

CHAPTER «MANAGEMENT OF NATIONAL ECONOMY DEVELOPMENT»

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THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINE: THE LIFE QUALITY CHALLENGES AND THE SOCIAL POLICY INNOVATIONS

Summary

The increasingly threatening problems of the population natural reproduction in Ukraine, the deterioration of the quantitative and qualitative parameters of the national economy's labour provision, the strengthening of migration sentiments and processes in the society actualize the significant role of social legislation and social policy in these negative trends' consistent mitigating and preventing. The key task of the policy for maintaining national security and economic competitiveness in the globalized world remains the optimization of the employment sphere's systemic influences on the socium's level and quality of life and reproduction, which result in assessing the satisfaction of territorial and functional communities, social groups with their living activities, as well as the state institutional grounds. The prospects for improving Ukrainian socio-economic policy in the area of the life quality resilience increasing (first of all, reasonable in the context of mitigating threats and public acceptability of results) are largely related to the systematization of structural changes in: ensuring the population productive employment; optimizing the working environment and occupational safety, educational and household support for employment and labour mobility; improving economic, legal, and everyday household culture, including in the direction of the legal labour promoting. The main dominants of reproducing and increasing the population life quality resilience, which are transmitted through the employment sphere and function in it, include the institutional, the socio-economic, the socio-labour, and the cultural and educational ones. The conditions, features, and criteria for reforming national social protection system within the framework of long-term strategic guidelines for Ukraine's European and global integration have been determined, taking into account

the urgency of socio-economic security of this process (especially, according to the goals of preserving and optimizing the quantitative and qualitative parameters of the population natural and labour potential reproduction, maintaining the competitiveness of the workforce, the economy and its territorial subsystems, Ukrainian business entities in the globalized world of competing national actors).

Introduction

One of the key tasks of the effective socio-economic policy for maintaining national security and national business entities' competitiveness in the globalized world remains the optimization of the employment sector systemic influences on the socium's level and quality of life and reproduction (in particular, in terms of ensuring productive employment, improving the mechanisms and parameters of reproducing and implementing the psycho-physiological, intellectual, creative potential of the working-able population and labour force, as well as consumer demand), which result in: the investment attractiveness of economic entities and settlement systems; the effectiveness of the long-term "hidden" policy for regulating the economically active population's cross-border migration; the spectrum of satisfaction assessments of communities and social groups with their life activities; the processes of the state institutional system's functioning and development.

The employment sphere is the basic, powerful generator of a complex system of factors and indicators of the population life quality itself, as well as the conditions and parameters of its resilience (stability, resistance to a combination of internal and external negative influences) at the nationwide, community, and individual levels.

Guarantees of the population social protection and security in Ukraine are increasingly facing threats and limitations in their financing from budgets of various levels, special-purpose budgetary and extra-budgetary funds, caused by the national economy's difficult situation and uncertain prospects. Among the obvious ways to resolve this problem, numerous representatives of the executive and legislative authorities promote the codification of Ukrainian social legislation, based on improving the algorithms for implementing constitutional social rights (especially, provided by the state), as well as on narrowing social guarantees through norms, standards, and mechanisms to strengthen their targeting (primarily, intended for people in difficult life circumstances) [1; 2]. Another important factor and criterion for reforming the social policy and social legislation are the obligations that were voluntarily undertaken by Ukraine within the framework of strategic geopolitical European and world integration aspirations (first of all, within the framework of the EU Association Agreement).

At the same time, the increasingly threatening issues of the population natural reproduction in Ukraine, the deterioration of the quantitative and qualitative parameters of the national economy's labour providing, the strengthening of migration sentiments and processes in society (noticeable even during the martial law period, which caused restrictions and complications in the cross-border leaving procedures for a number of categories of pre-working and working age citizens) actualize the significant role of social policy and social legislation in these negative trends' consistent mitigating and preventing. This situation requires a careful and balanced approach to a radical revision (especially, reduction) of the social protection and security guarantees, even by effective manifestations of systemic legislation that are widely recognized in the world.

The issues of ensuring the life quality as a whole and, in particular, the working life quality (based on the socio-economic development achieved parameters, the employment scale, structure and specifics) has received wide coverage in scientific and popularized studies in countries all over the world and in Ukraine. Among the relevant informative publications, it is appropriate to note the papers devoted to the definition, specification, and methodology of these concepts and processes research, the justification and classification of factors of their formation and evaluation (Ryndzak O.T., 2021; Halaiko N.V., et al., 2020; Stavvyskyy A., Molokanova K., 2020; Palchuk O.I., 2018) [3–6]. They are complemented by the studies of a set of factors, criteria, approaches to ensuring and modeling the life quality in Ukraine and other countries of the world, their importance for the effective and balanced social reproduction (Andreitseva I.A., Sikora V.I., 2021, 2024; Poliakova O.Yu., et al., 2021; Stavvyskyy A., Molokanova K., 2020; Rybalova O.V., et al., 2020) [5; 7–10]. A significant research segment consists of papers that carry out both the comprehensive analysis of the population life quality in Ukraine, taking into account retrospective trends and expectations (Kyryliuk V.V., et al., 2024; Halaiko N.V., et al., 2020) [4; 11], and the life quality assessment of communities and groups identified by place of residence and social vulnerability (Poplavska O.M., Shevchuk O.V., 2020; Shtuler I.Yu., 2020; Melnychuk D.P., et al., 2020) [12–14]. The martial law period in Ukraine is characterized by an increase in the number of papers on evaluating the factors, quality, and features of the population life in conditions of active military operations and their consequences (Gukalova I.V., 2023; Bielikova N., et al., 2022) [15; 16].

Constructive review on the issues of reforming and improving the national social legislation according to the criteria and obligations of Ukraine to strengthen political and economic ties with the EU have been carried out in the studies, where: the processes and trends of forming modern norms of the EU social policy and social security system have been examined

(Okładna M.G., Yakovyuk I.V., 2016; Kostiuk V.L., Melnyk O.Ya., 2017) [17; 18]; comparative analysis of current standards of the population social protection and security in the European Union countries and Ukraine has been carried out (Tymchyshyn T.M., 2020; Orlovska I.H., 2022; Zabolotna N.Ya., 2024) [19–21]; problems and nowadays trends in the adaptation of Ukrainian social legislation to European norms have been identified (Maliuha L.Yu., 2019, 2020; Harasymiv T.Z., 2021) [22–24]. At the same time, the most informative sources for identifying problems and prospects for improving Ukrainian social policy and social legislation according to the criteria and guidelines of European integration obligations are the EU *acquis communautaire*, drafts and the latest adopted norms of the national social laws, relevant official documents [25–30].

Chapter 1. The population life quality in the resilient parameters of the economy and employment

Under the resilience of the economy and society (including in terms of the population life quality as a whole and, in particular, the working life quality), it is appropriate to understand formal and informal mechanisms of their subjects' (the population, the labour force, business entities, territorial settlement and business subsystems, territorial and functional communities) viability, resistance, ability to restoring and developing in unstable environmental, socio-economic, geopolitical conditions that are forming and maintaining functionality due to the set of the specified subjects' properties, embodied in the natural and socio-humanitarian potential, as well as in systemic characteristics of institutional, economic and social interactions. Therefore, the resources, potential, and mechanisms for ensuring resilience are significant features and characteristics of countries' national security and competitiveness in the globalized world.

In the process of transforming the workforce and human resources into the key factors of neo- and post-industrial economies' production and social reproduction, the employment sphere has taken on the role of the accumulator and moderator of socium's potential and mechanisms for resilience, reflecting the economic development dynamics (growth, stagnation, recession), powerfully influencing the living standards, strategies of life and economic activities, the consumption structure and features, the living environment and the wealth of a range of social strata (hired labour force; entrepreneurs; layers of final beneficiaries, as well as rentiers who receive their main income from enterprises' shares, rentals of real estate and movable property; people of pre-working age; pensioners of various categories), that is, the conditions and factors that determine the life quality's objective and subjective assessments from the community to the individual levels [5; 7; 10].

In this context, the population life quality should be interpreted as a set of objective and subjective assessments of the conditions, factors, and prospects for comfortable and safe living, full (including socially acceptable) realization of the psychophysical, intellectual, and creative potential of individuals and communities of various functionality and scale, which create opportunities for achieving desired self-development and consumption benchmarks, preserving and reproducing health, prolonging life expectancy, and productive economic activity (within the framework of its individual and collective strategies).

Reflecting on the economic development level and key macroeconomic indicators, the country's employment structure ensures the reproduction and determines the dynamics of the level and quality of life of both the employed and their family members, as well as the population as a whole (through legitimate and informal social mechanisms for: the distribution and redistribution of produced values (goods, services) and income from them; the satisfaction of common public and socially necessary needs, in particular, regarding the reproducing and improving a certain labour, professional and qualification potential, economic, technological, and everyday household culture; the vulnerable categories' social protection, stimulation of socially useful productive activities).

Therefore, the direct reflections of a country's economic specialization and employment structure are:

- the income level, the scale and trends of consumption and accumulation of a range social groups; the property and social stratification parameters [5; 8];
- the level and sustainability of state and local budgets' funding, financing of compulsory insurance funds, other state and extra-budgetary programs and measures of social security and protection;
- the socially acceptable (formal and informal) mechanisms and strategies for capitalizing labour, professional and qualification potential, as well as social potential itself;
- the range of individual and group opinions regarding a decent standard of living and its quality, in particular, lifestyles, socially necessary and private needs' content and scale of their fulfilling, economic activities, needs in education, self-education, lifelong learning and advanced training [3; 4; 6];
- the parameters and dynamics of supply and demand on the national labour market and its territorial subsystems; the factors, scales and trends of the labour migration (shuttle, interregional, cross-border).

At the same time, the employment parameters determined by the territorial organization of the spectrum of resources (human, material and technical, financial) and production itself affect the anthropogenic and technogenic quality of communities' living environment, outlining:

- topical and potential threats to the environment, living conditions, as well as predicted nearest and distant trends of their realization;
- the crime level of economic activities and living environment.

The highlighted areas of the employment sphere's influence on socium-wide, collective, and individual perceptions about the life quality, as well as on the levels of profitability of a range of types of economic activities and financing of social security state and territorial guarantees allow:

1) to distinguish within the category of life quality such concepts, as: the quality of working life at the collective and individual levels (among the main factors are the guarantees and conditions of employment, a set of its incentives, including the remuneration level in relation to perceptions about the income decent level, a range of subjective assessments of desired professional and personal self-realization); the economic activities' collective and individual strategies as a part of the decent life of territorial communities, social groups, and separate persons (among the main factors are the education level, the competitiveness of the community's / individual professional and qualification potential, opinions about the acceptable mechanisms for labour and socio-humanitarian potential capitalizing, parameters of the economic culture, and involvement in targeted measures for productive employment stimulating) [3; 10; 12–14];

2) to identify mechanisms for ensuring the life quality resilience, which could be implemented in the employment sphere (in particular, through the priorities and strategies for: diversification, innovative development, modernization of the national economy across the spectrum of its territorial subsystems, support and lobbying of the national business entities' interests in the internal and foreign markets of goods and services; development of the national effective demand and the consumer market; stimulation of social protection, social and labour inclusion of a range of vulnerable categories; preservation and reproduction of labour potential, increasing the efficiency of its professional and qualification component capitalization and improvement);

3) to divide the main dominants of reproducing and growing up the population life quality resilience, which are transmitted through the employment sphere and function in it, into:

- the institutional ones (legislative and normative principles of labour and employment, as well as access to competitive professional education; practice of their implementation);

- the socio-economic ones (the employment sphere's structure in the context of expansion and reproduction of modern productive technological modes, the complex formation and integration of the national economy's territorial subsystems, the development of production clusters and closed production cycles; policies and mechanisms for overcoming a range of

processes of the employment shadowing and the labour non-declaring; the territorial labour markets' functionality, in particular, through the indicators of job searching duration and programs for stimulating employment; the unemployment rate dynamics, especially, in comparison with the trends of the crime situation and cross-border labour migrations) [4; 9; 11];

- the socio-labour ones (strata income levels, as well as level of wages by types of economic activities and categories of employees in comparison with the subsistence minimum physiological and social components, dynamics of the cost of the so-called mandatory services' volume; the effectiveness of control over working conditions and occupational safety; the range of subjective – corporate, community (by place of residence), individual – assessments of labour conditions and wages, accessibility and prospects for the labour and professional self-realization, career growth) [7; 8; 10];

- the cultural and educational ones (the comprehensive and professional education levels, the professional and qualification structure of the economically active population and employed, trends in its reproduction and optimization; the compliance of the structure of professional education by the state and local orders and within the framework of personal initiatives with the set of needs for stimulating economic growth, balancing regional development parameters related to the territorial communities' life quality; subjective assessments of competitive education and acceptable employment).

Both in the pre-war years and the martial law period, the main threats to ensuring the resilience of the population life quality in Ukraine under the influence of a number of adverse internal and externally generated socio-economic development trends were represented by: the reduction in the national economy's volumes, destruction of it's material and technical base; the resource provision complication of certain industries and types of activities; the systemic and large-scale situational disruptions of logistics chains; the narrowing of sales markets (both external and internal); the departure of the economically active and able-bodied people and their family members of pre-working age abroad; the deepening of the workforce's gender-age disparities; the increasing imbalance between the Ukrainian economy's real needs in labour and the population educational orientations [6; 9; 11; 15; 16]. In the near future, these threats will intensify the negative trends in the employment sphere functioning, which have been manifesting for a long time, in particular, due to:

- the national economy's predominant specialization on resources and raw materials in the conditions of vulnerability of both the production infrastructure and available sales markets (in particular, external ones);

- the national economy's significant shadowing, the unjustified stratification of the employed by labour income in the conditions of employees' relatively low remuneration standards, as well as the decrease in the living

standards of vulnerable categories (as most dependent on the effectiveness of social mechanisms for the redistribution of benefits and income);

- the destruction of community and individual benchmarks of legal productive employment, including due to the unsatisfactory dynamics of normalized wage standards;

- the expansion of numerous forms of non-standard employment as an environment that provokes the narrowed reproduction and obsolescence of the employed' professional and qualification potential, socially dangerous dynamics of educational and labour orientations of the population mentioned category and their family members.

According to the analysis of Ukrainian statistics in the nearest pre-war period, the share of hired employees among the employed population aged 15–70 reached 84%, and (in general) their labour income remained quite low, even compared to the official subsistence minimum, the content and value estimations of which continues to be the subject to objective criticism [31]. At the same time, there was a rather rapid decline in the number of employed and full-time workers per the resident population. The acute imbalance in the national economy's structure, which is threatening in the context of its competitiveness, as well as formation of the potential for the life quality reproducing in the medium and long term, ensuring its sufficient resilience for the entire spectrum of the population social and income groups, was evidenced through:

- the ranking of economic activities by gross domestic product and gross value added per the contingent of employed and full-time workers, where the real estate transactions, mining and quarrying, information and telecommunications, financial and insurance activities, public administration and compulsory social insurance dominated;

- the growth of the rent component of income from the supply of electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning, mining and quarrying, temporary accommodation and catering, information and telecommunications.

Chapter 2. Approaches to improving the social policy in Ukraine under the global and macro-regional challenges

In April 2022, the decision to create the working group on developing a draft of the Social Code of Ukraine (as a basic document for systematizing the social sphere's legislation) was adopted at the meeting of the Committee on social policy and protection of veterans' rights of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine [32], and, in February 2023, the mentioned Committee has already recommended this project to be submitted to the Verkhovna Rada. This is not the first attempt to codify the social legislation of Ukraine (according to the explanatory note to the earlier draft of the Social Code, in particular, it was

carried out with the aim of harmonizing, eliminating conflicts between laws, and bringing social norms regulated by subordinate legal documents to the level of law [33]. This document, which received the status of the draft Law No. 11061, was published in 2012 [27].

The conceptual provisions of the draft of the Social Code of Ukraine dated 02.08.2012 No. 11061 were developed in response to the tasks of the Targeted Program for implementing the Program Resolution of the VI Congress of the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine “Trade Unions – for the social state development in Ukraine”, as well as within the framework for implementing the paragraph 5 of the resolution of the Presidium of the Federation of Trade Unions dated 09.11.2011 No. P-7-6 “On the poverty situation in Ukraine and Trade Unions’ actions to overcome and prevent poverty among workers” in order to build up the social state’s legal foundations, to develop the civil society, and to democratize governance and citizens’ lives [28]. According to the conclusion of the FTU apparatus’ socio-economic department, the Social Code of Ukraine, while normalizing the unified state social protection and security system, should have the following goals of: ensuring an interconnection with acts of other legislation branches (civil, labour, budget, etc.); streamlining the existing types of social protection and security without establishing new ones (in order to prevent an increase of its financing from budgets of all levels), as well as preserving existing social benefits; transforming a number of social benefits into cash payments (pensions, financial assistances, compensations, subsidies, loans) and social services (including social assistance); fixing the financing of the separate types of social protection and security at the levels of the budget system at which the decision to establish them was made; financing professional benefits and employees’ guarantees at the expense of the relevant budgets of employers, state authorities and local government bodies. Also, the draft of the Social Code of Ukraine dated 2.08.2012 No. 11061 was based on the principles of accessibility, guaranteeing, and differentiation of types and amounts of social protection and security [28].

Achieving these goals, the Social Code also was supposed to: optimize social obligations and financial capabilities of the state, using social rights’ constitutional guarantees, international obligations and legislatively defined priorities of the social development of Ukraine and, at the same time, preventing a decline in citizens’ living standards that can be identified through actual (not nominal) indicators; harmonize national social legislation with the international law norms (in particular, within the framework of implementing the ILO conventions and recommendations ratified by Ukraine, as well as the European Social Charter) taking into account the level of the national economy’s development and financial capabilities of Ukraine [28].

In turn, among the main arguments of the latest stage of Ukrainian social legislation codification are: the need to systematize it due to its multiplicity and obsolescence, exacerbated by a noticeable and already chronic lack of state expenditures on social benefits; the long-standing issues of the state budget's objective limitation in the context of implementing historically and politically created norms on social protection and security for a range of citizens' categories; the conclusion on the principles of civilized countries' legislative practice, according to which social policy should be based on the state's financial capacity and public consent to finance a number of the population categories in certain circumstances; the need and expediency of shifting the social protection and security system's emphasis from social payments to social services with a focus on providing targeted assistance to persons in difficult life circumstances, regardless the category to which a person belongs according to the social vulnerability criteria and state social protection and security guarantees (as the basis for reforming the state's political and social platform) [2]. On the other hand, the basis of the new Social Code of Ukraine, as its developers declared, should be international and European social standards that reflect a decent standards of living, social and pension protection [32].

As a result, representatives of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committee on social policy and protection of veterans' rights and Council of Europe experts, associated with the project "Further support for developing human social rights in Ukraine", expect an increase in the assistance to people in difficult life circumstances, reaching amounts sufficient to ensure a normal living standard [2; 32].

It is difficult to refute each of the arguments presented above, but taken together they create the negative impression of the state authorities' attempts to reduce quickly and extensively both the volume and the legal norms and guarantees of social obligations themselves in the historical period when social policy is a result, an integral guideline, and a condition for competitive communities' development in the globalized world. This conclusion is confirmed by the concern of the legislative power representatives for the prestige of Ukraine as the state with the EU membership candidate status, expected in connection with a significant reduction in the volume of verdicts of the European Court of Human Rights and national courts on claims for failure to fulfil state social obligations and, accordingly, due to the limitation of payments for them from the state budget [2]. So, there are no obligations – no lawsuits, but, it seems, there is growth in Ukraine's international prestige.

In the context of above-mentioned situation, it is appropriate to note that the European Code of Social Security dated 16.04.1964 as amended on 6.11.1990, signed by Ukraine in 2016 (not the EU Social Code, by analogy with the document that is being developed by the Verkhovna Rada Committee on social policy and protection of veterans' rights and claims to be a comprehensive

systematization of Ukraine's social legislation), was concluded with the aim of encouraging the EU members to develop national social security systems, promoting their social progress (in particular, on the basis of extending social guarantees to the entire population with personal social rights, eliminating discrimination, including its gender motives) [25].

Comparing the already made attempt to codify Ukrainian social legislation and the European Code of Social Security, it should be noted a narrower range of thematic areas and a greater focus on the problems of financial compensation, conditions and aspects of access to it in the EU code. Therefore, the European Code of Social Security does not claim to be comprehensive in all areas of public life and social policy, as it was done in the draft of the Social Code dated 2012 or as it was declared recently by the representatives of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on social policy and protection of veterans' rights, as well as by Council of Europe experts, associated with the project "Further support for developing human social rights in Ukraine". The European Code of Social Security focuses exclusively on the regulation of publicly accepted norms and practical issues of resource capabilities' compensation and equalization (including guaranteed access) of the population (in particular: employed and unemployed, their family members; persons who are currently entering or due to age can enter the labour market, as well as obtain the status of unemployed or job applicants; a number of the population categories vulnerable by gender, age, health status, family situation, place of residence, length of residence in the EU) in relation to living standards both common to the European Union and specific to its separate member states.

It is also noteworthy that the European Code of Social Security contains numerous norms related to the use of indicators and benchmarks for provision or possible lack of provision of the population or its targeted category with certain types of social assistance (Articles 9, 14, 20–24, 28, 35, 38, 46, 49, 52, 54, 56, 59–61, 65–67, 71–73) [25]. It is known that the use of such indicators and benchmarks in social policy allows to increase expenditures on a range of demanded types of social assistance during periods of improving and accelerating the economic development pace of a country and its regions, as well as to justify and plan goals, tasks, ways of applying and developing social levers of economic progress and economic growth. Conversely, in times of economic recession and stagnation, the practice of indicating social development guidelines and objectives contributes to maintaining the validity of separate norms and standards of social protection and security in the absence or limitation of their financing from budgets of various levels, compulsory insurance funds, extra-budgetary sources (without revising legislation towards narrowing social guarantees and standards). In Ukraine, the practice of indicating quantitative and qualitative parameters of social protection and security can be standardized by amending the Law "On State Social Standards

and State Social Guarantees” dated 5.10.2000 No. 2017-III (currently in the version of 26.06.2024), primarily its Articles 3, 4, 8, 19, 20, 22–24 [26].

In the context of the latest trends in monitoring, improving the regulatory framework, and political assessment of the levels of wages and living standards in the EU, it is also advisable to focus on the main category used to calculate the range of types of social assistance – the amount of previous earnings of potential beneficiaries or their breadwinners, starting from the basic earnings rate of the categories to which they belong (Part XI of the European Code of Social Security) [25]. Responding on 19.10.2022 to the vote on the adoption of Directive No. 2022/2041 of the European Parliament and the Council on an adequate minimum wage, EU officials confessed that for too long time the European reality was a situation where wages left workers and their families living in poverty. Therefore, they emphasized the urgency of: measures to increase the statutory minimum wage and promote collective bargaining; providing workers with the access to an adequate minimum wage and decent living standards [34]. Consequently, for a long time, EU social policy and practice were based on the category whose monetary dimensions did not meet minimum standards of social protection and security; thus, the corresponding social assistance was understated and insufficient. At the same time, Directive No. 2022/2041 was interpreted as the regulatory document defining the framework for minimum wages with respect for social partners’ freedom; hence, its implementation is capable to improve the working and living conditions not only for workers, but also for employers who pay decent wages, creating the basis for a fair, inclusive and sustainable recovery [34].

As for Ukraine, according to the conclusion of the legislative power leading representatives, miscalculations in the indexation policy lead to the current situation, where the official subsistence minimum is almost four times lower than the actual one and doesn’t even provide for basic human needs for food, medicine, clothing, and housing, which is especially acute for public sector employees, pensioners, and the low-income groups [31]. On the other hand, the imbalanced structure and the current low resilience of the national economy objectively threaten to exacerbate adverse trends in the natural reproduction of the population and labour force, as well as in the reproduction of the life level and quality in Ukraine in the medium and long term perspective. Under these conditions, the state social obligations’ narrowing will inevitably negatively affects both the living parameters of the majority of social and income groups, as well as the labour and economic situation, and the competitiveness of national business entities.

In the above context, the latest approaches to the modernization of social protection and security in Ukraine raise numerous questions. In particular, this concerns the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 371 “Some Issues of Implementing the Experimental Project on the Provision of Basic

Social Assistance” dated 25.03.2025, as amended on 19.08.2025 [29] and the Draft Law No. 14051 “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on the Provision of Basic Social Assistance” dated 18.09.2025 [30], which (it is quite clear from their content and political support) will become an important part of the new Social Code of Ukraine.

The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 371 outlined an experimental mechanism for a radical change in the model of low-income families’ social protection and security by monetizing the set of social benefits through the basic social assistance, which (according to a number of low-income criteria) is assigned to a family and paid: to one of its members who applied for its assignment; to each adult family member in equal parts (upon the joint request of all such persons and at subject of applying to the Pension Fund bodies) [29]. The assignment of the basic social assistance has numerous restrictions related to family members’ assets, economic, consumer, social, and educational activities (paragraph 5 of the CMU Resolution No. 371). At the same time, the basic social assistance may be granted to families with several unemployed able-bodied persons registered at employment centres as unemployed or job applicants (in particular, for the purpose of a training voucher obtaining) (paragraph 6).

Most restrictions on the provision of basic social assistance are quite justified, but restrictions related to caring for the disabled and elderly, loss of working capacity, and reaching retirement age without acquiring the right to pension payments are not entirely clear, since in the majority of cases, such households, like other population vulnerable categories, objectively bear significant costs to ensure a minimally acceptable living standard. It is reasonable to assume that the content of the basic social assistance category doesn’t allow for the gradation of socially vulnerable persons according to the characteristics of age, health status, and life experience, moreover, as to paragraph 21 of the CMU Resolution No. 371, the basic social assistance amount is determined as the difference between the total amount of the basic amount for each family member and the average monthly total family income [29].

As for the Draft Law No. 14051 “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on the Provision of Basic Social Assistance” dated 18.09.2025 [30], the comparative table, compiled by the Directorate of the Population Targeted Social Support of the Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine, evidenced that the Law “On State Social Assistance to Low-income Families” is being transformed into the Law “On Basic Social Assistance”. This assistance is approved by the Cabinet of Ministers for the relevant year, taking into account the state budget’s available resources in an amount not lower than the subsistence minimum established for able-bodied persons on January 1 of the calendar year. However, the criteria for classifying families as low-income

(i.e. those with a low average monthly total income) are determined by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (Article 1 of the Law “On Basic Social Assistance”).

As a result, according to Article 2 of the Law “On Basic Social Assistance”, this legislation will no longer have any relation to the Law “On the Subsistence Minimum”, and the amount of basic social assistance, as well as the procedures for its assignment can be adjusted annually by the Cabinet of Ministers (taking into account the current situation), since the relations regarding the adoption, entry into force, administrative appeal, implementation, termination of administrative norms in the field of providing basic social assistance (as to Article 2) are regulated by the Law “On Administrative Procedure”. As a result, a basis is created for ignoring Article 11 of the Law “On Basic Social Assistance”, according to which the payment of basic social assistance should be carried out at the expense of the State Budget of Ukraine [30]. Therefore, with the implementation of the Law “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on the Provision of Basic Social Assistance”, a situation may arise where the state budget will no longer be responsible for full funding the range of types of social assistance.

Conclusions

The dynamics of the employment sphere’s functioning processes reflects both the retrospective and the current level of substantiation and effectiveness of the state policy for establishing socio-economic development, ensuring the investment attractiveness and competitiveness of territorial economic systems and national business entities. As a result, this dynamics is embodied in the potential for the population life quality reproduction and improvement on a scale from the individual to the collective and nationwide levels.

The generalization of methodological and practical principles, features, and issues of formation and dynamics of resilience characteristics of Ukrainian population life quality allows to distinguish the main threats to its provision, related to:

- the functioning, reproducing, transmitting the legislative and economic grounds for the quality of labour potential and working life, productive employment (primarily, in the areas of: guaranteeing and standardizing the employment and remuneration; topical conditions and prospects for development / (stagnation, degradation) of the nationwide employment sphere and its territorial subsystems);
- the destabilization of socium’s organizational and resource mechanisms for optimizing the quality parameters of the labour potential and working life, the population productive employment (first of all, in the areas of: stimulating productive employment and working life quality (including through the State Employment Service, a network of HR agencies, institutions for occupational

health and safety of various levels, specialized territorial and sectoral programs on employment and occupational health, the multi-faceted system of socio-economic support for the working life quality, labour and professional mobility); inconsistent policy and strategic priorities for optimizing the quality parameters of the labour potential and the population working life);

- the destruction of public, community, and individual motivations for productive legal employment (primarily, in the parameters and dynamics of: shadow employment and undeclared labour; excessive market landmarks in professional education, obsolescence of educational standards and programs; crisis of civic and consumer expectations, among the main factors of which are the loss and limitations of community and individual resources for reproducing and improving the standards and practices of comprehensive and professional education, career guidance, advanced training, labour and professional mobility);

- the adverse global and geopolitical trends (as a result of the destabilization of settlement systems, economy and employment sphere due to: the military actions, their reversible and irreversible consequences for the economy, living environment, labour potential; lack of the systemic and balanced policy for preventing cross-border labour migration; chaotic strategic priorities and guidelines for diversification, modernization, specialization of the national economy and its territorial subsystems; rapid uncontrolled changes in the geo-climatic and sanitary-epidemiological situation).

The expectations of a number of the national legislative power representatives regarding the positive impact of the latest approaches to the systematization and codification of the principles of social protection and security, which provide for a significant narrowing of the relevant guarantees (including through the implementation of standards and mechanisms that radically strengthen the targeting criterion's role), on the demographic, labour, socio-political situation in Ukraine, and its international prestige should be recognized as poorly justified. In the current complex geopolitical and socio-economic conditions, it is advisable to coordinate the processes of large-scale and rapid national social legislation reforming not only with external geopolitical guidelines, but with the strategic priorities of restoring the Ukrainian economy through the preserved internal potential of its resilience, diversification, modernization, and competitiveness. The content of social policy, the scope of social protection and security of the population of pre-working and working age, employees of various categories of vulnerability play a decisive role in the reproduction and optimization of the specified characteristics of the national economy and society in the globalized world of neo- and post-industrial national economies.

Comparing the approaches and results of codification of the principles of social protection and security in the EU and Ukraine, we can conclude that the basis of the relevant processes in the European Union are the concepts of socio-economics and social audit, focused on organizing an effective process of human resources and labour reproduction. Their application involves assessing the activities of a range of social actors, structures, and business entities in the context of achieving significant public and non-commercial goals and values based on systematic monitoring of the relevant views of a range of social groups. This approach to adjusting social policy and social legislation allows balancing the dialogical positions of social and business partners towards the coordinated implementation of their strategic tasks and guidelines, ultimately harmonizing social and socio-labour relations in the state. Understanding the role of constructive social dialogue in the effective reproduction of human resources, and labour force, in the development and growth of business systems and the economy as a whole, the EU authorities are focused on the consistent optimization of the volume and structure of social assistance, which should be provided in accordance with the European Code of Social Security.

While proclaiming the dominance of European and global integration goals and values, Ukraine should take a balanced approach to reforming the regulatory framework for the processes of reproduction and preservation of the natural and labour potential of the population and workforce. Therefore, the strategic priorities for mitigating and preventing the set of interacting internal and external threats to the life quality resilience in Ukraine are:

- the improving of the regulatory framework and organizational and economic mechanisms for ensuring the quality of labour potential and working life, and the population productive employment;
- the optimization of the working environment and occupational safety, as well as educational and household support for the population employment, its career guidance, advanced training, labour and professional mobility;
- the development of territorial communities' economic, legal, and everyday household culture, focused on increasing the working life quality, promoting productive legal employment.

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