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## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE PRECARIAT IN UKRAINE**

The emergence of the precariat as a new social class has piqued the interest of researchers due to ongoing formation processes. While extensively studied in global sociology, research on this phenomenon in Ukraine is still in its nascent stages. This study aims to grasp the essence of the precariat, identifying its nature, distinguishing features, and underlying causes. A comprehensive understanding of the precariat's relationship with the shadow economy is pivotal for ensuring transparency and sustainable economic development.

In the contemporary world, there is a noticeable trend toward societal individualization, characterized by a growing sense of disunity and a preference for individuals to address social issues independently. This inclination is reinforced by feelings of anxiety and disorientation, which erode social bonds and interpersonal solidarity [1]. The challenges are made worse by globalization and the unpredictable nature of the job market, leading to a feeling of uncertainty and instability among people. In this environment, we see the emergence of the precariat — a group of people facing uncertain job prospects and a lack of social benefits. Standing defines the precariat as a product of globalization and flexible labor practices, encompassing individuals navigating uncertainty in the labor market [3]. Ukrainian scholars approach this concept from various angles, delving into its impacts on labor dynamics, social security, and the shadow economy. It is observed that economically active individuals often leave their jobs due to employment constraints [4]. The rise in precarity poses challenges for global social security systems, fueling the expansion of the shadow economy and impeding efforts to ensure economic transparency and stability.

Understanding the implications of precariat emergence is crucial for ensuring both social security and sustainable economic development. This unique socio-economic group is closely tied to neoliberal ideology, which puts more responsibility on citizens for their public and private lives, leaving them more exposed. In Ukraine,

the economic reforms of the 1990s worsened existing socio-economic gaps, leading to the rise of the precariat. This group includes various categories — temporary workers, part-time employees, the unemployed, and those in creative fields, who often struggle with unstable jobs, feeling left out, and limited access to social benefits. Creating a more inclusive and balanced society depends on promptly addressing these issues.

There was a consistent decline in informal employment in Ukraine between 2017 and 2021 — from 3,695.6 in 2017 to 3,018.4 in 2021 (according to the Labour Force Survey results [2]). This shows that efforts to reduce informal employment and improve formal job prospects are working effectively. Moreover, a decline in informal employment may signify an improvement in overall economic performance, a heightened understanding of the importance of formal employment, and a potential reinforcement of regulatory measures targeting informal labor practices. Hence, close monitoring of the situation and the implementation of targeted policies to further reduce informal employment and its associated negative effects are imperative. This positive trend can lead to a more stable and fair socio-economic landscape for those facing uncertain circumstances, ultimately enhancing their well-being and social inclusion.

In conclusion, understanding the complexity of the precariat is crucial for fostering sustainable economic development. By guaranteeing equal opportunities for all individuals within this group, we can improve their well-being, drive comprehensive socio-economic progress, and create a more sustainable and inclusive society for everyone.

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