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## RESULTS OF MARKETING RESEARCH ON SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE MARKET FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL LABOR NEEDS

*The development of Ukraine as a legal, democratic, and socially oriented state is closely linked to the shaping and evolution of the modern labour market. To achieve this, it is necessary to establish clear and comprehensive mechanisms and systems for accessing this market. Special attention should be given to creating and utilizing additional employment opportunities for individuals with special needs. Currently, individuals with disabilities face significant obstacles to equal competition in the labour market, leading to violations of their right to work, and a lower employment rate compared to the general population. This can initiate a process of gradual exclusion from the sphere of employment, resulting in increased unemployment rates and deepening poverty. The study of international experience in providing employment support for individuals with limited work capabilities is relevant in this context. The focus is on identifying opportunities to apply this experience in Ukraine. Special attention should be given to adapting and implementing technologies, special training programs, and incentivising employers to create an inclusive environment and provide equal opportunities in the labour market. It covers the implementation of measures for workplace adaptation, financial support for employers, and the active involvement of educational institutions and the public in the process of forming suitable infrastructure for inclusive employment. The experience of foreign countries in the field of social protection and employment stimulation for individuals with limited capabilities can serve as a basis for developing and implementing effective national-level strategies that contribute to the inclusion of all segments of the population in Ukraine's active labour force.*

**Keywords:** market research, labor market, people with special needs, special labor needs, employment, social guarantees.

**JEL classification:** M31, J22, H53, H55

## РЕЗУЛЬТАТИ МАРКЕТИНГОВОГО ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ СОЦІАЛЬНИХ АСПЕКТІВ РИНКУ ПРАЦІ ЛЮДЕЙ З ОСОБЛИВИМИ ПОТРЕБАМИ

*Прагнення до формування та еволюції сучасного ринку праці відіграє ключову роль у подальшому розвитку України як правової, демократичної та соціально орієнтованої держави. Це включає в себе необхідність створення чітких і всеосяжних механізмів і систем доступу до цього ринку. Особлива увага приділяється системі створення та використання додаткових можливостей для працевлаштування осіб з особливими потребами. Нині відсоток зайнятих серед людей з інвалідністю значно нижчий, ніж серед загального населення. Практика показує, що через наявність особливих потреб в осіб з інвалідністю виникають серйозні перешкоди для рівної конкуренції на ринку праці, що своєю чергою призводить до порушення їхнього права на працю. Це породжує процес їхнього поступового виключення зі сфери трудової діяльності, збільшує рівень безробіття та поглиблює бідність. У зв'язку з цим стає актуальним вивчення зарубіжного досвіду з надання підтримки зайнятості осіб з обмеженими трудовими можливостями та виявлення можливостей застосування подібного досвіду в Україні. Необхідно приділити особливу увагу розробці, адаптації та впровадженню спеціальних програм для навчання осіб з інвалідністю, які враховують їхні потреби та забезпечують їхню компетентність у вибраних сферах. Це передбачає впровадження заходів з адаптації робочих місць, фінансову підтримку роботодавців, активне залучення освітніх установ і громадськості до процесу формування відповідної інфраструктури для інклюзивного працевлаштування. Крім того, важливо стимулювати роботодавців для створення різноманітних інклюзивних ініціатив для забезпечення рівних умов та можливостей для всіх працівників на ринку праці. Загальний успіх таких ініціатив буде визначатися не лише збільшенням кількості працівників з інвалідністю на ринку праці, але й покращенням їхнього становища, розвитком професійних навичок та забезпеченням їхнього повноцінного участі в економічному та соціальному житті країни. Також важливо звертати увагу на роль уряду в цьому процесі, забезпечуючи належну підтримку та розвиток політик, спрямованих на включення осіб з обмеженими можливостями в сучасне трудове середовище. Отже, шлях до інклюзивного ринку праці в Україні вимагає комплексного підходу, враховуючи як соціальні, так і економічні аспекти. Активне використання зарубіжного досвіду та впровадження ефективних стратегій дозволять країні крок за кроком досягти важливого прогресу в сфері трудової інклюзії та стати прикладом для інших країн.*

**Ключові слова:** маркетингове дослідження, ринок праці, люди з особливими потребами, особливі трудові потреби, працевлаштування, соціальні гарантії.

**Statement of the problem.** According to the World Report on Disability published by the World Health Organization and the World Bank, around 15% of the global population has disabilities. However, their participation in the global labour market is significantly lower than this

percentage. People with disabilities face higher levels of unemployment and lower overall employment rates than those without disabilities. Additionally, persons with disabilities often encounter low-paid work that does not provide financial stability or social guarantees. Improving

policies in this area is essential to support the active integration of persons with disabilities into the labour market.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006, recognizes in Article 27 the right of persons with disabilities to equal opportunities in employment, on par with others [1]. This means that individuals with disabilities should have the same access to employment opportunities, wages, and labour rights as those without disabilities. The Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 [2], which were adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015, identify persons with disabilities as one of the vulnerable groups whose rights must be protected and expanded. The document outlines sustainable development goals that directly address disability issues in the context of the labour market and related indicators.

As a result, the labour market segment for people with disabilities is characterised by significant instability and a high level of unemployment. There is a mismatch between the requirements of the labour market, including vacancies and specialisations, and the qualifications of professionals obtained from the country's educational institutions. Therefore, the issues of employment and unemployment for people with disabilities in the labour market are crucial for contemporary Ukrainian society. This topic attracts the attention of specialists from various scientific fields, including marketing, labour economics, sociology, education, psychology, social work theory, personnel, and production management. This issue is relevant in light of the socio-economic crisis and the level of development and implementation of state policies regarding employment in Ukraine. It is a significant social problem that requires modern approaches to resolution in the context of social interactions.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The integration of workers with special labour needs into production and social life is a pressing issue for many countries, including Ukraine. Currently, there is active research into the functioning of the labour market and its associated problems. Several scholars, including D. Boginya [3], Lisogor L.S., Rudenko N.V. [4], Chuvardinskii V.O. [5], Galitsky O.M., Grishnova O.A. [6], have analysed these issues. Although previous scientific studies hold value, it is important to emphasise the significance of studying the labour market segment for workers with special needs. Currently, this area is not receiving adequate attention despite its undeniable importance and relevance. To gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by workers with special needs in the labour market, and to promote their social integration, it is important to focus research efforts on this area. This will contribute to a more inclusive work environment.

**Objectives of the article** is to examine and demonstrate the challenges associated with employing individuals with disabilities in the job market, and to devise strategies and resources to tackle them.

**Summary of the main results of the study.** Research has shown that individuals with disabilities have a lower employment rate compared to the general population. In 2020, the employment rate for people with special needs was 67%, compared to 77% for the general population, according to statistical data. A study by the Statistical Office

of Sweden on the labour market situation for individuals with special needs found that 16% of the population aged 16 to 64 reported having certain limitations [7]. Within this group, 42% reported limitations to their work capacity to a significant or partial extent. However, the employment rate for individuals with disabilities in labour positions was lower than that of the general population, with only 67% employed in 2020. For individuals with disabilities that impair work capacity, the unemployment rate reached 52%, compared to 77% for the total population. The full-time employment rate for individuals with disabilities is significantly lower than that of the general population. Only 70% of employed individuals with disabilities work full-time, with this figure dropping to 58% for those with disabilities related to impaired work capacity. In contrast, the full-time employment rate for the general population is 77% (see Figure 1).

The percentage of women working full-time is lower compared to a similar metric for men. This observation applies to both the general population and the group of people with special needs in the labour market. A study conducted in 2020 found an unemployment rate of 9% among individuals with special needs and the general population, which is particularly noteworthy. However, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities, indicating limitations in work capacity, was higher at 17% [7].

The research suggests that the high number of people with disabilities in our country is linked to deficiencies in the national healthcare system, inadequate safety and occupational protection in workplaces, low environmental awareness, and exposure to various crisis such as armed conflicts, natural disasters, and environmental threats.

As of the beginning of 2024, 2,712.6 thousand citizens of Ukraine were officially registered as disabled, according to data from the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, and the Pension Fund of Ukraine [8] (Table 1).

The statistical data indicates a sharp increase in the overall number of people with disabilities in our country from 2010 to 2014. In 2010, there were 2,631.1 thousand people with disabilities, which increased by almost 200.6 thousand people by 2014. Since then, the number has consistently grown, reaching 2,725.8 thousand by 2022. However, by 2023, the number had slightly decreased to 2,712.6 thousand. The rise in the number of people with disabilities can be attributed to inadequate government management and military actions. This is supported by statistics on Ukrainian citizens who were granted disability status between 2010 and 2023, and the reasons for their disability (data pertains to individuals aged 18 and above) (Table 2).

The formation and development of the modern labour market are crucial for the further development of Ukraine as a state based on laws, democracy, and social orientation. Therefore, it is necessary to establish clear and transparent mechanisms and systems for accessing this labour market. Special attention should be given to creating and utilizing additional opportunities for employing individuals with special needs. Participants in this market, including people with disabilities, may face limitations in bodily functions that affect their interaction with the environment, potentially impacting their competitiveness. Therefore, it is important for the state to create conditions that ensure

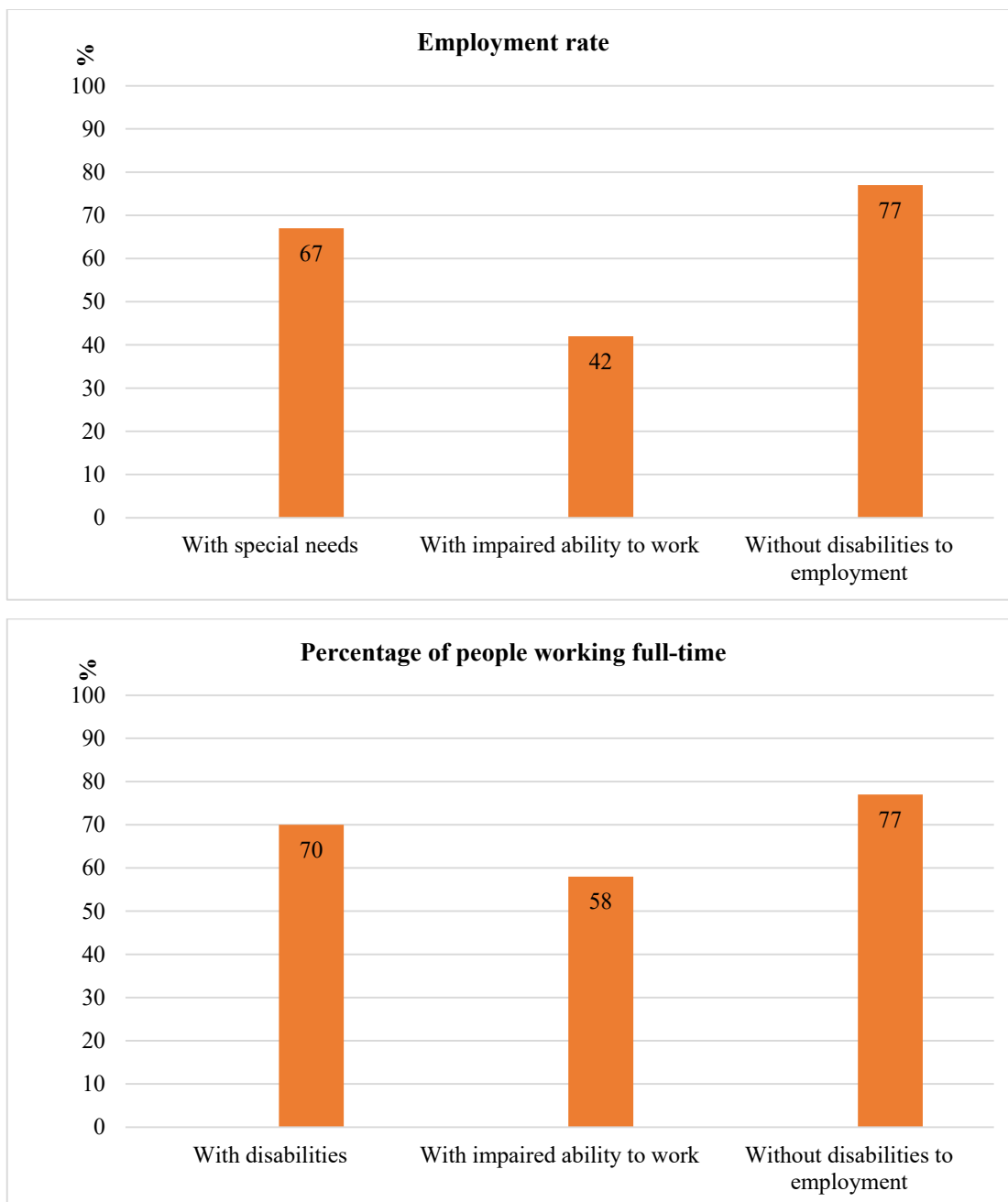


Figure 1. Share of population engaged in labor processes, %

Source: [7]

the realization of their rights on par with other citizens and provide social support.

Currently, there is no consensus within government structures, society, or among potential employers regarding the labour market for people with special labour needs. However, employment issues for this group have become increasingly significant recently.

The effectiveness of the participation of workers with special labour needs in the employment market depends heavily on compliance with national legislation, particularly regarding this group of citizens. It is important to note that Article 19 and 20 of the Law of Ukraine No. 875-XII led to the adoption of Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution No. 70 on 31.01.2007 [9]. This resolution contains key regulations that govern the labour market for people

with special labour needs. The documents' fundamental principles aim to ensure equal employment opportunities for workers with special labour needs. They have been further developed and improved, significantly impacting the processes of shaping and expanding the work market for individuals with special labour needs. Certain prerequisites precede this opinion, which can be traced to normative provisions possessing legislative status in Ukraine [10]:

- the procedure for registering enterprises, institutions, organizations and individuals who employ workers;
- methods of providing information on the employment and placement of persons with disabilities by enterprises, institutions, organizations and individuals who employ persons with disabilities, as well as providing the necessary data to organise their employment;

Table 1

## Number of persons with disabilities in Ukraine from 2010 to 2023, in thousands

Year	Number of people with disabilities at the start of the year				Total
	Group I	Group II	Group III	Children with disabilities	
2010	311,7	1 070,8	1 091,1	157,5	2 631,1
2011	310,5	1 078,7	1 155,7	165,1	2 710,0
2012	304,7	1 076,0	1 230,7	166,2	2 777,6
2013	298,2	1 054,4	1 268,5	167,1	2 788,2
2014	291,3	1 042,3	1 329,8	168,3	2 831,7
2015	251,8	915,9	1 249,7	151,1	2 568,5
2016	250,3	919,0	1291,2	153,5	2614,1
2017	240,6	900,5	1306,2	156,1	2603,3
2018	235,4	899,2	896,1	159,0	2635,6
2019	226,3	896,1	1375,7	161,6	2659,7
2020	222,3	900,8	1416,0	163,9	2703,0
2021	215,0	897,1	1449,1	162,9	2724,1
2022	207,2	886,7	1469,7	162,2	2725,8
2023	204,9	888,7	1472,0	156,0	2712,6

Source: compiled according to [8]

Table 2

## Distribution of individuals first recognised as disabled in 2010–2022 by reason for disability among the population aged 18 and over

Year	Quantity	Industrial accidents and occupational diseases	From a general illness	Persons with disabilities among military personnel	Disabled people since childhood
2010	173 498	5 117	146 831	4 582	16 968
2011	176 161	4 687	149 439	5 720	16 315
2012	171 826	4 589	146 220	4 829	16 188
2013	165 114	4 275	140 352	4 874	15 613
2014	133 745	2 206	114 784	4 356	12 399
2015	138 247	1 928	118 238	6 031	12 050
2016	136 302	1 968	114 953	8 195	11 186
2017	135 674	2 367	116 533	6 145	10 629
2018	138 756	2 498	118 790	7 256	10 212
2019	136 300	2 591	116 139	7 315	10 255
2020	117 664	2 539	99 411	5 740	9 974
2021	121049	-	-	-	-
2022	145243	2488	126335	5816	10604

Source: compiled according to [8]

– the established procedure for determining the number of jobs for persons with disabilities, which must meet the established standards in enterprises of economic associations that include enterprises of public organizations;

– methods of payment of administrative fines and penalties for non-compliance with the established norms of jobs for persons with disabilities by enterprises, institutions, organizations and individuals using hired labour;

– the methodology for using administrative fines and penalties for failure to fulfil the norms of workplaces for the employment of persons with disabilities, which have been transferred to the State budget;

– the procedure for conducting inspections of enterprises, institutions, organizations and individuals who use hired labour.

Employers in Ukraine are legally required to respond appropriately to the growing number of workers with limited capabilities in the labour market and their impact on overall employment dynamics [10; 11].

However, it should be noted that state policies, even when elevated to the level of laws, may not always be fully implemented in practice, and the mechanisms for applying legislative provisions may not always work efficiently. The recommendations of non-governmental organizations, foundations, and associations that support individuals with limited work capabilities, as well as those with advanced international experience, are not being fully utilized. In the current conditions of a developed market economy and insufficient levels of social support for workers with limited work capabilities, the issue of their employment has become increasingly pressing. Based on conducted research, the main reasons for the low level of employment in this sector of the labour market have been identified. The key factors are as follows:

– low level of education, both general and vocational, for persons with special educational needs, as well as limited or complete loss of professional skills as a result of long-term illness or disability;

– lack of detailed information on employment opportunities and available places of work for persons with special labour needs, as well as on enterprises that contribute to the creation of new jobs for this category of workers;

– limited flexible forms of work organization and employers' lack of interest in employing people with special labour needs;

– insufficient legal protection for potential employees with special labour needs during the employment process, which leads to numerous negative scenarios when trying to find a job, including enterprises of public organizations for people with disabilities;

– reluctance of prospective employers to hire workers with special labour needs due to the need to make significant investments to create specialised workplaces;

– possible risks of accidents during the working process and subsequent insurance costs;

– employers' concerns about possible difficulties in dismissing workers with special labour needs;

– low wages in the positions offered by the employer and the mismatch between the employer's requirements and the employees' capabilities;

– limited or insufficient awareness of potential employers of the abilities and needs of workers with special labour needs.

According to Ukrainian legislation, individuals with special labour needs are entitled to a full range of socio-economic, political, and personal rights and freedoms as provided by the Constitution, laws of the country, and international agreements approved by the Verkhovna Rada

of Ukraine. This includes the Constitution of Ukraine [12], the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Law of Ukraine No. 875-XII 'On the Basics of Social Protection of Disabled People in Ukraine' [9]. In accordance with Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, participating states must ensure that individuals with special labour needs have equal opportunities in the field of employment [10; 11]. This article reflects the right to freely choose or agree upon employment opportunities, in conditions where the labour market and work environment are open, inclusive, and accessible to this category of workers.

The legal aspects of employing people with special labour needs in Ukraine are determined by the Constitution of Ukraine [12], the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [8], and Law No. 875-XII [9], specifically Section IV which covers Employment, Education, and Vocational Training of Persons with Disabilities.

**Conclusions.** Although the government has guaranteed rights and enacted legislative measures to facilitate the employment of workers with special labour needs, their involvement in productive work remains a weak link in our country. Practice shows that due to health restrictions, these workers are deprived of equal opportunities to compete in the employment market. This leads to violations of their labour rights, gradual exclusion from the workforce, an increase in unemployment levels, and deepening poverty. It is crucial to analyse international experience in supporting the employment of workers with special labour needs and identify possibilities for its application in Ukraine.

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