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Labor Movement in Ukraine and Russia: Dynamics, Factors and Strategies of Protection of Class Interests (Results of 1989-2010)

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This is the study of the dynamics of labor movement in Ukraine and in Russia and the reasons for the decline of strike mobilization of employees based on official statistics and international sociological projects. The dynamics in the number of strikes and their members from 1989 to 2010 shows that in these two decades the strike movement was extremely uneven: while in the 1990s it was of intense and undulating character, in the 2000s there was a trend towards its attenuation.

The decline in the number of strikes in the 2000s in post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia can be explained with seven reasons: 1) improving of economic conditions (higher wages, the timeliness of their payments, the reduction of unemployment and involuntary part-time); 2) legal regulation of strikes brought complications to the procedure of starting them; 3) legal institutionalization of the social dialogue model; 4) changes in the work place that leave less space for collective protest actions and class solidarity, and at the same time expand the opportunities for individualized forms of social protection; 5) changes in the collective organization of the opposing classes—reduction in the number and influence of trade unions and, on the contrary, strengthening of the employers' organizations; diversification of social protection (in addition to the trade unions, the courts became its subjects); 7) changes in the fixation techniques of strike activity, where official statistics no longer record strikes carried out without compliance with prescribed procedures.

The labor movements in Russia and Ukraine and the developed Western countries had similar tendencies: it was characterized by unevenness (periodic ups and downs; and while the Western countries experienced the peak of labor protests in the 1970s, in post-Soviet countries it occurred in the 1990s); motivation primarily with economic slogans; and the transition from the forms of direct mobilization of collective action to the institutionalized ones.

Keywords: labor movement, strike, trade unions, political parties.

Labor movement in the USSR was revived and legalized at the end of the 1980s by a powerful wave of strikes and meetings. They were a rather popular and effective instrument of protection of employees' interests during the next decade of post-Soviet transformation

too. Both experts and employees hoped for the revival of independent and powerful trade unions as subjects of political process, for the creation of political parties, based on the ideology of protection of rights of working people. Yet, labor and class conflicts, born

by economic and political transformation of the society, were supposed to be resolved by civilized methods, a step to which was seen in the institutionalization of the social dialogue model, passing of new labor legislation. However, on the threshold of a new century there was a turn which experts estimate as a defeat of labor movement, the loss of its role of a subject of social change. In the 2000s strike activity attenuated, the trade unions failed to become independent and effective actors in the fight for the interests of the working class; the political parties formed in that period did not have a clear class ideology; labor conflicts were declaratorily resolved within a framework of a tripartite social dialogue model by means of constructive talks, which eliminated outbreaks of strikes. Employees and experts, however, were under the impression of compulsion to the dialogue and strengthening of bureaucratic limitations to the direct mobilization of workers for protection of their rights.

The problems and issues connected with labor movement have been actively studied by sociologists in Russia and Ukraine. Owing to their research we have empirical data about different aspects of development of labor movement—strikes, trade unions, the social dialogue model (Alekseeva, 1983; Biziukov, 2011; Borisov, 2001; Dubrovskii, 2009; Guliaev, 2003; Il'in, 1998; Kabalina, 1998; Katsva, 2008; Kononov, Kononova, Denshchik, 2001; Kozina, 2009; Krutoi plast, 1999; Maksimov, 2008; Narysy istorii, 2008; Pan'kova, Ivashchenko, 2006; Protesty, 2011; Rabochee dvizhenie, 1995; Rusnachenko, 2000; Sobolev, 2009; Solidarizatsiia, 1998; Suchasnyi stan, 2003; Zabastovki, 1996; Zhukov, 2000; Siegelbaum, Walkowitz, 1995). The aim of this article is to analyze the dynamics of labor movement in Ukraine and Russia for the last twenty years and the present situation.

The conceptual base of the research

Labor movement is a social movement aimed at protecting the rights and interests of employed workers, resolving conflicts between employers and employees, transforming the existing system of distribution of economic power and resources. Labor movement usually starts with unofficial interest groups, leading then to formation of political parties or other institutionalized groups, which become the main actors of the movement. The ideal typical model of development of a social movement (in particular, labor movement) is described by Otthein Rammstedt (Rammstedt, 1979) as a succession of the following phases: 1) the crisis of the existing system of institutional practices and appearance of uncoordinated illegitimate innovative practices; 2) achievement of a consensus among the people, affected by the crisis and interested in the changing of the social order, polarization of “social activists” and administrative authorities, formation of a collective identity of the participants of the movement; 3) articulation of the problem and drawing up the line of arguments opposing the existing order; 4) formation of the movement, its geographical and social localization; 5) formulation of the ideology, drafting the action plan, ignoring the old institutional norms and following new ones; 6) extension of the movement and localization of the opponent, active propaganda of the ideas of the movement, increasing the number of supporters; 7) the appearance of the organization; 8) institutionalization or revolution as a result of the movement and the indicator of the achievement if its aims, transformation of the social order.

Some researchers find it difficult to analyze a labor movement as a social movement because it is predominantly institutionalized in the modern society. (Fantasia, 2001; Fantasia, Stepan-Norris, 2008; Nieuwbeerta, 2001). It is common knowledge that the role of the organizations,

making up labor movement (trade unions and political parties), is not limited to mobilization of workers for the participation in collective protest action. The functions of trade unions are chiefly those of concluding collective labor agreements and negotiating with the employer. These are institutionalized participation in regulation of economic activity and stabilization of labor-management relations, which result in bureaucratic regulation of collective action and weakening of class confrontation. So, a considerable part of labor movement is realized in institutionalized forms.

Modern theorists of social movements stress the importance of a methodological approach, which was underestimated earlier, according to which it is impossible to completely understand the logic of a mobilization of a social movement without simultaneously considering the antimobilisation forces. (Meyer, Staggenborg, 1996; Fantasia, Stepan-Norris, 2008). In this case, to understand the dynamics of labor/trade union movement, it is necessary to analyze it not as isolated one, but correlated with the activity of the employers' organizations as "counter movements" (Griffin, Rubin, Wallace, 1986). The employers' organizations are interested in reducing or even neutralizing the ability of employees for mobilization; ideally, in counteraction to the activity of local trade unions as well as workers' movement in general, trying to create "union free environment". Counter movements of employers are, on some occasions, visible and direct (when repressions are used towards labor movements—suppression of strikes, murders, intimidation and bribery of trade union leaders and activists), on other occasions these counter movements are concealed and disguised (when employers realize their interests through state structures, trying to weaken the influence of trade unions and limit the instruments of their activity with the help of legislation) (Krupat, 1997). Notwithstanding

the fact that since the end of the 20th century the trade unions of the most European countries have had to work within strict bureaucratic limits, the mobilization of direct collective action is still an important instrument of their activity.

Michael Burawoy considers that in the studies of class as an actor of labor movement, too much attention is devoted to "the realm of superstructure—education, political parties, ideology and state", though "they no longer exist as opposition to political challenges" (Burawoy, 2001: c. 22). From his point of view, the realm of industry (the principal "melting pot of class formation") has superstructures of its own, or political and ideological mechanisms of production, called by him as "the regime of production". This notion gives Burawoy a conceptual framework for studying competing confrontations and identities arising around work. Different regimes of production (despotic and hegemonic, as well as their variations – bureaucratic, colonial and hegemonic despotism) have different consequences for class struggle. While despotic regime prodded to class mobilization, hegemonic regime (born by the increase of state involvement into regulating of labor-management relations and ensuring welfare) relied on agreement and coordination of workers and management interests. However, in the last decades, a so-called hegemonic despotism took shape: workers are still protected from arbitrary dismissals, but they lose their jobs because of frequent suspension of production; they can come out on strike, but membership changes constantly.

"Hegemony is functioning now in the opposite direction: it is not capital that makes concessions to labor, it is labor that does it to keep work places. Economic compulsion of workers to collaboration and agreement leads to attenuation of strikes and reducing in trade unions'

membership.” (Burawoy, 2001: c. 37). Burawoy’s answer to why strikes are seldom used as a means of resolving of labor disputes is: people nowadays are not afraid of exploitation in the same degree as they are afraid of social exclusion, the prospect of losing their jobs.

So, during the last decades the researchers in post-Soviet, as well as in Western sociology, have been trying to explain the obvious tendency to the reduction in strike activity and weakening of labor/ trade union movement (Baer, 1975; Brandl, Traxler, 2009; Smelser, 1963; Tilly, 1978; Rammstedt, 1979; Tarrow, 1994; Social Movements, 2002; Olson, 1965; Fantasia, Stepan-Norris, 2008). Structural and institutional reasons for the weakening of labor movement are seen in the changes in the work place, globalizing processes, in the changes in the forms of protecting of the interests of employees (by means of institutionalized, but not mobilizing, practices), in the loss of trade unions’ authority and influence and at the same time, in the well-consolidated counter movements of employers.

Problem statement and methodology

The following issues connected with labor movement are usually studied: the level and pattern of mobilization (mainly strike) activity and factors, affecting its dynamics; the subjects of this movement (trade unions, political parties, strike committees); the effectiveness of their activity and level of trust of employees to them. To have an insight into the labor movement of post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia it is necessary to conduct an empiric analysis of, firstly, the level of strike activity of employees , and, secondly, of the reasons of its dynamics. We consider it effective to research these aspects both in time perspective (for the last 20 years) and in comparative perspective (in comparison with

developed Western countries and post-socialist countries).

A wide range of data was used as the empirical base for the fulfillment of the objectives set: 1) the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine and the International Labor Organization from 1989 to 2010), 2) monitoring of the Institute of Sociology , the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (1994-2010), 3) the International project of European Social Survey (ESS).

Discussion of results History and modern state of labor movement

The history of legitimation of labor movement

It is generally known that in the second half of the 20th century the working class of the USSR, in contrast to the working class of Western countries, had practically no experience of collective asserting of its rights. Having good reasons for labor conflicts (low wages, substandard working conditions, lack of material comforts), employees did rarely if ever embark on active collective actions. The uneventful history of the alternative trade unions and labor movement in 1950-1980 is described in several sources (Zabastovki, 1975; Rabochee dvizhenie, 1995; Borisov, 2001; Rusnachenko, 2000; Narysy istorii, 2002: c. 562–567). As a rule, the cases of strikes and self-organization into independent trade unions were either hushed up or interpreted as sabotage and marginal activities in the Soviet mass media. Lyudmila Alekseeva, basing on the archives of dissidents and the samizdat, collected information about 76 strikes of post-Stalinist decades (the most high-profile among them are: the cruelly suppressed labor unrest in Novochoerkassk in 1962 and the waves of strikes in 1976-1978) (Alekseeva, 1983). Having given a rather detailed description of their motives, results and initiates, the researcher stated that all

these strikes were chiefly “spontaneous outbreaks of desperate people”, a revolt caused by either intolerable living conditions or the unjust actions of the authorities, but not by far-reaching plans of social reorganization. In the Soviet times the only legitimate mechanism for workers to protect their rights and interests were trade unions, but their independence and effectiveness in realization of this task is often debated. Experts claim that (basing among other things on the data of content-analysis of records of the meetings of trade union committees) in the Soviet period the main function of the trade union was not protection, but administration and maintenance and morale building activities. (Narysy istorii, 2002: c. 530; Kabalina, 1998).

In the late Soviet period there was no legislative base for direct mobilization of collective actions. In the 1920s workers’ strikes were still quite legal practices, but in the late 1930s it was declared that in the Soviet society there were no good reasons for class and labor conflicts. So, there was no article, guaranteeing citizens the right to hold strikes, in the Constitution of Ukraine of 1978. Only at the beginning of the 1990s under the pressure of spontaneous mass protests and on the initiative of their leaders a number of changes and amendments were written into the Constitution, which “with the aim of strengthening and developing of the constitutional system guaranteed the citizens of Ukraine the freedom of speech, press, assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations” (article 48) and granted “the right to organize political parties, other civil organizations, take part in movements assisting in promoting their legal interests (article 49).

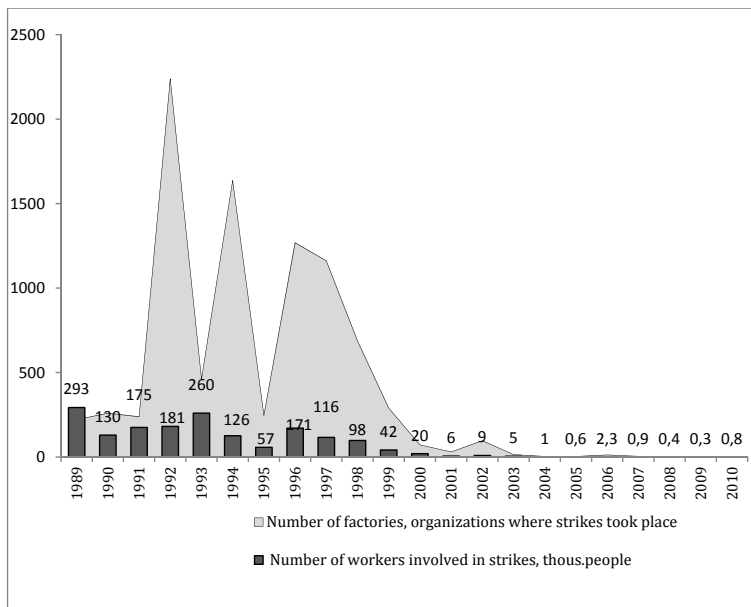
At the present time in Ukraine, as well as in most economically developed Western countries, the right to strike is guaranteed by the law. The Constitution of Ukraine adopted in 1996 (article 44) guarantees working citizens the right to

strike in order to defend their economic and social interests. The procedure of exercising the right to strike is prescribed by the Act of Ukraine of 1998 “About the procedure of resolving labor disputes (conflicts)”. According to article 17 of the Act a strike is interpreted as a temporary collective voluntary cessation of work by a factory, institution, organization with the aim of resolving a collective labor dispute. According to this Act, a strike can be started if conciliation procedures did not lead to resolving a collective labor dispute or if the owner or the representative of the owner evades conciliation procedures or fails to abide by the agreement, reached in the course of resolving a collective labor dispute.

The dynamics of the level of labor movement. We will consider the panoramic view of strike activity in independent Ukraine and Russia basing on the data of official statistics. Fig. 1 presents the data of the dynamics of the number of strikes and their participants from 1989 to 2010. It can be seen, that during the two decades the strike movement was extremely uneven: while in the 1990s it was of an undulating character (there were increases in the number of strikes and their participants in 1991, 1994, 1997), in the 2000s an almost complete attenuation can be observed (with the exception of the outburst in Russia in 2004-2005). The dividing line between the decades (as change in the tendency) falls on the 2000s.

Of course, the level of strike activity in the 1990s was impressive. Supported by the media, it was estimated as exceptionally high, especially against a background of the situation in the Soviet times, when workers had minimum experience of mobilization (as it was mentioned above, only 76 trustworthy cases of labor protests were recorded). However, as intensive as this period of the outburst of the labor movement in the post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine in the 1990s was, viewed in a longer historic perspective, it is incommensurable with

Ukraine



Russia

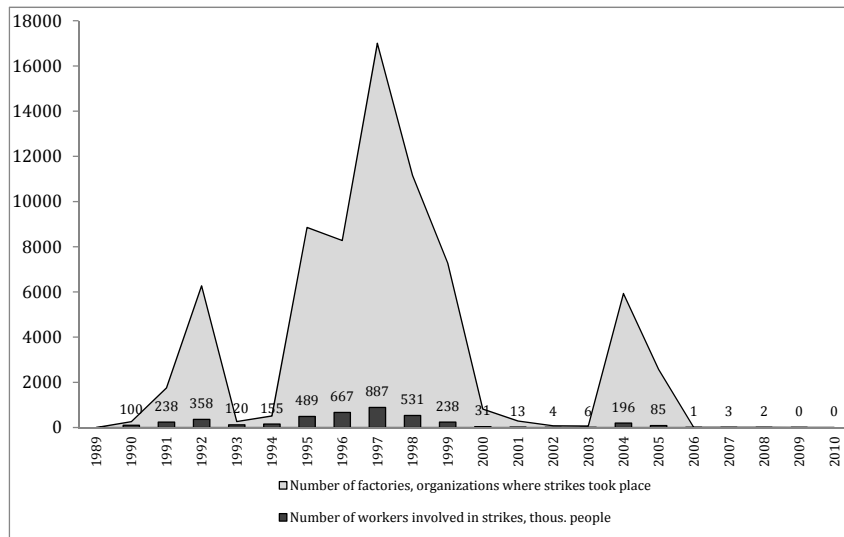


Fig. 1. The dynamics of the strike movement in 1989-2010, %

the period of social revolutions at the beginning of the 20th century (see Table 1). So, the percentage ratio of the number of striking workers compared to the general number of industrial workers in the Russian Empire in 1912-1913 (when the level of strike activity was not the highest registered) was

considerably higher, than in Ukraine and Russia in 1996 and 1997, which were the peak of strike activity. While at the beginning of the 20th century, the number of workers who took part in strikes was from one third to a half of the total number of industrial workers, at the end of the century it

Table 1. The ratio of participants of strikes in industry to the total number of workers employed in this branch of industry

Number of participants	The Russian Empire		Russia		Ukraine	
	1912	1913	1996	1997	1996	1997
Total number of workers employed in industry, thous. people	2163	2438	16366	14905	4642	4273
Number of workers who took part in strikes, thous. people	725,4	1272	365,6	184,3	114,3	63,2
The ration of participants of strikes to the total number of workers employed in industry, %	33,7	52,2	2,2	1,2	2,5	1,5

*Sources: (Voieikov, 2004: с. 29); Статистичний щорічник України за 1997 рік. – К., 1998. – С. 383.

was only 1.2-2.5 % (Voieikov, 2004). It is a rather indicative difference, fortifying the thesis about the weakness of labor/strike movement in the post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine.

One can compare the dynamics of the strike movement in Ukraine and Russia with other countries, using the data about the number of strikes beginning from 1971 on the Web site of ILO (International Labor Organization) (see Table 2). Among the countries with a traditionally low level of strike activity are – Norway, Sweden, Portugal, the USA, Canada. Among the countries with a traditionally high level of strike activity are – France, Italy, Japan. It is obvious that in all countries the level of strike movement is undulating—there are ups and downs, but a gradual reduction in the number of strikes can be registered in a 40-year perspective. The peak of labor protests fell on the 1970s, but from the 1990s labor protests have been attenuating. The corresponding data about the post-Soviet countries starting from 1989 can be found on the Web Site of ILO. Among the former republics of the USSR only Russia and Ukraine have a rich post-perestroika history of strikes, among the countries of the former CMEA – Poland. It is obvious that the peak of strike movement, which Western countries experienced in the 1970s, in the post-Soviet countries fell on the 1990s.

(Russia was the leader in the number of strikes: 17 thousand in 1997). In the 2000s the outbursts of protests occurred only in Poland and Russia.

So, the dynamics of labor movement in Ukraine and Russia has a strongly marked descending character, up to almost complete attenuation by the end of the 2000s. I will give my own explanation of the reasons for the demobilization of employees, pointing out seven reasons.

The reasons for the attenuation of strike movement

The first reason – and the most obvious one – **is the change of economic situation** in the 2000s, removal of acute economic problems, which stimulated strikes in the 1990s (see Table 1). For example, in Ukraine¹ in the middle of the 1990s *involuntary part-time employment* (working half-day and being on administrative leave) reached 25-40 %, but by the end of the 2000s it decreased to 6-15 %. *The level of unemployment* in the 1990s was 12 %, decreasing then to 8 % (which is the average level of unemployment in Western countries). The amount of *debt in wages* during this period diminished by 4-10 times. There was a progressive (though very slow) increase of the level of *nominal and real wages*. By the way, the analyzed period includes the stages from the total

Table 2. Dynamics of the number of strikes in different countries (1971–2008)

Year	Ukraine	Russia	Poland	Italy	Spain	Portugal	France	Great Britain	Finland	Norway	Sweden	Canada	The USA	Japan	South Korea	India	Australia
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1971	-	-	-	5598	549	-	4718	2228	838	10	60	569	-	2527	10	2752	2404
1972	-	-	-	4756	710	-	3464	2497	849	9	44	598	-	2497	-	3243	2298
1973	-	-	-	3769	731	-	3731	2873	1010	12	48	724	-	3326	-	3370	2538
1974	-	-	-	5174	2009	-	3381	2922	1795	13	85	1218	425	5211	58	2938	2809
1975	-	-	-	3601	2807	-	3888	2282	1530	22	86	1171	235	3391	52	1943	2432
1976	-	-	-	2706	3662	-	4348	2016	3199	34	73	1039	231	2720	49	1459	2055
1977	-	-	-	3308	1194	332	3281	2703	1633	15	35	803	298	1712	58	3117	2090
1978	-	-	-	2479	1128	333	3195	2471	1207	14	99	1058	219	1517	102	3187	2277
1979	-	-	-	2000	2680	370	3121	2080	1715	10	207	1050	235	1153	105	3048	2042
1980	-	-	-	2238	2103	269	2118	1330	2182	35	212	1028	187	1133	206	2856	2429
1981	-	-	-	2204	1993	602	2405	1338	1591	17	68	1048	145	955	186	2589	2915
1982	-	-	-	1747	1810	528	3113	1528	1212	12	46	677	96	944	88	2483	2060
1983	-	-	-	1565	1451	500	2837	1352	1919	9	92	645	81	893	98	2488	1787
1984	-	-	-	1816	1498	525	2537	1206	1679	21	206	716	62	596	114	2094	1965
1985	-	-	-	1341	1092	476	1901	903	833	11	160	829	54	627	265	1755	1895
1986	-	-	-	1469	914	365	1391	1078	1236	16	75	748	69	620	276	1892	1754
1987	-	-	-	1149	1497	213	1391	1016	791	10	72	668	46	474	3749	1799	1517
1988	-	-	-	1769	1193	181	1852	781	1327	15	144	548	40	498	1873	1743	1508
1989	222	-	894	1297	1047	307	2040	701	606	14	139	627	51	362	1616	1786	1402
1990	260	260	250	1094	1312	271	1750	630	450	15	126	579	44	284	322	1825	1193
1991	239	1755	305	791	1645	262	1572	369	270	4	23	463	40	310	234	1810	1036
1992	2239	6273	6351	903	1360	409	1494	253	165	16	20	404	35	263	235	1714	728
1993	462	265	7443	1054	1209	230	1472	211	125	12	33	381	35	252	144	1293	612
1994	1638	514	429	861	908	300	1671	205	171	20	13	374	45	230	121	1201	560
1995	247	8856	42	545	883	282	2066	235	112	11	36	328	31	209	88	1066	643

Continuation table 2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1996	1269	8278	21	904	830	274	1439	244	94	18	9	330	37	193	85	1166	543
1997	1162	17007	35	920	774	265	1607	216	91	6	14	284	29	178	87	1305	447
1998	687	11162	37	1103	632	227	1475	166	98	36	13	379	34	145	129	1097	520
1999	290	7285	920	753	749	200	2319	205	65	15	10	413	17	154	198	927	731
2000	73	817	44	966	750	250	2748	226	96	29	2	378	39	118	250	656	700
2001	31	291	11	746	737	208	2131	207	84	3	20	381	29	90	239	674	673
2002	97	80	1	616	688	250	1179	162	76	16	10	294	19	74	322	579	767
2003	15	67	24	710	678	170	1066	138	112	5	11	266	14	47	320	552	643
2004	4	5933	2	745	708	122	1125	135	84	12	9	297	17	51	462	447	692
2005	4	2575	8	654	685	126	-	116	365	2	14	260	22	50	287	456	472
2006	13	6	27	587	783	155	-	158	97	12	9	151	23	46	138	430	202
2007	5	7	1736	667	752	99	-	152	91	4	14	206	23	54	115	389	135
2008	1	4	12765	621	811	-	-	144	92	10	5	187	16	52	108	423	177

*Source: For international statistics on dynamics of strikes and description of methodology see Web site of ILO : [<http://laborsta.ilo.org/applv8/data/e9e.html>].

Table 3. The dynamics of factors influencing strike activity of the population of Ukraine (1991-2010)

Years	Number of factories, organizations where strikes took place	Unemployed		Involuntary part-time		Wages			
		According to the methodology of ILO, %	Officially registered, %	On administrative leave, %	Working half – day (half-week), %	Debt in wages, mln grvn	Nominal wages, grvn	Nominal wage in comparison to the previous year, %	Real wage in comparison to the previous year, %
1991	239	–	0,03	–	–	–	–	–	–
1992	2239	–	0,3	–	–	–	–	–	–
1993	485	–	0,3	–	–	–	–	–	–
1994	1638	–	0,4	21,2	6,4	–	–	–	–
1995	247	5,6	0,4	17,7	5,6	–	73	514,2	110,6
1996	1269	7,6	0,5	–	–	–	126	171,4	96,6
1997	1162	8,9	2,7	21,9	16,1	4189	143	113,7	96,6
1998	687	11,3	4,3	22,4	17,5	5166	154	107,2	96,2
1999	290	11,9	5,5	22,0	17,6	6519	178	115,7	91,1
2000	76	11,6	4,8	16,1	13,3	6401	230	129,6	99,1
2001	31	10,9	3,6	7,2	13,3	4928	311	135,2	119,2
2002	97	9,6	3,7	5,1	12,4	2657	376	121,0	118,2
2003	15	9,1	3,5	3,2	11,3	2548	462	122,8	115,2
2004	4	8,6	3,5	2,0	8,8	2232	590	127,5	123,8
2005	4	7,2	3,1	1,8	7,4	1111	806	136,7	120,3
2006	13	6,8	2,7	1,2	5,4	960	1042	129,2	118,3
2007	5	6,4	2,3	1,1	4,4	806	1351	129,7	112,5
2008	1	6,4	3,0	1,6	10,6	669	1806	133,7	106,3
2009	4	8,8	1,9	2,6	19,4	1189	1906	105,5	90,8
2010	3	8,1	2,0	3,4	13,6	1474	2239	120,0	110,2

Sources: Статистичний щорічник України за 2010 рік. – К., 2011. С. 397; Праця України у 2010. – К., 2010.

deficiency of food products and commodities in the 1990s to the abundance of products and relative prosperity in the 2000s. The data of Table 4 show a considerable growth in the supply of durable consumer goods to the population (cars, refrigerators, washing machines, TV sets, computers, mobile phones) in this period.

The positive dynamics of these goods was made possible both by the increase in real salaries and the mass granting of consumer credits after the year 2000 (the amount of consumer credits rose by 10 times). All these created a feeling of

increasing well-being in many people, which was evident in the growth in self-estimated material status. There is no doubt that the improvements in economic situation weakened protest moods and actions. Western sociologists acknowledge that the better people live, the less they are inclined to protesting.

Now I will move to other– less evident and less easily checkable empirically–explanations of decreasing in labor protests.

The second reason seems to be *legal regulation of strikes*. In 1998 the Law of Ukraine

Table 4. The dynamics of supply of some durable goods to the population of Ukraine (1985–2010), things on average per 100 households*

Years	Cars	Refrigerators, freezers	Washing machines	Color TVs	Video recorders	Music centers	Cameras	computers	Microwave ovens	Mobile phones	Self-estimation of the material standard of living of a family on a 10-point scale**
1985	14	88	65	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	
2000	17	94	74	69	13	3	22	1	1	–	2,7
2002	16	94	74	74	14	4	25	3	3	–	3,5
2004	16	96	74	83	17	8	30	6	5	15	3,7
2006	17	100	78	96	21	13	35	12	14	81	3,6
2008	20	108	84	107	21	17	38	22	29	149	3,8
2010	21	109	85	110	41	13	26	25	33	167	3,6

* Source: Статистичний щорічник України за 2010 рік. – К., 2011. – С. 417.

** Source: The data of monitoring of the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine.

“On the procedure of settlement of collective labor disputes (conflicts)” was adopted. This Act legally regulated a strike as a form of resolving labor conflicts², at the same time it brought complications to the procedure of starting it, which made a strike less popular among workers. At the present time the prescribed period for the procedure of starting a legal strike in Russia and Ukraine, in experts’ estimation, is not less than 40 days.

The third reason for weakening of labor protests is *the institutionalization of the social dialogue model in Russia and Ukraine*. This conception (aimed at ensuring the balance of interests of employees, employers and the state) was created as a substitute for the conception of class struggle and proved effective in many economically developed countries beginning from the 1960s. The model of social dialogue was implemented by the International Labor Organization and in post-Soviet countries: the National Service of Mediation and Reconciliation was created in Ukraine in 1998; in Russia a tripartite Council of Conciliation of Labor

Management Relations was created in 1991. It is declared that from this time on various disputable points between employees and employers at the national, regional and local levels are to be resolved within the framework of constructive talks (with the mediation of trade unions, representatives of the employer and government agencies), which allows to avoid strikes. According to the statistics of the Rosstat (Federal Statistic Service) and the State Statistic Committee of Ukraine on the collective labor disputes, it really works: most of the registered conflicts were resolved with the help of the National Service of Mediation and Reconciliation, and none as a result of a strike. However, there is no agreement among the experts in estimation of the realization of the social dialogue model in the post-Soviet countries. Further research is necessary to understand what the absence of strikes means—whether it is a reflection of the fact that institutionalized forms of settling of labor disputes in the 2000s are really effective. Or whether it is a sign of victory of the policy of employers and the state, that, enforcing the rules of game in resolving labor disputes,

profitable for employers, strengthen bureaucratic limitations for direct mobilization of workers, forcing them to the dialogue and agreement.

The fourth reason for the decline in the number of strikes is *the dynamics of the collective organization of the opposing classes*—employees and employers.

The trade unions in Ukraine and Russia in the 1990s were going through a crisis and were making attempts to come out of it. They were restructuring themselves, dividing into traditional and alternative, looking for a new ideology, gaining experience of bargaining with the employer about better conditions of selling workforce and were learning to constructively settle labor disputes, trying to turn into really independent structures of Western type. The successes and failures of trade unions in this period is a separate topic. Here we will only discuss the amount of trade union membership. At the present time it is difficult to adequately estimate these numbers, because information from official sources and data of sample surveys differ considerably. According to official data of The Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine, in 2009 the number of trade union members was 59 % from the total number of employed workers. The data of the international project ESS (and a number of other projects) estimate the number of trade union members as 20-22 % from the total number of workers; in Russia-16-18 % (see Table 5). It can be seen in Fig. 2 that such level of trade union membership is average in most European countries (17, 8 %).

Table 5 shows the dynamics of trade union membership from 1960. During the last 50 years trade union membership decreased by 1.5-2 times in most western countries such as France, the USA, Japan, Germany, Switzerland, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Austria. Some researchers ascribe the reasons for this downward process to the change in the structure of working

relationship in the “new economy” (increasing of the number of people, working half day/ half week, who are employed on temporary contracts, outsourcing etc, and, as a rule, not covered by trade unions). Others argue that despite global changes in the sphere of work, the trade unions in some countries—Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Canada, Italy—retained their status-quo or even became stronger, which is probably connected with the effectiveness of their real participation in protection of interests of workers, united by trade unions (Sobolev, 2009).

In Soviet period trade union membership in Ukraine and Russia was constantly increasing, reaching by the beginning of the 1990s the unthinkable for Western countries 99.5 % from the total number of employed workers. But later, because of sharp socio-economic transformations, trade union membership declined by more than a half (the same thing happened in Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic). Historians of trade union movement see the reasons for this process in the closure of many big enterprises, expansion in different kinds of unofficial employment (22 % of Ukrainians were employed in the unofficial sector in 2009), increase in the number of enterprises of private sector, where trade unions were not encouraged; disappointment with the activity of traditional trade unions, that turned out to be incapable of really protecting the economic and social interests of their members; division of industry-specific trade unions (such as , miners’ metal-workers’, railway employees’ trade unions) into traditional and independent in the process of strike movement. The trend of declining in trade union membership is the same in Western and post-Soviet countries, but the reasons for it are different.

In contrast to trade unions in Ukraine, which have a rich history, employers’ organizations started to appear only in the 1990s and at that time consisted chiefly of directors of large state-

Table 5. Trade union membership in Ukraine, Russia and some other countries of OECD in 1960–2008, %*

Country	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2008
Ukraine	44,3	74,1	80,4	90,5	97,8	98,8	97,5	50,2	30,4	22,4	19,8
Russia	–	–	–	90,2	98,0	98,8	98,5	60,3	29,9	17,9	15,5
All countries of OECD, including :	33,6	32,4	33,3	34,0	32,8	28,2	26,0	23,9	20,4	18,7	17,8
Poland	–	–	–	–	–	–	54,8	45,2	24,2	18,3	15,6
Hungary	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	49,1	21,7	17,5	16,8
Czech republic	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	46,3	29,5	21,5	20,2
Austria	67,9	66,2	62,8	59,0	56,7	51,6	46,9	41,1	36,6	33,6	28,9
Germany	34,7	32,9	32,0	34,6	34,9	37,7	31,2	29,2	24,6	21,6	19,1
France	19,6	19,5	21,7	22,2	18,3	13,6	10,3	8,9	8,1	7,8	7,7
Italy	24,7	25,5	37,0	48,0	49,6	42,5	38,8	38,1	34,8	33,6	33,4
Spain	–	–	–	–	–	10,2	12,5	16,3	16,7	15,0	14,3
Switzerland	36,1	32,8	28,9	32,3	27,7	24,9	22,7	22,9	20,8	19,4	18,3
The Netherlands	40,0	37,4	36,2	37,8	34,8	28,0	24,3	25,6	22,9	21,0	18,9
Norway	60,0	59,0	56,8	52,8	58,3	57,5	58,5	57,3	54,4	54,9	53,3
Sweden	72,1	66,3	67,7	74,5	78,0	81,3	80,0	83,1	79,1	86,5	68,3
Denmark	56,9	58,2	60,3	68,9	78,6	78,2	75,3	77,0	74,2	71,7	67,6
Great Britain	38,9	38,7	43,0	42,1	49,7	44,3	38,7	33,1	30,2	28,4	27,1
Canada	29,2	26,7	31,0	34,3	34,0	35,3	34,0	33,7	28,3	27,7	27,1
The USA	30,9	28,2	27,4	25,3	22,1	17,4	15,5	14,3	12,8	12,0	11,9
Japan	32,3	35,3	35,1	34,5	31,1	28,8	25,4	24,0	21,5	18,8	18,2

*Sources: The data of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=U_D_D. The data on Ukraine and Russia 2005 and 2008 are extracted from the project ESS.

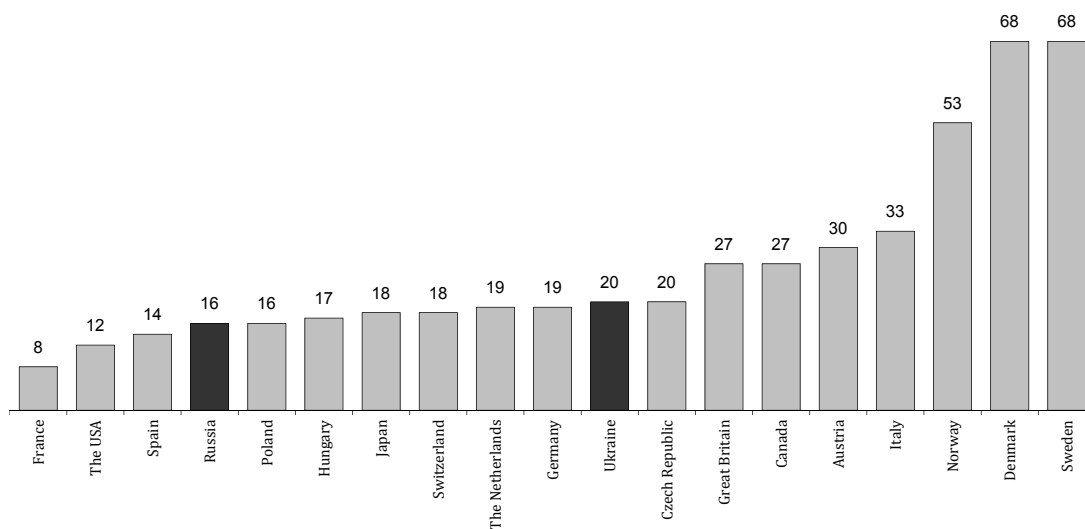


Fig. 2. Trade union membership in Russia and Ukraine and some OECD countries in 2008, %

owned enterprises. Beginning from the 2000s, a considerable growth of unions of large employers (now mainly private owners) have been taking place; in 2012 Federation of employers' of Ukraine claimed to unite 70 % of employers. By the way, the same trend exists in Western countries: the class of employers is better united than the class of employees (Suchasnyi stan, 2003). While trade unions unite on average 18 % of employed workers, organizations of employers unite 60 % of employers; small and medium-sized businesses estimate the level of trade union membership as 7-10 % (see Fig. 3). Besides having considerably bigger power and economic resources, in comparison to employees, employers are better organized, which makes it easier for them to protect their class rights.

Political parties are another instrument for protection of class rights. According to monitoring data of the Institute of Sociology of National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the level of membership in political parties has considerably increased from 0.6 % in 1994 to 3.5 % in 2010. It can be estimated as rather low as compared to the Soviet past (when 11.3 % of employed population of Ukraine were members of CPSU), and, at the same time, as average European (according to

the data of the international project ESS 2008, membership in political parties in post-Soviet and capitalist countries does not exceed 4 %) (see Fig. 4). Thus, the levels of membership in trade unions and political parties are similar in Western and post-Soviet countries. The tendencies of reduction in influence of these organizations on social processes are similar, too.

The fifth reason the for the decline of labor movement is *changes in the workplace*, leaving less space for traditional collective protest action and, at the same time, expanding the opportunity for individualized protection. Among the most important changes are *sectoral shifts*. The trend in Ukraine in 1990-2010 has been the decline in employment in the sectors where people work in large industrial collectives (by two times – in industry; by one and a half – in building, by five times – in agriculture), and increase in the sectors, dominated by small and medium-sized enterprises and self-employment (almost by five times in trade and service sector, by two times in restaurant and hotel, and financial sectors). The latter are characterized by more individualized work which demands work flexibility, outsourcing, and regulation on the basis of temporary or individual labor contracts. Shifting

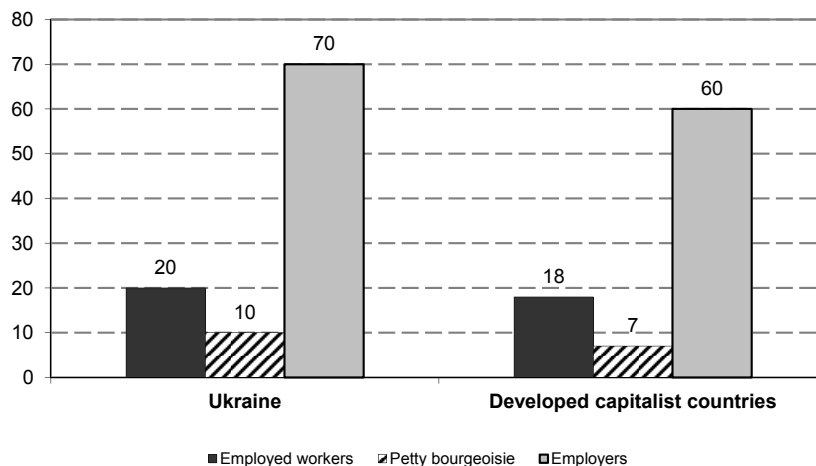


Fig. 3. Level of integration into class organizations in different countries, %

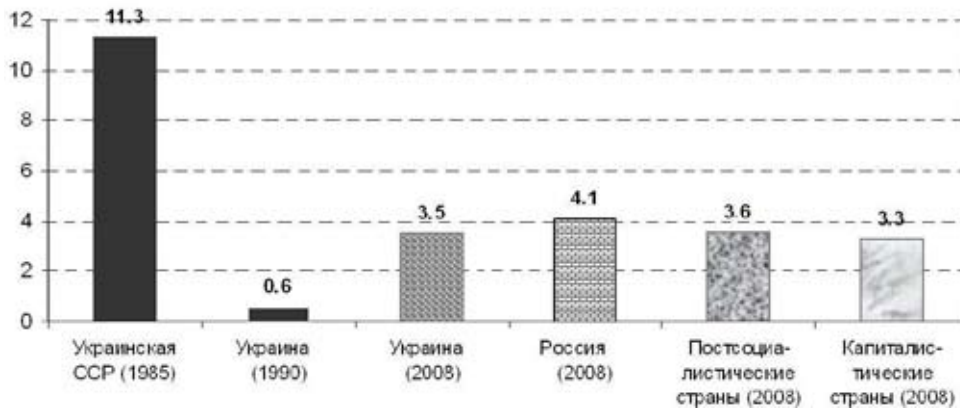


Fig. 4. Level of membership in political parties, %

of employment from state to private sector is an influential factor (in Ukraine the ratio of workers employed in state and private sectors changed from 9:1 in 1994 to 1:1.2 in 2010), because in the private sector individual contracts are usual and trade unions were not encouraged. The spread of unofficial employment, the level of which was 23 % in Ukraine in 2010, has a considerable influence, too. Not having official labor contracts, employees are devoid of the possibility of overt protection of their interests. All these changes of labor relations lead to the formation of the *prekariat* (instead of the *proletariat*)—a class of employed workers involved into unstable, unofficial, flexible labor relations. It is considered that such work relations do not provide a stable ground for class unification and mobilization.

The sixth reason for the demobilization of employees is *diversification of social protection*. In the 1990s strikes and appeals to trade unions were the most effective and popular ways of resolving labor disputes. From the 2000s there has been observed a tendency to diversification of forms and subjects, protecting the interests of workers and participating in regulation of conditions of employment and wages. These functions are carried out more and more

effectively (winning the trust of workers) by such institutions as the courts, state regulating bodies, the system of individual employment contracts. This process is called “diversification of social protection” (Sobolev, 2009: c. 169). The fact that trade unions are losing their role of a universal mechanism for social protection is a worldwide tendency. At the same time, *appealing to court* is becoming a fairly widely used channel for social protection. Although the detailed court statistics, concerning labor disputes, is not at the author’s disposal, I will present the data of the State Statistic Committee of Ukraine about the number of cases of reinstatement of employment, payment of wages, reparation of damages to enterprises and organizations, reviewed in the courts of first instance. (see Table 6). At present, labor disputes connected with payment of wages are most widespread. It is obvious that the outburst in the number of statements of claim to courts about payment of wages is connected with the legal strengthening of administrative responsibility of the heads of enterprises.

The seventh reason (connected with allowances for the specifics of statistical instruments) is *a change in the methodology of fixation of strikes*. In the 1990s official statistics

Table 6. The dynamics of the number of statements of claim, reviewed by courts of first instance in civil proceedings in Ukraine, thous.*

<i>Kind of claim</i>	<i>1985</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2010</i>
Reinstatement of employment	3,4	3,8	3,6	5,5	3,8	4,4
Payment of wages	0,8	1,1	0,9	237,6	56,0	18,7
Reparation of damages caused by workers to a state enterprise, organization.	19,9	9,8	1,8	1,8	0,7	0,7

*Sources: Статистичний щорічник України за 2001 рік. – К., 2002. – С. 521; Статистичний щорічник України за 2010 рік. – К., 2011. – С. 503.

counted all strikes, but from the year 2000 the strikes carried out without the compliance regulated in the Law of procedure (“illegal”) and nonstandard forms of strikes (work-to-rule, piquets) are recorded. So, the official data are considered understated. Recently there have appeared some organizations which carry out an alternative record of labor protests (Protesty, 2011; Biziukov, 2010). Nevertheless, this, to my mind, cannot significantly change our opinion about the general decline of strike mobilization and the trends of change.

Conclusion

I will formulate several conclusions based on the data obtained. During the last two decades, the following tendencies in the development of labor movement in post-Soviet countries have become obvious: a considerable decline in the number of strikes and trade union membership, change in the forms of resolving labor conflicts from spontaneous to more and more institutionalized, weakening of the importance of a traditional strike and, at the same time, realization of various alternative forms of mobilization (from Italian strike to Internet-maidan of workers of informational sector, who are organized in net protest communities), diversification of social protection, narrowing of space for collective actions for protecting class interests, resulting from individualization of labor.

The described tendencies of the dynamics of labor movement are similar to those that took place in the developed capitalist countries, but they happened several decades later. For example, the peak of strikes which the Western countries experienced in the 1970s occurred in the post-Soviet countries in the 1990s. The similarity can also be seen in the fact that, while the trade unions and labor movement are considered to be weak social actors, the mobilization potential of employers is gaining strength (one of the evidences for which is the increase in the number of employers united in associations). Post-Soviet countries also copy the Western mechanisms for ensuring class agreement (in the form of the tripartite social dialogue model. Yet, the forms of realization of this model, in experts’ opinion, do not reach their aim, but rather demobilize employees in their search for more effective ways of resolving labor conflicts, making these conflicts latent. A high level of protest moods among different groups of employed and self-employed workers, as well as the absence of powerful class organizations and visible, real actions to protect their interests, is the evidence that class and labor conflicts do not find their resolution in Russia and Ukraine. However, it is impossible to foretell how far it is from latent protest attitudes to class mobilization and solidarity on a national scale. What class will be in the vanguard of class protests? What positive program of social change

will it offer? Sociologists must monitor these processes.

Different groups of employees and their organizations have shown that they are able to protect their interests and rights, but their collective experience, to my mind, has some drawbacks. For example, the reasons for their protests have so far been different aspects of their struggle for survival and right to labor, but not demands for massive social improvement of life standard, work conditions and wages. Employee's protests are mainly aimed at solution of a concrete

problem situation, but not at a systematic prolonged challenge of the dominating position of the administrative authorities. Workers are not inclined to class solidarity—occasions when strikers were supported by workers of another sector or a neighboring factory are rare. The enumerated reasons give ground for subscribing to the conclusions of a number of researches, that labor movement "today does not reach the level of social-political force which is able to affect the course of major social reforms" (Voieikov, 2004: c. 25).

¹ For the corresponding data for Russia see: (Kozina, 2009).

² In Russia it was legalized in the new Labor Code of 2002, Ukraine has not adopted a similar document yet.

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Рабочее движение в Украине и России: динамика, причины, стратегии защиты классовых интересов (итоги 1989–2010 годов)

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Изучение динамики рабочего движения в Украине и России и причин снижения забастовочной мобилизации наемных работников предпринято на основании данных официальной статистики и международных социологических проектов. Динамика количества забастовок и их участников с 1989 по 2010 год свидетельствует, что в течение двух десятилетий забастовочное движение было крайне неравномерным: если в 1990-е оно носило интенсивный и волнообразный характер, то в 2000-е наблюдался тренд к его затуханию.

При объяснении снижения числа забастовок в 2000-е годы в постсоветских Украине и России выявлено семь причин: 1) улучшение экономической конъюнктуры (повышение заработной платы, урегулирование своевременности ее выплаты, снижение уровня безработицы и вынужденной неполной занятости); 2) законодательное урегулирование правил проведения забастовок, приведшее к усложнению процедуры ее начала; 3) институционализация модели социального партнерства; 4) изменения в сфере труда, детерминирующие сужение пространства для коллективных протестных действий и классовой солидарности и одновременно расширение зоны индивидуализированных форм социальной защиты; 5) перемены в коллективной организации противостоящих классов – снижение численности и влияния профсоюзов и, напротив, усиление организаций работодателей; 6) диверсификация социальной защиты (ее субъектами, помимо профсоюзов, стали суды, органы государственного контроля, система индивидуальных договоров); 7) изменение методики фиксации забастовочной активности, где официальной статистикой теперь не учитываются забастовки, проводимые без соблюдения прописанных процедур.

Рабочее движение в России и Украине и развитых западных странах имело подобные тенденции: оно характеризовалось неравномерностью (периодические подъемы и спады; причем, пик трудовых протестов, который западные страны прошли в 1970-е годы, в постсоветских пришелся на 1990-е), мотивированностью преимущественно экономическими лозунгами, переходом от форм прямой мобилизации коллективных действий к институционализированным.

Ключевые слова: рабочее движение, забастовка, профсоюзы, политические партии.
