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## OUTSOURCE PROCESSING UNDER STAFF SHORTAGE

*During the war, Ukraine has faced numerous challenges, one of the most threatening of which is the personnel shortage. The full-scale war caused large-scale labor migration, a significant number of the able-bodied population was mobilized into the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and this became an important factor that led to a shortage of qualified workers. For many economic entities, this situation becomes critical and requires immediate and effective solutions to ensure stable work. One such solution is outsourced processing which is the transfer of certain business processes to external companies that have the necessary resources and expertise. Insufficient research on outsourcing causes a low level of business awareness of its strategic effectiveness. It is hypothesized that the use of outsourced processing is an effective adaptive solution to overcome the personnel shortage in the war in Ukraine, which will enable business entities to optimize costs, ensure continuity and flexibility of activity, and attract highly qualified specialists. The research was carried out using the methods of analysis, comparison, systematization, empirical studies and case studies, as well as horizon scanning and logical modeling. The challenges of outsourced processing in the conditions of war are analyzed, examples of its successful application in conditions of personnel shortage are provided. The conducted studies form scientifically based approaches to determining the directions of integration of outsourced processing in the activities of business entities. The concept of outsourced processing is based on the quality selection of the outsourcer and its establishment of effective partnership relations; creates*

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## АУТСОРС-ПРОЦЕСИНГ В УМОВАХ КАДРОВОГО ДЕФІЦИТУ

*За воєнного часу Україна стикається з численними викликами, серед яких одним з найзагрозливіших є кадровий дефіцит. Повномасштабна війна спричинила масштабну трудову міграцію, значна кількість працездатного населення мобілізована до лав Збройних сил України, і це стало важливим чинником, що зумовило нестачу кваліфікованих працівників. Для багатьох економічних суб'єктів ця ситуація стає критичною й потребує негайних та ефективних рішень для забезпечення стабільної роботи. Одним з таких рішень є аутсорс-процесинг – передача певних бізнес-процесів зовнішнім компаніям, які мають необхідні ресурси та експертизу. Недостатнє дослідження аутсорсингу спричиняє низький рівень обізнаності бізнесу у його стратегічній ефективності. Висунуто гіпотезу, що застосування аутсорс-процесингу є ефективним адаптаційним рішенням для подолання кадрового дефіциту в умовах війни в Україні, що дасть змогу суб'єктам бізнесу оптимізувати витрати, забезпечити безперервність і гнучкість діяльності, залучити висококваліфікованих спеціалістів. Дослідження виконано з використанням методів аналізу, порівняння, систематизації, емпіричних досліджень та кейс-стаді, а також сканування горизонту й логічного моделювання. Проаналізовано виклики аутсорс-процесингу в умовах війни, надано приклади успішного його застосування в умовах кадрового дефіциту. Проведені дослідження формують науково обґрунтовані підходи до визначення напрямів інтеграції аутсорс-процесингу в діяльність суб'єктів бізнесу. Концепція аутсорс-процесингу базується на якісному виборі аутсорсера та встановленні ним ефективних*



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*advantages in innovativeness and flexibility of business; creates conditions for optimizing time, effort and resources; makes it possible to attract the physical and intellectual potential of external companies, in particular to cover the shortage of personnel.*

*Keywords:* outsourcing, outsource-strategy, personnel management, business innovations, communication, scanning the horizon

*партнерських відносин; формує переваги в інноваційності та гнучкості бізнесу; створює умови для оптимізації витрат часу, зусиль та ресурсів; дає змогу залучати фізичний та інтелектуальний потенціал зовнішніх компаній, зокрема для покриття дефіциту кадрів.*

*Ключові слова:* аутсорсинг, аутсорс-стратегія, управління персоналом, інновації в бізнесі, комунікації, сканування горизонту

**JEL Classification:** M12, M54, L22, L83, H56, O31.

### Introduction

The large-scale mobilization and migration of the population caused by the war in Ukraine aggravated the problem of outflow and shortage of personnel and, as a result, the lack of competent personnel in all spheres of the economy, which necessitates the search for effective management approaches. Due to the development of digital technologies, "personnel hunger" is covered by the remote work of personnel and the use of artificial intelligence in certain operational cycles. An effective solution to overcoming military challenges is also the implementation of outsourced processing, which allows you to delegate part of the company's internal functions or processes to external performers. Focusing on the main business goals and competencies, reducing costs, covering the insufficiency of own resources and capacities, increasing efficiency and gaining access to external knowledge and technologies are the key advantages of its application. Therefore, the analysis of the current situation and the development of outsourced strategies for overcoming trend challenges by Ukrainian companies are relevant areas of research.

The concept of outsourced processing has many vectors aimed at different types of business processes that are delegated to other business entities and form certain efficiencies: saving efforts and resources on processes, using more professional competencies and quality work (quality service), concentration on the main goals and transfer of secondary functions to individual performers. Therefore, the attention of scientists and businesses to outsourcing in recent years is quite understandable, in particular in the difficult conditions of martial law in Ukraine.

Quite a lot of works are devoted to the study of outsourcing, which focuses on the justification of concepts and practical approaches. Regarding the theoretical aspects, scientific views are focused on the study of types of outsourcing: public institutions and services, IT outsourcing, logistics outsourcing, HR outsourcing, etc. Accordingly, scientists Sokolyuk & Lyashenko (2020) paid attention to the study of the determinants and causes of logistics outsourcing, from the point of view of Ukrainian manufacturing companies, who stated the optimality of a mixed system that combines the use of own and third-party capacities, mostly for Ukrainian manufacturing companies. The works

of Morphet (2021) with the characteristics of the outsourcing of central public services, their features and advantages are also decisive in this perspective. Hansen (2023) studied the impact of outsourcing on staff effectiveness. Interestingly, he compared the results for outsourced workers and civil servants in similar positions and concluded that outsourcing has significant adverse effects: it causes low engagement and high levels of employee burnout.

In turn, the practical approvals of outsourcing are considered in the article by Oakie (2021) in the context of assessing the expediency of partnerships with outsourcers, the features of concluding agreements and forming an outsourcing strategy. The author recommends using outsourcing at all stages of strategic development as a means of joint (company and outsourcer) strengthening of weaknesses and use of strengths. Management approaches are analyzed in the publication of Markina et al. (2020), which substantiates the theoretical and methodological foundations of outsourcing as one of the most promising areas of resource-saving development of agri-food enterprises. Disadvantages and risks, as well as areas of application of outsourcing in banking are described in the article by Kogut et al. (2023). It is worth noting the study of outsourcing in business practice as an element of a complex business system from the point of view of systems theory and graph theory, interpreted by Ustimenko & Prokhorenko (2023). Scientists have described the complex organization of business with the aim of sustainable and long-term increase of its fundamental value thanks to two types of graphs: material and information flows, at the tops of which information processing and management decision-making processes are carried out.

Analytical studies by Landay & DeArmond (2018) dedicated to the outsourcing of specific tasks and personnel processes are valuable for researching aspects of the application of outsourcing processing in conditions of personnel shortage. The authors note that the lack of work effort caused by personnel turnover due to numerous absenteeism, sick days and vacations, non-compliance with established deadlines, causes the need for the substitution of certain operational functions of personnel. We also find useful insights in the writings of Budyakova (2020), which presents an analysis of the legal, economic, and organizational advantages and disadvantages of personnel outsourcing; and Hadetska (2020), where the volume of the Ukrainian outsourcing services market is analyzed, the types and directions of application of various outsourcing services by enterprises in Ukraine are determined, and the advantages and disadvantages of HR outsourcing integrations are argued.

As the analysis of the sources showed verified data on the loss of personnel potential in Ukraine in terms of certain factors and in general are practically absent. In turn, available scientific research on outsourcing processing has formed a theoretical basis; however, certain provisions require rethinking taking into account the realities of the growing shortage of

personnel under the threat of escalation of hostilities. In addition, the digital aspects of relations in the field of outsourcing need a new look, which strengthens the scientific and practical value of the mentioned research topic.

The aim of this article is to determine the effectiveness of outsourced processing as a tool for overcoming the personnel shortage during wartime in Ukraine. At the same time, the key tasks are the analysis of the impact of military operations on the personnel situation in Ukrainian companies, examples of the successful use of outsourcing processing by Ukrainian business entities in various industries; as well as the main advantages and challenges that companies face when implementing outsourcing solutions; as well as the formation of practical recommendations for business regarding the effective implementation of outsourcing processing in conditions of personnel shortage.

It is hypothesized that outsourcing processing is an effective solution in the most difficult conditions of war and personnel shortage. The methodology of its confirmation was the operationalization of information sources through analytical tools and scientific research methods.

The information base of the research is scientific literature on outsourcing, personnel management, and online platforms of companies.

In the process of developing theoretical material, general scientific methods were applied, in particular analysis (comparative analysis to determine the definition of "outsourcing") and synthesis of theoretical assumptions and findings. Thanks to the method of comparison and systematization, the advantages of outsourcing integration into business processes, which have been successfully tested by Ukrainian business entities, have been formulated. The horizon scanning method helped identify trends in the development of outsourcing and demonstrated positive prospects for its integration to overcome the shortage of personnel in the war and post-war periods; the modeling method was used to interpret the main stages of outsourcing strategy formation, as well as to build a road map for domestic business structures to overcome the "personnel famine" during the war.

The scientific novelty consists in the development of the concepts of "outsourced processing" and "outsourced strategy", as well as the modeling of a roadmap for the integration of outsourced services into the business processes of economic entities, which will allow covering the "personnel shortage" in Ukraine.

Limitations in the research are the lack of reliable data on the loss of personnel potential in Ukraine in terms of certain factors and in general. In the perspective of future research, it is planned to consider the compilation of outsourcing and design management as a symbiotic model of personnel management of Ukrainian companies. This will make it possible to create an innovative approach to anti-crisis management, taking into account modern aspects of overcoming psychological and physical exhaustion, shortage of competent personnel and other problems.

The content structure of the main part of the article consists of four sections: the first describes the causes of personnel shortages in wartime conditions; the second one interprets the theoretical basis of the research and determines the role of outsourcing in overcoming "personnel hunger"; the third argues the advantages of outsourcing for business; the fourth chapter provides practical insights into the implementation of the outsourcing strategy in the business processes of Ukrainian business entities.

### **1. Reasons for personnel shortage in wartime conditions**

In wartime conditions, personnel shortages become a serious problem for many sectors of the economy, so analyzing the causes and finding effective tools for attracting and managing personnel is an important step to overcome this challenge. In order to understand in more detail the justification of directions for solving personnel problems, it is worth determining the key reasons for the shortage of labor in the labor market of Ukraine in modern conditions (*Table 1*).

*Table 1*

Reasons for personnel shortage in Ukraine in the war time frame

Factor	Characteristics
Mobilization of the population	Military operations lead to the mobilization of a significant part of the working population, which reduces the number of available workers for the civilian economy
Migration	Many people are forced to leave their places of residence due to hostilities, military threats and military evasion, which leads to a significant reduction in labor resources
Fatal losses	Irreversible loss of a significant portion of the country's labor potential
Psychological factors	Stress, anxiety and uncertainty have a negative impact on the performance and motivation of employees
Economic instability	It reduces the attractiveness of work in certain economic sectors and administrative regions
Destruction of infrastructure	The destruction of the production capacities of business entities and infrastructure objects makes it difficult for people to return to work
Problems in the educational environment	Stoppages of educational processes, distancing of communications and a decrease in the quality of control over the development of educational components reduce the number and professional level of new specialists
Gaps in traditionally male professions	Mobilization causes downtime and stoppages in business, in particular, the problem of ensuring the functioning of critical infrastructures and strategically important sectors of the economy is urgent

*Source:* compiled by the author.

Today in Ukraine, the need for security and resistance to military invasion is extremely acute. Therefore, due to the mobilization that began in 2014 and intensified in 2022 with the start of a full-scale war, the country is losing a significant share of the economically active population, its physical and intellectual potential. The exact number of mobilized and dead

servicemen is not made public for security reasons, but every year the front needs a significant number of defenders. In addition, according to business estimates, the shortage of personnel in Ukraine has already reached almost 40% (Lytvyn, 2024).

One should also take into account the significant migration flows since the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Russia, which causes threatening prospects for the labor market in Ukraine. Thus, as of February 1, 2022, the number of available population (excluding Crimea AR) was 41.1 million people (State Statistics, 2022). According to the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the population of Ukraine in 2023 was 36.74 million people (UN, n.d.). At the same time, over 7.8 million border crossings by Ukrainians were recorded in the first 4 months of 2024 (Opendatobot, 2024), of which 1.5% did not return to Ukraine (VU, 2024). Arithmetic calculations show a decrease in the population by 4.477 million people, or about 10.9%. Despite the fact that there are about 11.7 million economically active people, but approximately 9–9.3 million of them actually work (Ukrinform, 2023), the losses of the economic potential of the Ukrainian labor market are significant and demonstrate negative forecasts and expectations.

Thus, the above calculations demonstrated the deepening of the crisis in the labor market, which causes the need to find and involve new approaches to human resource management in Ukrainian companies, capable of overcoming the problem of personnel outflow and attracting new personnel prospects, in particular through the integration of outsourced processing into the operational activities and processes.

## **2. The role of outsource- processing in overcoming staff shortages**

Outsourcing takes many forms and can include various business processes, from manufacturing to IT services and human resource management. Comparativistics of scientific sources demonstrates several approaches to determining the definition:

- the company's strategic decision to reduce costs and increase efficiency by hiring another person or company to perform tasks, provide services, or perform operations that were previously performed by employees within the company (Markina et al., 2020; Oakie, 2021; Kogut et al., 2023; CFI, 2024);
- the business practice of hiring a third-party company to provide services or create goods that were traditionally provided by the company's own employees and personnel (Morphet, 2021; Ustymenko & Prokhorenko, 2023; Twin, n. d.);
- business practice, when the company hires a third party to perform tasks, operations or provide services (Gadetska, 2020; Budyakova, 2020);
- an agreement under which one company hires another company to be responsible for a planned or existing activity that is performed or may be

performed internally (Jasińska, 2018; Sokolyuk & Lyashenko, 2020; Inbound Logistics, 2023).

As we can see from the considered approaches, outsourcing is a contractual business practice of hiring external organizations or individuals (the outsourcer) to perform certain tasks, manage certain values (products, resources, knowledge), provide services or manage operations in order to save money, time and achieving efficiency (productivity) of the business entity (client) (author’s interpretation).

Outsourcing can relate to both simple administrative tasks (such as data entry) and complex projects such as the design and management of facilities, networks, order processing and sales organization, etc. The use of outsourcing by a business entity initiates the implementation of outsourced processing – a complex of analytical and production operations, service products, delegated for execution to professional outsourcers, which helps to focus the management of the client company on its core competencies, optimize costs, increase the quality and efficiency of work, as well as creates opportunities to use the expertise and resources of outsourcers (author’s interpretation).

From the above, it can be concluded that the concept of outsourced processing is based on the formation of relations between the supplier (outsourcer) and the client. The key aspects here are the client company’s need for certain services and the outsourcer’s offer to provide such service products/services through its own capabilities and competencies. Accordingly, the value creation potential of outsourcing relations constitutes the target orientations of the contractual relations between the supplier and the client (*Figure 1*).

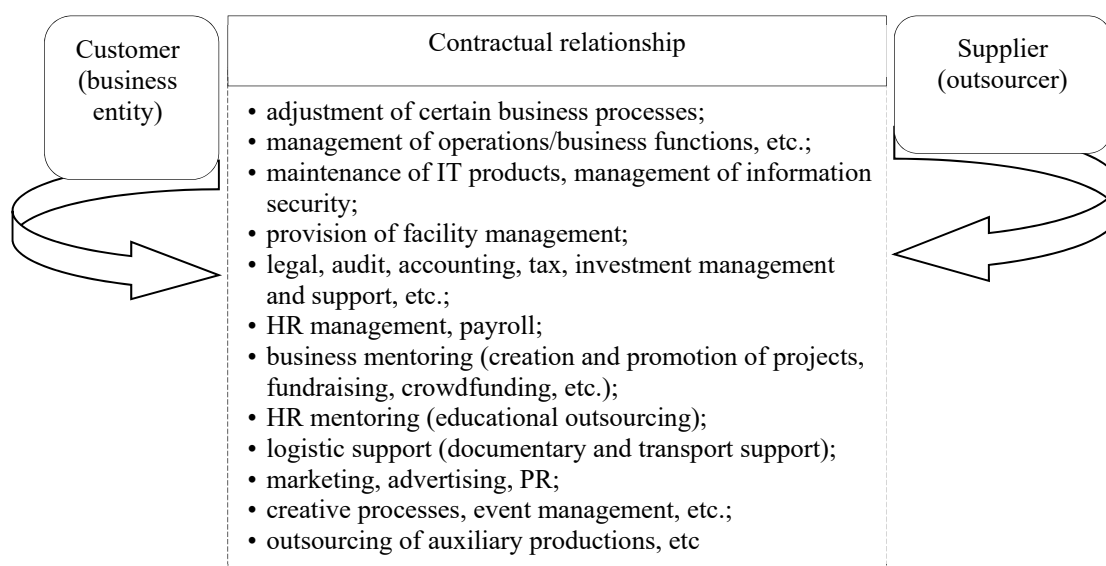


Figure 1. Main components of outsourcing relationships

Source: compiled by the author according to (Solli-Sæther & Gottschalk, 2010; Inbound Logistics, 2023).

The determinant that forms the value proposition of outsourcing is the characteristic of the business entity (client) and its understanding of the processes of managing resources/operations that it does not own. The second factor is the outsourcer's own capabilities (external contractor or third-party supplier of personnel/material and technical support). The formalization of their interaction is a contract (contract) containing the subject and conditions, as well as the coordination of interests.

One of the aspects worth paying attention to is staff outsourcing (Staff Outsourcing or Employee Outsourcing), a practice in which a company transfers the management of its human resources to an external provider. This type of outsourcing will include the hiring of temporary workers, contract management, payroll processing, recruiting, and other HR functions (*Table 2*).

*Table 2*

Concepts of personnel outsourcing

Concept	Characteristics
Temporary Staffing	Hiring temporary workers for short-term or seasonal assignments to cover peak business periods, holiday seasons, etc.
Permanent Staffing	Outsourcing of recruiting services to fill vacant positions (permanent employees)
Workforce Management	Delegation of HR management, including work scheduling, vacation accounting, performance management, etc
Payroll Outsourcing	Payroll processing outsourcing to ensure payment accuracy and compliance with legislation
Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO)	Using RPO to attract candidates, conduct interviews, and select the best candidates

*Source:* Compiled by author from (Half, 2024; ManpowerGroup, 2024; ADP, n.d.; Davis, 2024).

Despite the attractiveness of using personnel outsourcing, it is worth noting possible challenges that the business entity needs to solve independently:

*quality control:* in particular, compliance with corporate culture and quality standards when outsourcing management;

*communication barriers:* possible difficulties in interaction with external service providers;

*data privacy and cyber security:* ensuring the protection of personal data of employees.

Therefore, when making a decision to implement outsourced processing, it is worth considering the benefits and risks for the company and the possible impact on the company's brand.

So, outsourced processing is potentially able to fill the gaps in the staffing of Ukrainian business for the considered business processes and operations. However, one should be aware that the implementation of outsourced processing may also carry certain risks for users of outsourced services. First, the loss of control over key processes can lead to a decrease in the quality of services or products, which will negatively affect the reputation of the user company. Second, reliance on an outsourcer increases the risk of data privacy loss, as well as financial instability if the outsourcer runs into trouble. Third, the user company's fear of losing unique knowledge or competencies that



may be critical to its competitiveness. Therefore, it is likely that some entrepreneurs will avoid outsourcing processing because of these risks.

### **3. Benefits of outsource – processing under martial law**

The war is depleting Ukraine's material, financial, and human resources. Accordingly, during the war period, the main tasks are focused on ensuring the stable functioning of the state and business in conditions of increased risks and restrictions. Among such tasks, adaptation to the regime of air alerts, curfews, blackouts, as well as the prompt restoration of infrastructure and the minimization of damage caused by Russia's military aggression are of primary importance. The problem of staff shortages is already apparent, but mostly concerns temporary and critical needs related to security and business continuity. However, it acquires new dimensions and features in the post-war period.

It is predicted that in the post-war period, long-term recovery problems will become key, where the lack of personnel necessary for the full restoration of production capacities and social relations will come to the fore. Added to this is the need for adaptation and rehabilitation of demobilized workers, many of whom may require special rehabilitation and compensatory measures to return to professional life.

Outsourcing in this sense can be particularly useful and creates certain advantages for business and government structures in certain aspects.

**Business continuity.** Outsourcing enables companies to maintain operational continuity even in difficult conditions. Hostilities can affect local businesses, causing disruptions. Transferring part of the functions to external organizations helps to avoid a stoppage of activity.

**Cost reduction.** During a war, costs can increase due to the destruction of infrastructure, increased resource prices, etc. Outsourcing helps reduce personnel, equipment and other operating costs because external suppliers can offer more competitive prices.

**Flexibility and adaptability.** Outsourcing allows companies to quickly adapt to new conditions and requirements. External providers can quickly scale their services according to business needs, which is especially important in times of war when the situation can change rapidly.

**Access to specialized resources and knowledge.** In wartime, difficulties may arise with qualified personnel and the development of resources. Outsourcing provides access to specialized knowledge and technology that may not be available domestically.

**Risk reduction.** Outsourcing helps spread the risks associated with doing business in wartime. Companies can avoid direct losses due to destruction of property or infrastructure by delegating some operations to external organizations located in safer regions and locations.

**Focus on core business competencies.** Outsourcing enables companies to focus on their core competencies and strategic tasks by delegating support functions to external specialists. It helps to increase efficiency and productivity in crisis conditions.

For a clearer understanding of the practical implementation of the benefits of outsourcing processing, it is worth investigating the key aspects of outsourcing to determine the main trends and perspectives of outsourcing processing. For this purpose, we will apply the method of scanning the horizon, which involves a systematic study of potential events and their consequences (*Table 3*).

*Table 3*

Scanning the horizon for outsourced processing prospects

Key aspects	Scanning the horizon	Drivers
The global COVID-19 pandemic, distancing relations	Pandemic and post-pandemic period: the pandemic has forced many companies to switch to remote work, which has led to an increase in demand for outsourcing IT services and customer service. Increasing demand for flexibility and adaptability	The need for flexibility, information security and adaptation to new conditions
Analysis of current labor market trends	Wartime Outsourcing Trends: - increase in demand for outsourcing of all types due to shortage of personnel; - increased attention to socially responsible outsourcing that implements social initiatives, environmental sustainability and energy efficiency	security policy, remote work, physical security, cyber security, business relocation, ensuring business continuity and sustainable development
Development of information technologies and communications, labor market tools	Global outsourcing trends: - integration with new technologies and social requirements of the modern world (digitalization and automation, inclusive outsourcing, robotic process automation (RPA) and cloud services are becoming an integral part of many outsourcing contracts); - global distributed workforce; - outsourcing based on results (pay-for-result models, focusing on key competencies); - personalization of services, creation of personalized products	Development of technologies and communications, creation of jobs for vulnerable population groups and compliance with ethical standards, price advantages, qualified workforce, need to focus on core activities, optimization of business processes
Internationalization of the business environment and changes in business models and the structure of the labor market	Predicative trends of post-war outsourcing in Ukraine: further development of outsourcing is expected thanks to: - attracting international outsourcing partners to rebuild businesses and the economy as a whole; - recruitment of personnel from other countries (personnel outsourcing); - growing importance of sustainable development and social responsibility, inclusiveness of services	Infrastructure restoration, social rehabilitation, economic transformation and investment boom, international integration, changes in market conditions, regulatory requirements
Adaptation of business to the new realities of the world economy, technological progress and changes in the rights and expectations of employees	Predictive global outsourcing trends: further development of outsourcing is expected thanks to: - integration of artificial intelligence, automation and blockchain technologies; - growing demand for specialized services (niche outsourcing, focus on quality, not just cost); - growing importance of sustainable development and social responsibility, inclusiveness of services; - adaptability and flexibility (flexible work methods, flexible contracts)	Sustainable development, automation, personalization of services, cyber security, changes in market conditions, regulatory requirements

*Source:* compiled by the author according to (Mazaraki et al., 2022; Shields, et al., 2022; Mederos, 2021; Galal et al., 2012).

As we can see from *Table 3*, businesses are gradually adapting to the new realities of the domestic and global economy, technological progress, and changes in the rights and expectations of employees. Accordingly, outsourcing trends reflect the transition from a cost optimization model to a strategic partnership that takes into account current challenges and opportunities.

The advantages of outsourcing are its ability to address many operational and strategic challenges that companies cannot meet on their own. It allows companies to maintain operational continuity even in difficult conditions. Military operations and numerous blackouts can affect local businesses, causing interruptions in operations. Transferring some functions and operations to external organizations for processing helps to avoid business interruption. In addition, outsourcing distributes the risks associated with doing business. Companies can avoid direct losses due to the destruction of property or infrastructure by delegating some operations to outsourcers from safer regions of Ukraine or the world. Outsourcing also helps to overcome difficulties in accessing specialized knowledge and technologies through in-house resource potential. Therefore, the integration of outsourcing can mobilize the joint efforts of the client company and the outsourcer to reduce costs, increase efficiency, and allow them to focus on their core competencies. This is the main advantage of outsourced processing.

#### **4. Practical insights into the implementation of outsourcing strategy in the operational processes of business entities**

As already mentioned, in the context of the uncertainty of the military timeframe, business entities need strategic decision models that will allow them to use their own resources more efficiently, focusing on key areas of activity and engaging external experts to overcome operational and personnel problems. Therefore, developing and integrating an outsourcing strategy into the company's overall development strategy is an effective foresight step.

An outsourcing strategy should be viewed as a comprehensive approach to business management that involves the transfer of certain functions, tasks or processes to external organizations in order to increase efficiency, reduce costs and focus on the company's core competencies, which has a number of components (*Figure 2*).

As it can be seen, the implementation of the outsourcing strategy goes through the stages of constant monitoring of outsourcing needs, control over its effectiveness and risk management.

To understand the expediency of using an outsourcing strategy, let's consider real cases of companies that used outsourcing to overcome personnel shortages during the war (*Table 4*).

## MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT

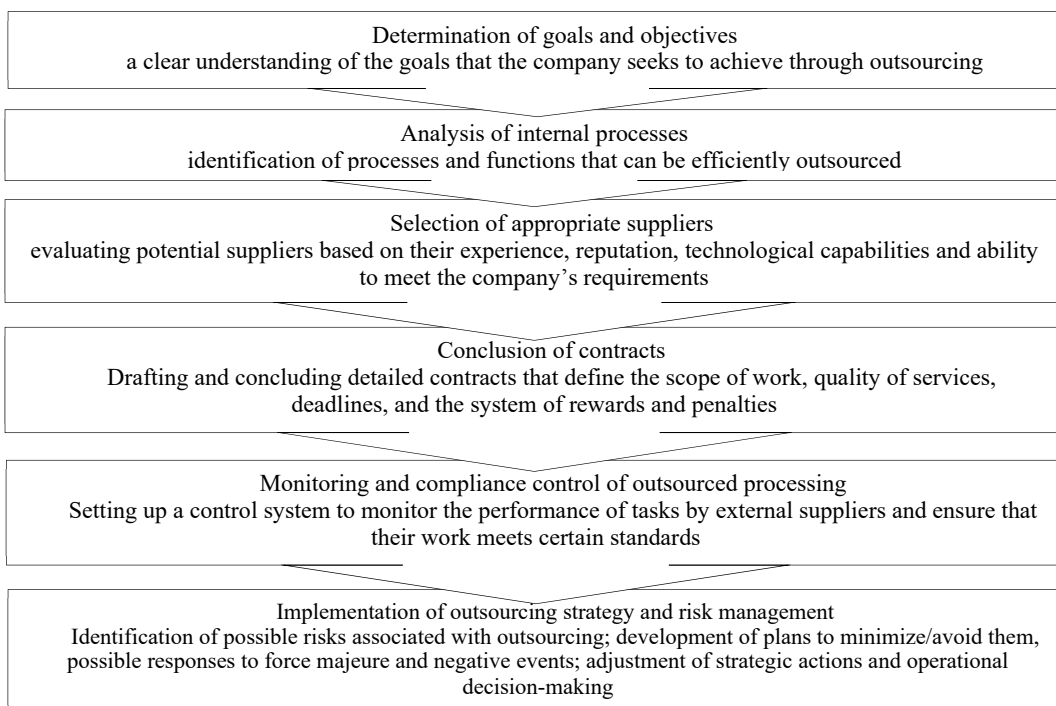


Figure 2. Formation of an outsourcing strategy of a business entity

Source: compiled by the author according to (Mendela & Rumyantseva, 2020; Hopkalo et al., 2024).

Table 4

### Case studies of Ukrainian companies that have used outsourcing strategies to overcome staff shortages and mitigate military risks

Company	Strategic decision	The results
XYZ IT company	Services of outsourcing companies from Poland and India to support their projects	The pace of software development has been maintained, the costs of hiring new employees have been reduced and access to specialists with a high level of competence has been obtained
Myronivsky Hliboproduct	Use of external companies for logistics, IT services and accounting	Helped maintain production levels, reduce downtime and reduce financial losses
PrivatBank	Use of external companies for IT support, cyber security and data processing	Costs for hiring and training new employees have been reduced, competitiveness in the market has been preserved
InterContinental Kyiv Hotel chain	Auditing, accounting services, IT support and customer service services	Uninterrupted work was ensured, reliable audit reports were formed
Premier Hotels and Resorts Hotel chain	Management of IT services, marketing, cleaning	Uninterrupted operation of the hotel was ensured and costs for training new employees were reduced
"Puzata Hata Restaurant complex Kanapa Restaurant	Services of outsourcing companies to provide cooks and waiters from other regions of Ukraine and from abroad	Contributed to avoiding work stoppages, reducing costs for recruiting and training new personnel

Source: compiled by the author based on websites, social media pages, and company management data (XYZ, n. d.; MHP, n. d.; PrivatBank, n. d.; Premier Hotels and Resorts, n. d.; Puzata Hata, n. d.; Kanapa, n. d.).

Due to the threat of war, many employees of Ukrainian companies moved to other safer regions, left the country or were mobilized, which led to a significant shortage of personnel. We can summarize based on the information from the Table 3, that the business orientated itself in the possibilities of outsourcing and

effectively integrated it into operational processes, maintaining a high level of service, which is especially important in crisis conditions.

Arguments for the expediency and perspective of outsourcing in Ukraine during and after the war also serve as expert assessments, which form the following statements:

- it is important to choose outsourcing companies from countries that have a stable political situation and developed infrastructure to support business processes (Oshri et al., 2009; Semyonov, 2024);
- communication and relationship management are key success factors when working with outsourcers. Regular meetings and clearly defined goals help to avoid many problems (Deloitte, 2019; Antonyuk, 2024);
- outsourcing not only helps solve the problem of personnel shortage, but can also become a source of new ideas and innovations for business (Bunyak, 2021; Antonyuk, 2024);
- outsourcing is an effective tool for reducing the costs of training and maintaining personnel, reducing the number of tasks for employees, and also for ensuring flexibility in times of crisis (Lading, 2022; Lyskanych, 2023; Fillin, 2024).

Thus, taking into account the studied theoretical and analytical aspects, the experience of the considered companies and the recommendations of experts, we will model a road map for overcoming the personnel shortage during the war in Ukraine and in the post-war period (*Figure 3*).

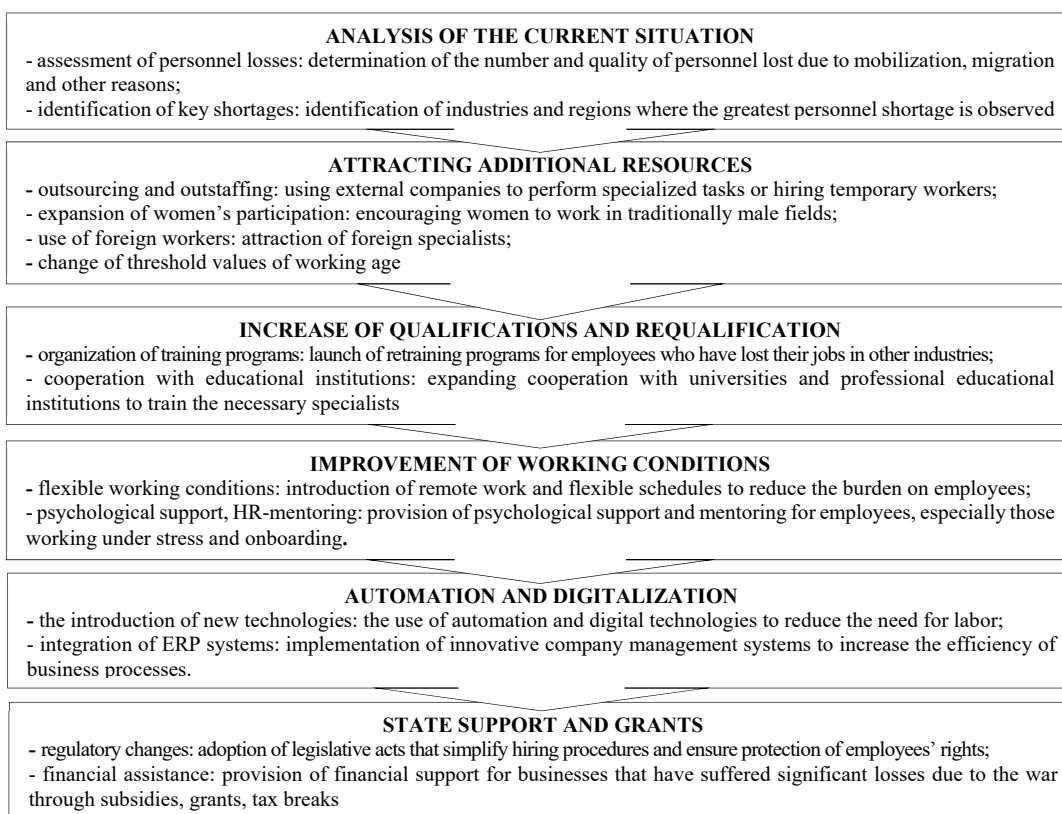


Figure 3. Roadmap for overcoming the staff shortage during the war in Ukraine

*Source:* compiled by the author according to (Bosovska & Bovsh, 2021; Deloitte, 2023; Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2024; ILO, 2024).

The positions described in the roadmap should be correlated and updated with data from official websites of state/regional/local authorities, recruitment agencies, online media, outsourcing companies, and scientific research to jointly monitor human resources issues and overcome labor market challenges.

Therefore, outsourcing processing is an effective strategic solution for integration into the company's operational activities and project development, forms auxiliary and supporting operations that ensure a high level of service, establish effective external and internal communications, optimize costs and ensure management flexibility in times of crisis, in particular in conditions of shortage of personnel.

Due to the fact that the structure of the modern Ukrainian labor market is changing according to gender and age, we draw attention to research on the possibilities of involving women and teenagers (with the permission of parents or guardians) in certain labor operations. After all, gender and aging substitution – the involvement of women and representatives of different age groups in traditionally male professions – can become an effective way to overcome the personnel shortage. This approach not only fills vacancies, but also helps create an inclusive work environment where everyone can realize their potential, regardless of gender or age. Of course, such an innovative approach will require the creation of adaptive programs, flexible working conditions, mentoring support and encouragement. However, the author sees this as the future trend of the Ukrainian labor market and aims to analyze these aspects from a legal, socio-economic and ethical point of view in future scientific studies.

### **Conclusions**

In the Ukrainian scientific and business environment in recent years, there have been tendencies to rethink management approaches and personnel management. The Transformation Trendbook has three markers that have impacted HR: the COVID-19 pandemic, artificial intelligence, and war. Pandemic limitations of physical communications (2019–2022) initiated the development of digital innovations and the organization of remote work, online offices, cloud businesses, and created the need for cyber protection of information, client and corporate data. So, one of the principles of business facilitation was formed as flexibility and remote work. Artificial intelligence has created opportunities to replace physical (robots, cobots, robotic hands) and intellectual work (creating texts, animations, videos, etc.). The war provoked the outflow of labor resources: the mobilization and migration of the population, creating a situation of shortage of personnel in many areas of the economy. Therefore, the research is aimed at finding effective ways to overcome this problem.

At the same time, the hypothesis that outsourcing is an effective solution in the most difficult conditions of war and personnel shortage is partially confirmed by analytical sources, a study of practical insights of

business entities, and expert assessments in the field of outsourcing. Identified risks for the business recipient of outsourcing services, among which the loss of control over key processes, dependence on the quality of work and financial stability of the outsourcer, risks of data privacy protection, loss of unique knowledge or competencies of the outsourcing recipient can be highlighted.

The research has been analyzed the impact of military actions on the personnel situation in Ukrainian companies: the reduction of competence and quantitative parameters of the potential of the labor market outlined future trends towards aging and gender substitution. Outsourcing showed the potential ability to partially overcome the problem of personnel shortage, as evidenced by the monitoring of successful insights into outsourced processing of Ukrainian business entities in various industries. After all, despite the advantages of outsourcing integration into business, there are also numerous challenges that stop entrepreneurs from implementing outsourcing solutions.

However, awareness of the prospects that form outsourcing in accordance with domestic and global predicative trends continues to contribute to its development, in particular, in overcoming problems with a lack of qualified personnel.

The considered approaches to the definition of outsourcing and outsourced processing, the determination of the main components of outsourcing relations determined the main directions of the formation and implementation of the outsourcing strategy of a business entity in the crisis conditions of the labor market. It was established that the outsourcing strategy as a comprehensive approach should be formed both at the macro level (social policies of local authorities, territorial communities, the state), and at the macro level – in the contractual relations of business entities regarding the outsourcing of knowledge, personnel, technologies, competencies, etc.

The approbation component of the research was the development of a road map for overcoming the personnel shortage, which worsens with the prolongation of martial law and the corresponding demographic iterations for an indefinite period of time. However, obstacles to implementation remain relevant, in particular due to the reluctance of entrepreneurs to take risks, as well as the problems of ensuring cyber security and the security of confidential data.

In the perspective of future research, it is planned to consider the compilation of outsourcing and design management as a symbiotic model of personnel management of Ukrainian companies. This will make it possible to create an innovative approach to anti-crisis management, taking into account modern aspects of overcoming psychological and physical exhaustion, shortage of competent personnel and other problems. In addition, the study of the features of gender and aging substitution – the use of the potential of women and representatives of different age groups in traditionally male professions, which can become an important factor in the stabilization and development of the economy in wartime conditions – is also considered a target scientific perspective.

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