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SOCIAL SECURITY OF CITIZENS OF UKRAINE: THE CURRENT STATE AND PERSPECTIVES OF IMPROVEMENT

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It should be recognised that recently the issues of social protection and security have been the most acute and discussed in Ukrainian society. And it is understandable, because, firstly, “the social security service as a system of providing and servicing special categories of citizens, who need it due to difficult life circumstances”, nowadays does not correspond to contemporary tendencies and needs, and, secondly, citizens of Ukraine are dissatisfied not only with the low level of pensions and wages, because, receiving these funds, it is difficult to live with dignity, at least to satisfy the basic needs (in food, clothing, medicine and recreation), but also that, despite the fact that under law they have the right to some privileges or preferences, they are deprived of it because of the lack of funds in the budgets, unsettled mechanism and rules for their provision, and sometimes the absence of particular categories of people in the list of those who can be defined as “the special categories of citizens who need it due to difficult life circumstances.”

Also, for many reasons, these issues are among the debatable ones. Let us explain the last thesis: it is not completely clear what worthy life is (it is an evaluative concept and the vision and answer depend on various factors); what kind of social security should be guaranteed by the state; who has the right for monetary assistance; what are the means for its provision.

In this context, it should be added that in any society, regardless of the level of its economic development and political system, there are always people who, through natural reasons independent of them, cannot ensure their existence by own efforts. These primarily include children and the elderly people, because the former is “yet”, and the latter is “already” inoperative.

Besides, some people can become unable to work, because they temporarily or permanently lose their ability to work or lose their jobs, due to health problems (military personnel who were injured or imprisoned, political prisoners).

Based on the above, we can state that Ukraine represented by the government authorities should fulfil the following tasks: to create conditions for raising average wages and pensions; to review the level of the cost of living, and to implement pension reform in order to expand the network of non-state pension funds at the level with the principal state; to develop and implement the balanced policies on the labour market, while ensuring compliance with the guarantees regulation both in the field of labour remuneration and the

entire sphere of social security; to review the list of persons (categories) who need state assistance due to the difficult life circumstances, in particular, to study the feasibility and possibility of moving from the provision of benefits and subsidies to targeted cash assistance [1].

We add that people who, due to difficult life circumstances, need social support and services, have the right to rely on the assistance from the state at least concerning:

1) minimal financial assistance (we are talking about assigning the particular amount of cash payments for a specified period in case of loss of work, not on one's initiative, deterioration of health);

2) preferential taxation;

3) medical support (assistance from rehabilitation physicians, psychologists);

4) the sanatorium-resort therapy (at least for children from such families);

5) obtaining a minimal set of social services (for example, from local budgets or charitable foundations);

6) conducting vocational guidance and retraining, even with free training for employment, to assist in it.

In the context of what has been said, we note that we fully agree with professor S. Teleshun [6], who is convinced that when reforming any sphere (especially as painful and significant as the social one), one should rely on "the middle class, which is the social base that interested and will greatly contribute to its implementation through labour and political activity" [6].

At the same time, one should not forget about the impossibility of an insignificant part of citizens who are not able to fully realize their rights and freedoms, "due to the imperfection of Ukrainian legislation, the opacity of political and economic decisions made by the authorities, the weakness of intellectual competition and system control over the implementation of decisions made, and the high level of corruption in state power system" [6].

It should be added that the imperfection and a large number of regulations do not allow us to quickly figure out what benefits a person can count on, what help can be expected and what support the state will provide. It is especially acute now when there are the categories of citizens for whom certain types of social security should be provided, for example, rehabilitation or the help of specialist doctors. We are talking about prisoners of war, political prisoners, military servicemen, who returned from the zone of the joint forces operation.

As we know, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine registered draft law No.8205 "On the legal status and social guarantees for persons illegally deprived of their liberty, hostages or convicts in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and beyond its borders" [5], according to which it is regulated, in particular, and the issue of providing social assistance to political prisoners, prisoners of war.

So, Article 8 asserts that “the state guarantees the provision of legal assistance to hostages or other illegally imprisoned persons, in the forms provided for by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine, as well as international treaties, the approval of which is provided by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine” [5], and in Article 9 it is stated: “Persons recovered from illegal imprisonment, released from unlawful conviction, are guaranteed free medical examination, diagnostics and treatment of the diseases obtained during their stay in the places of illegal imprisonment, rehabilitation and health-improvement. The procedure for providing treatment is established by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine”. [5]

So, the sphere of social security in Ukraine is complicated and extensive in volume; it does not meet the requirements of the time, which, in turn, complicates the work when asserting the rights and freedoms of citizens.

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