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THE IMPACT OF WAR ON CHANGES IN LABOR RELATIONS: FREELANCING, GIG ECONOMY, REMOTE WORK

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The war in Ukraine has caused unprecedented changes in the economic and social life of society. One of the most dynamic spheres of transformation has been labor relations. Forced mobility of the population, destruction of infrastructure, migration, and the need to ensure the safety of workers have led to a rethinking of traditional forms of employment. In wartime, freelancing, the gig economy, and remote work have gained particular significance, not only as a way to preserve jobs but also as a driver of new economic processes.

The full-scale war has led to large-scale changes in the labor market: thousands of companies have stopped or reduced their activities, millions of people have lost their jobs or changed their place of residence. In these conditions, the role of non-traditional forms of employment, which allow workers to remain active despite physical distance or being in a war zone or abroad, has increased. The relevance of this research is due to the need to assess the impact of war on the structure of labor relations and formulate approaches to the effective regulation of new forms of work in crisis situations [1].

The aim of this research is to analyze the impact of war on the transformation of labor relations in Ukraine, particularly the development of freelancing, the gig economy, and remote work, as well as to define the prospects and ways to improve labor legislation in the context of new realities.

Before 2022, flexible forms of employment in Ukraine were gradually developing, mainly in the IT, media, and banking sectors. However, with the onset of full-scale war, the situation changed dramatically [2]. According to the State Employment Service and international organizations, the following trends have been observed:

- An increase in the number of freelancers working through online platforms (Upwork, Freelancehunt, Fiverr, etc.);
- The emergence of new professions within the gig economy: couriers, drivers, consultants, temporary workers with flexible schedules;
- A mass transition of companies to a remote work model – both temporary and permanent;
- Increased interest in self-employment and micro-entrepreneurship as an alternative to traditional employment.

At the same time, there are several issues: the lack of a clear legal status for freelancers, limited access to social guarantees, low levels of digital literacy among some of the population, income instability, and psychological difficulties working in isolation or danger.

The war in Ukraine has become a trigger for deep changes in the system of labor relations. Freelancing, the gig economy, and remote work have transformed from alternative forms into vital mechanisms for ensuring employment. These transformations have both positive and problematic aspects that require a systematic approach to their regulation [3].

To ensure the effective functioning of the new labor model, it is necessary, first, to develop legislative norms for regulating non-traditional forms of employment. Second, to provide social protection and access to insurance for freelancers and gig workers. Third, to develop digital infrastructure and training programs for different categories of the population. Fourth, to encourage businesses to implement flexible work formats. Fifth, to ensure psychological support for workers, especially those working under stress or in isolation.

In the long term, the new labor relations model could contribute to the growth of economic mobility, innovation, and the competitiveness of Ukrainian labor on the global market.

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