should be filled by jobseekers and reduce the unemployment rate. However, because their skills and abilities do not meet the expectations of employers, the vacancies remain unfilled and unemployment persists.

Since employers' requirements are the main drivers of the vacancy market, the occupations (for people with tertiary education) with the highest number of vacancies were identified and the availability of the corresponding unemployed was compared. If an employer announces the need for a specialist in a particular occupation (qualification), then if there are unemployed people in the same occupation, it means that they do not meet the employer's requirements. If they did, they would not be unemployed.

The article proposes a methodology for quantifying the level of the qualification gap, analysing it in dynamics and for any region (regardless of the number and size of the labour force) on the basis of determining the gap coefficient. It was used to make a comparative assessment of the existence, level and dynamics of changes in the qualification gap for 6 regions of Ukraine and the city of Kyiv for specialists with higher education. The paper identifies and analyses possible causes of the qualification gap. According to the analysis, the presence of IDPs is among the factors influencing the level of the qualification gap for professions requiring higher education.

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