

Review

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for dissertation for awarding an educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education "3. Social, economic and legal sciences", professional field "3.8. Economy"; doctoral programme "Finance and Insurance" at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance

Author: Olexandra Lysiuk

Topic: Labour market and employment of the population in the modern economy of Ukraine

Supervisor: prof. Igor Britchenko

Grounds for presenting the review: member of the scientific jury for the defence of the dissertation pursuant to Order №91/22.4.2021 of assoc. prof. Dr. Grigoriy Vazov, Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF).

General description of presented documents

Documents sent to me include a dissertation (in Russian), an auto-abstract (in Bulgarian and Russian), a CV (in English), a list of publications (13 titles), scanned copies of five publications (in Ukrainian).

Scope, characteristic and evaluation of the dissertation

The dissertation is dedicated to a system, which is topical for every economy. The labour market is of key importance also for Ukraine, which is in a period of profound transformations in the social and economic relations with regard to its transition to a market economy; the development and the regulation of the labour market in the country is further complicated by significant internal and external migration, as well as by the ongoing processes (including military conflict) in its eastern part. The dissertation represents a comprehensive research of the situation, trends and regional features of the regulation of the labour market in Ukraine, and summarises pathways for regulating this market in the situation of structural changes and development of the economic cycle.

The dissertation consists of an introduction, three parts and final conclusions.

The introduction, in accordance with the requirements, presents purpose, tasks, object and subject of the study. Its structure is logically organized around the set objective and tasks.

The first part has a theoretical and methodological nature and sets the conceptual framework of the research. Based on an extensive literature review (mainly national publications), it clarifies key categories such as "market" and "labour market", the elements and functions of the labour market (pp.48-49 of the dissertation); its factors (p. 23) and basic models (p. 34) are systematized (including in graphic form), as well. I would note in this first section:

(a) The attempt to formulate own definition of the category 'market' (p. 21). However, no attempt is made to define the 'labour market'; in other words, based on the good systematization of existing scientific knowledge on the subject, no clearly presented personal scientific point of view on the definition of the labour market has been reached. In this part, as in the other sections, the author demonstrates knowledge of literature (mostly in Russian or Ukrainian - judging from the list of titles at the end of the dissertation) and very good skills for systematizing existing scientific knowledge. The elements of scientific discussion with the views and understandings of cited authors could be stronger, which would improve the quality of the research.

(b) The clarification of specific features of the Ukrainian labour market are highlighted, such as its three-sectoral model, specific symptoms, problems and contradictions, among which quantitative and structural differences between supply and demand of labour (p. 49 et seq.).

(c) The emphasis on the need to implement an active labour market policy (p. 52).

The second part is analytical and examines the situation, trends and regional specifics of the regulation of the Ukrainian labour market. Based on an analysis and evaluations of statistical data and results of scientific publications, the features of the Ukrainian labour market are well studied - its demographic factors (depopulation, population aging, decreased life expectancy, deteriorating health status); the parameters of unemployment and migration, etc. Key problems on the labour market at national and regional level are outlined, such as imbalance between supply and demand, structural unemployment, poor quality of professional training, and low efficiency of labour usage and others). I would also highlight as strength of this section the analysis of the impact of migration on the financial flows in the Ukrainian economy (item 2.3).

The analysis, the evaluations and the conclusions are based on official statistical data and publications, which do not raise doubts about reliability. On this basis, specific measures are proposed to solve labour market problems - for example, to pursue an active labour market policy and reduce unemployment (p.72-73).

While the first part is theoretical and methodological, and the second - mainly analytical, but also containing elements of policy recommendations, then **the third section** can be characterized as "constructive" one. This is a strong section of the dissertation, which presents *the author's views and specific recommendations* for improving the labour market regulation, including a systematic set of priority areas for action (in terms of strategic planning), directions and measures to stimulate individual entrepreneurship, small and medium business, youth employment, general principles of the mechanism for regulation of the Ukrainian labour market, subjects, objects, instruments and fields of regulation, etc. (item 3.1).

In point 3.2., the author especially studies social entrepreneurship as a new and promising element of the improvement of the labour market state policy. An approach/model for development of social entrepreneurship and drafting a National Strategy for Social Entrepreneurship is proposed, which is considered as one of the important factors for the exit of Ukraine from the economic crisis (p.111-113).

Innovative elements exist also in point 3.3, dedicated to the innovative labour as an element of the formation of a market mechanism in the field of labour. On positive side I would note: the summarizing of the main features of the new knowledge-based economy (p.114); the author's definitions of the terms "innovative labour" (p.115) and "market of innovative labour" (p.118); the derivation of three elements of the specific mechanism for regulating this type of labour (inclusion, coordination, remuneration (p. 119 et seq.); outlining the specificities of the economic relations in the field of innovative labour (p. 125 et seq.) In this section (as in the first part) the dissertation has a politico-economic character as well.

The dissertation is a personal/own work of the author, and the numerous official documents and other authors' publications are correctly cited in the text.

Contributions

The dissertation has the necessary scientific and applied contributing elements, in particular expressed:

- In theoretical-methodological aspect: (a) systematization and enrichment of existing knowledge about the essence and classification of concepts which are of key importance for the research (e.g. market, labour market, regulation of labour market, innovative labour, market of innovative labour); (b) appropriate research methodology, including theoretical comparison, analysis

and summarization, analysis and evaluation of (mainly) quantitative statistical information and secondary analysis of results from other researches.

- In scientific-applied aspect: achievement of results that complement and enrich existing knowledge about the Ukrainian labour market, in particular regarding: (a) its characteristics, factors, problems, existing and possible regulatory mechanisms; (b) the need to develop innovative labour and social entrepreneurship in order to modernize and balance the Ukrainian labour market.

- In political-applied aspect: (a) recommendations for applying the strategic planning principles and approaches in the state policy in the field of the labour market, incl. instruments for integrated (state and market) impact on the labour market, as well as measures and mechanisms for development of social entrepreneurship and innovative labour as promising new elements; (b) views and recommendations for improving the labour market regulation system.

These results and recommendations (probably) would be of interest for the policy and practice of state regulation of the labour market in Ukraine, and could be upgraded in future researches of the author in this field.

Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements

The dissertation plus the presented list of 13 publications shows fulfilment of the minimum national requirements of 80 points for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in field 3. Social, economic and legal sciences. The publications are on the topic of the dissertation and its results have been presented to the scientific community. It should be noted, however, that: (a) the bibliography for publications 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8 and the corresponding scanned copies do not allow to assess whether these are titles in edited/peer reviewed collective volumes; (b) co-authored publications 2.2 and 2.3 in the Journal of Scientific Papers VUZF Review (referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases) should bring 15 points instead of 10 (as in the reference).

Comments and questions

1. The title of the dissertation is "Labour market and employment of the population in the modern economy of Ukraine". The term "population" is broader than "economically active population" or "labour force" (employed + unemployed), which are de facto the focus of the research. In this context, from a scientific point of view, the correctness of the title of the Law of Ukraine "On Employment of the Population" („Про занятость населения“) cited in the dissertation could also be discussed.

2. The formulated 8 tasks of the dissertation seem like a lot and a way could be sought for their aggregation; the task "to analyse the needs of young professionals in the field of professional self-determination and the level of their readiness for active change" is not fully achieved, incl. for example, through conducting a separate (sociological) study.

3. There are limitations of the research in the autor's abstract (which is good), but they are not indicated in the dissertation.

4. With regard to the first part:

- The author's definition of the category "market" given on p.22 raises the following questions: (a) What is new and original? (b) How does the existence of state regulated/controlled prices (e.g. of energy) and subsidies (e.g. for agricultural goods) fit into the author's definition of "market"?
- Why in Ukraine the full employment is associated only with hired wage labour - according to the Law on Employment of the Population (which is mentioned on p. 42 of the dissertation, but the law itself is not quoted, instead a publication of G. Kupalova is cited). In principle, it is not sufficient just to describe the content of one or another

legal act – it is better to perform some assessment of its strengths/weaknesses from a scientific point of view.

- The statement that “employment is assessed by the number of people who have a job that brings them income” (p. 43) is incomplete: the absolute number of employees is a useful indicator, but when assessing employment other indicators should be used – e.g. by employment rate, representing the relative share of employed people of the respective population age groups (e.g. in the age group over 15 years).
- The conclusions on pp. 53-54 should be more closely related to the results of the theoretical analysis. For example, it is argued that (p. 54) key categories have been specified, including "transformation of the employment structure", changes "in the system of values and interests of youth", but such concepts are not clarified in the section.

5. With regard to the second section:

- The analysis is based mainly on absolute values for the studied indicators, and rates and proportions that allow assessing trends and structural changes in the labour market are almost not used. The wage as a component of the labor market is not analyzed.
- Point 2.3 (on the impact of migration on financial flows in Ukraine) could be more closely linked to the topic of the dissertation, especially with regard to the quantitative and structural characteristics of migrants (of course, if data are available). Some positive effects of migration could be discussed, such as reducing the pressure on the national labour market. The analysis of financial transfers from migrants (p.80, Tables 2.3 and 2.4, where, however, applied currency is not specified) would benefit and be more in-depth if, in addition to the absolute values and the dynamics of transfers, their share in GDP, their ratio to foreign direct investment, etc., are analysed.
- Some of the conclusions and evaluations (which seem reliable) do not result from an analysis of data - e.g. on the high share of unemployed with higher education (p.71), and the factors causing this problem are not clarified. Some of the conclusions (p.85-87) practically repeat parts of the analysis.
- Grey employment (e.g. in coal mining, agriculture, construction) and cyclical unemployment could be subject to analysis and evaluation.

6. Regarding the third part - there are reference numbers of titles in the text (p.96), which are not included in the list of references.

The above questions and comments do not underestimate the achievements of the author of the dissertation, but rather aim to give her the opportunity for doctoral defence and to suggest possible topics and directions in her future researches.

Conclusion

The dissertation is the author's own research on the key socio-economic system of the labour market. The set objective and tasks are generally achieved. Capabilities for conducting independent research with individual contributions are convincingly demonstrated, which clearly shows knowledge and skills necessary for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor". The requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for implementation of LDASRB and the Regulations for admission and training of doctoral students at VUZF are met.

On this basis, I recommend that Olexandra Lysiuk be awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education “3. Social, economic and legal scienc-

es", professional field "3. 8. Economics", doctoral program "Finance and Insurance" of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF).

Signature:



Prof. Georgi Shopov, PhD (Ec.)

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