ABSTRACT

for the dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the educational program «8D04101 – World Economy » Ualtayev Mukhtar Dulatovich « Destandardization of employment in the Eurasian Space: factors, scale, risks »

General description of the work. This dissertation examines the foundations of employment destandardization, new trends in labour activity in the EAEU member states under current global challenges, factors and risks, and forecasts the scale of these changes.

The relevance of the research is determined by current technological changes that are transforming the structure of labour relations worldwide and within Eurasian integration. The spread of non-standard employment creates new forms of labour relations and requires the study of employment guarantees and social protection of workers. Although such forms of employment have a long history, their current modernization and consequences remain insufficiently studied. The spread of non-standard employment is related to its advantages for workers and employers. Changes in labour relations allow both sides to respond more flexibly to their interests and needs. Higher levels of education and greater diversity of professional skills also increase demand for flexible work arrangements. At the same time, the expansion of flexible employment creates new risks for macroeconomic and social stability. This issue corresponds to UN SDG 8, which focuses on sustained economic growth, productive employment and decent work. Therefore, greater flexibility should be accompanied by the preservation of social guarantees and employment quality.

For Kazakhstan, ensuring decent work is a strategic priority. The COVID-19 pandemic increased the risks of income loss and demonstrated the vulnerability of workers in the informal, non-standard and platform sectors. This increased the need to adapt social protection mechanisms to new forms of employment.

The growth of non-standard employment is outpacing the adaptation of the regulatory framework. This creates legal gaps and increases the risks of destandardization, insufficient social protection and weakening professional identity among workers. Therefore, a comprehensive study of the factors, scale and risks of employment destandardization under EAEU integration is necessary to develop a sustainable and adaptive model of the national and Eurasian labour market.

The importance of the topic was noted by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan K.K. Tokayev in 2019 in the context of modernizing public and political life, developing a “listening state” and maintaining continuous dialogue between the state and society.

Thus, current geopolitical and socio-economic changes increase the need to study new forms of labour activity in the EAEU countries and the Republic of Kazakhstan. The employment development scenarios developed in the dissertation make it possible to forecast the emergence of new forms of work and assess related risks for the economies of Eurasian states.

Degree of scientific development of the problem. The theoretical basis of the research includes classical and modern approaches to the labour market. The study uses the works of A. Smith, D. Ricardo, J.-B. Say, J.R. Hicks, P. Samuelson, K. Marx, as well as representatives of Keynesianism, monetarism and institutionalism — T. Veblen, W. Mitchell, R. Commons, J. Galbraith, W. Rostow and others.

Research on destandardization developed alongside changes in labour relations under the influence of technology, economics and institutions. Scientific analysis gradually moved from traditional employment to non-standard, remote, independent and platform work that goes beyond the classical employment contract.

Foreign studies have linked employment transformation with workers' quality of life and working life. R. Walton demonstrated the influence of working conditions on social well-being, job satisfaction and the use of human capital. These ideas were further developed in studies of employment flexibility, social protection and labour market resilience.

G. Standing developed the concept of the precariat as a social group formed through the spread of non-standard employment and the weakening of labour guarantees. A. Supiot, G. Schmid, U. Beck and E. Grande, and M. Castells studied the influence of globalization, digitalization and the network economy on labour relations, flexible employment, algorithmic management and platform work.

In Russian economic science, V.N. Bobkov studied employment quality, precarization, unstable employment and workers' social protection. His research also addressed methods for assessing employment quality and factors behind the spread of non-standard work.

Among Kazakhstani researchers, employment transformation has been studied by S. Kaliyeva, A. Kussainov, S. Sadykova and other scholars. Their works address labour market modernization, self-employment, non-standard employment, digitalization and social protection of workers. These studies make it possible to identify the specific features of the institutional transformation of Kazakhstan's labour market.

The literature review shows that most studies focus on separate issues such as informal and platform employment, self-employment, labour quality or digitalization. Their comprehensive interaction with employment destandardization, labour market platformization and social protection mechanisms in the EAEU remains insufficiently studied.

Thus, although a significant theoretical and empirical base has been accumulated in individual areas, employment destandardization under digitalization and Eurasian integration retains scientific novelty and requires a comprehensive analysis of current labour market changes, employment quality and social protection.

Object of the research — the labour markets of the EAEU countries.

Subject of the research — processes of employment destandardization in the Eurasian space.

Purpose of the research — to develop theoretical and methodological foundations of employment destandardization and substantiate priorities and mechanisms for its

regulation, taking into account transformation risks and technological challenges in the Eurasian labour market.

Research objectives:

– to study the theoretical and methodological foundations of employment destandardization, taking into account current transformation processes in the labour market;

– to analyse and assess the dynamics and scale of employment destandardization in the Eurasian space;

– to study the impact of digitalization, the platform economy and transformation processes on the global and Eurasian labour markets;

– to assess the socio-economic risks of employment destandardization in the EAEU countries;

– to substantiate priorities and mechanisms for regulating employment destandardization and develop proposals to minimize risks and consequences in the Eurasian labour market.

Main scientific results and novelty. The study produced the following results:

- modern theoretical concepts have been synthesized, a critical analysis of the existing conceptual framework has been conducted, and the author's interpretation of the concept of employment destandardization has been proposed;

- based on the systematization of non-standard forms of employment, a multidimensional classification of modern forms of employment has been developed that differs from existing classifications. It distinguishes between forms of employment according to the method of formalization, the duration and stability of employment relationships, the level of legal protection, the autonomy of the parties involved, and their degree of dependence on digital platforms;

- a comparative assessment of the scale and structure of non-standard work in the EAEU countries has been conducted. Common trends in platform development and their impact on the labour potential of the member states have been identified, and the stages of transformation in the employment structure under digitalization have been determined, with particular attention to the ambiguous nature of the resulting social consequences;

- the specific features of platform ecosystems in the employment sector of the Republic of Kazakhstan have been identified, and parameters for their assessment have been proposed, taking workers' social protection into account;

- a system of mechanisms for reducing the risks of employment destandardization in the Republic of Kazakhstan has been developed. These mechanisms are differentiated according to workers' employment status, duration of employment, and level of social guarantees. A proposal has also been put forward to introduce a digital collective agreement as an instrument of legal protection;

- the author's model for the adaptive regulation of platform employment has been substantiated, and directions for modernizing the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan have been identified based on the principles of ensuring workers' "digital sovereignty".

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The significance of the study lies in developing labour economics and world economy research through a comprehensive analysis of employment destandardization. The author's interpretation, classification of employment forms and systematization of factors provide a basis for further study of labour market transformations.

The main theoretical results include:

– clarification and expansion of the conceptual framework;

– systematization of the main factors of employment transformation;

– substantiation of the socio-economic risks of non-standard work;

– development of methodological approaches to comparative analysis.

The practical significance of the research is determined by the possibility of using its results by government bodies, international organizations and labour market participants. The dissertation findings can be applied in developing state social policy, regulating employment and making strategic decisions.

The main areas of practical implementation include:

– improvement of legislation: proposals to establish the status of "algorithmic management", the "right to disconnect" and functional control criteria can be used by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan;

– modernization of monitoring: the methodology for assessing precarization risks can be used by statistical bodies and analytical centres to assess social threats and job quality;

– development of social partnership: recommendations on digital collective agreements can be used by trade unions and associations of workers when interacting with digital platforms;

– interstate integration: the proposed mechanisms can be used by the EEC in preparing roadmaps for harmonizing EAEU labour markets;

– education: the research materials can be used by universities in developing courses on world economy, labour economics, state regulation of the economy and international economic relations.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the research includes fundamental studies by domestic and foreign scholars, as well as recent scientific achievements and theoretical conclusions in the fields of labour market functioning, human capital theory and concepts of labour precarization under institutional transformations.

The main concept of the dissertation is to substantiate theoretical and methodological provisions for minimizing informal employment and to identify priority scenarios for legalizing labour relations in Kazakhstan.

Main provisions submitted for defence:

- the author's definition of employment destandardization as a systemic process of transforming the traditional model of employment relations, driven by technological, economic and institutional changes and manifested in a departure from uniform employment standards and an increasing diversity of hiring and work organization arrangements. These include informal, casual, temporary and indirect employment, as well

as new flexible forms, including zero-hour contracts. This process is accompanied by changes in working conditions, employment stability and mechanisms for the legal and social protection of workers;

- a multidimensional classification of modern forms of employment, differentiated according to the method of formalization, the duration and degree of stability of employment relationships, the level of legal protection, the autonomy of the parties involved, and their degree of dependence on digital platforms;

- a comparative assessment of the scale and structure of non-standard work in the EAEU countries, identification of common trends in platform development and their impact on the labour potential of the member states, and identification of the stages of transformation in the employment structure under digitalization;

- the specific features and assessment parameters of platform ecosystems, as well as the level of worker protection within them in the Republic of Kazakhstan;

- a system of mechanisms for reducing the risks of employment destandardization in the Republic of Kazakhstan, taking into account workers' employment status and ensuring their social protection, including the introduction of a digital collective agreement;

- the author's model for the adaptive regulation of platform employment and directions for modernizing the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan based on the principles of ensuring workers' "digital sovereignty".

Approbation and implementation of research results. The results and conclusions of the research have been published in domestic and foreign scientific publications in the form of 9 scientific works. These include 1 article in a scientific journal indexed in the Scopus international database, 5 articles in journals included in the list of scientific publications recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and 3 articles in international conference proceedings.

Structure of the dissertation. The work consists of an introduction, three sections, a conclusion, a list of 224 sources and an appendix. The dissertation is presented on 168 pages and includes 12 figures and 66 tables.