

CHANGES IN LABOR MARKET INDICATORS IN A PANDEMIC

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Abstract: This article analyzes the state of the labor market and examines changes in its indicators in a pandemic. It clearly outlines the processes that affect labor market indicators, the systemic problems that arise in this regard, and the factors that lead to them. The Government has also detailed the measures that need to be taken during the pandemic and in the context of rising unemployment in the labor market. As a result of the analysis, well-founded proposals were put forward to address the identified problems, reduce unemployment and increase employment.

Keywords: labor market, labor resources, economically active population, unemployment, employment, pandemic, government programs, new jobs, labor resource balance, systematic analysis.

Introduction

The spread of coronavirus infection, to one degree or another, has affected the way of life of people in almost all countries of the world. Even some regions are experiencing a serious crisis.

The situation in the global labor market and the problem of unemployment will remain a matter of serious concern, not only during and after the pandemic, but also when serious measures are taken to improve the situation.

Due to the pandemic, the global labor market is facing the worst crisis since the Second World War. According to the International Labor Organization, quarantine measures have led to temporary, total or partial closings of businesses, which affect 81 percent of the world's workforce, or 2.7 billion people.

The longest working day has been reduced in Arab countries (8.1%). This means that 5 million people will lose their jobs. In terms of unemployment, Europe ranks second (7.8% or 12 million people), and the third place is occupied by the Asia-Pacific region (7.2% or 125 million people).

The Main Findings and Results

Analysts at the International Labor Organization (ILO) warn that there is a risk of job losses or working hours in areas that employ an additional 1.25 billion people. The most affected were the hotel business, the service sector, wholesale and retail trade. The least affected areas are education, health care, utilities, agriculture, public services and public safety. Construction, financial and insurance services are at moderate risk of a pandemic in the labor market. The risk of harm to the labor market in the arts and entertainment, transportation, hospitality and tourism, real estate, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and car repair services is moderate.

It is possible that more than 1.5 billion people around the world may be left without life. Workers in the manufacturing and food industries are expected to fall into this category. The coronavirus pandemic is affecting the informal sector of the global labor market. The first month of the crisis resulted in a 60 percent reduction in the number of informal workers worldwide.

According to the UN, the crisis could leave at least 195 million people unemployed. Analysts say the global economy is facing historic unemployment rates.

The crisis caused by the pandemic holds great promise for the development of information technology, especially telecommuting and education, and delivery services. In other words, all spheres that are active in self-isolation are developing.

However, sooner or later the pandemic will end. The economy will continue to grow, but the effects of the pandemic crisis may take longer to heal than the virus itself.

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, labor authorities regularly conduct social surveys, based on the results of which the level of employment and unemployment is analyzed. In particular, at the end of 2020, these bodies conducted another public opinion poll in 101 cities and regions of the country according to the methodology developed on the basis of the recommendations of the International Labor Organization. It was attended by 490 citizens' self-government bodies, 4.9 thousand households and 25.9 thousand citizens.

The study found that quarantine measures aimed at preventing the spread of coronavirus infection during the COVID-19 pandemic have had a significant impact on the labor market.

According to preliminary data, the number of labor resources amounted to 19 million people, an increase of 0.6% compared to the same period in 2019. However, due to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the activities of business entities, the number of employed in the economy decreased by 5% or 671 thousand people compared to the same period last year and amounted to 12.7 million people.

The number of people employed in the formal sector of the economy amounted to 5.5 million people, which is 0.2% or 12.4 thousand people less than in the same period last year.

At the same time, due to restrictive measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus infection, the number of individual entrepreneurs decreased by 167.5 thousand (46.4%)

compared to the same period last year, and 131.2 thousand unemployed were involved in paid public works, which helped to prevent a sharp decline in the number of employment in the official sectors of the economy.

According to the study, the number of people who went to work abroad amounted to 2 million people (a decrease by 553.2 thousand people compared to the same period last year and by 232.1 thousand people compared to the results of the 1st quarter of 2020).

The number of people employed in the informal sector (excluding labor migrants working abroad) decreased by 2.1% or 105.3 thousand compared to last year and amounted to 5.1 million people. At the same time, the number decreased:

- temporary one-time and seasonal workers (decreased by 108.4 thousand);
- employees of family enterprises and entrepreneurs without employment registration (87.6 thousand);
- entrepreneurs operating without registration and permits (110.6 thousand).

At the same time, due to an increase in the number of people sitting at home during the quarantine period, and a sharp increase in the amount of subsidies from the Employment Assistance Fund for the Development of Farms, the number of people employed in dekhkan and wild subsidiary plots increased by 201.1 thousand people.

Granting rights to business entities and self-employed citizens to take into account their work experience and enjoy benefits makes it possible to reduce the share of employment in the informal sector.

The number of economically inactive population in the country increased by 4.5% compared to the corresponding period of 2019. This figure increased during the survey due to the fact that representatives of business and services temporarily suspended their

activities during the quarantine measures and chose not to engage in other activities, intending to resume after the introduction of restrictions.

According to the results of the first half of this year, the unemployment rate in the country amounted to 13.2%. This figure was 9.1% for the same period in 2019. The total number of people in need of work is 1.9 million.

It is worth noting that quarantine in the country was introduced on March 16, 2020. Before the introduction of quarantine, the country's unemployment rate was 9.3%, and the total number of unemployed was about 1.4 million.

In January-June 2020, in order to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on the labor market, labor authorities provided services to 588.2 thousand unemployed. In particular: - 501.1 thousand people were provided with jobs through permanent employment and participation in public works; - trained 15.0 thousand unemployed; - 27.0 thousand unemployed received unemployment benefits in the amount of 10.1 billion soums at the expense of the Employment Promotion Fund.

Also through subsidies from the Employment Promotion Fund: - 24.8 thousand people became members of personal subsidiary plots; - 15 thousand people became members of agricultural, sewing and handicraft cooperatives; - 3 thousand people were involved in entrepreneurship; - material assistance was provided to 2.3 thousand unemployed in need of social protection.

Conclusion

The aforementioned measures taken by the state serve to alleviate labor market problems, support the unemployed, provide employment for those in need, and prevent income decline in the event of a pandemic.

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