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Impact of the COVID-19 on the labor market in Vietnam

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Abstract---The COVID-19 pandemic has had a great impact on the economy, society, and especially, directly affects the labor market in Vietnam. According to a report from the General Statistics Office, in 2021 the number of labor market participants decreased compared to the previous quarter and the same period last year. The proportion of employees with informal employment and underemployment both increased compared to the previous quarter and the same period last year. The long-term effect of the pandemic on households has become clear, as of March 2021, 30% of households had lower incomes than in March 2020. According to the data, about 12% of households fall into financial difficulty when they lose the least. 50% of their income. Facing this situation, the Government of Vietnam has implemented a series of measures to maintain support for businesses and workers to restore production, contributing to improving the situation of labor and employment in the country.

Keywords---COVID-19, labor market, unemployment, Vietnam.

Introduction

The COVID-19 outbreak has caused unprecedented challenges, which are expected to have significant impacts on the development of Vietnam's economy. According to the assessment of the World Bank in Vietnam, the 4th outbreak of the disease has had a direct impact on workers (World Bank in Vietnam). Figures from the General Statistics Office show that, in the second quarter of 2021, about 12.8 million people aged 15 and over were negatively affected, including job loss, temporary leave, rotational work, and reduced hours or reduce income. The size of the labor force decreased by 0.7% while there were 1.6% more unemployed or underemployed workers in the second quarter of 2021 compared to the second quarter of 2019 (General Statistics Office (GSO), 2020).

Besides the impact from workers, production, business activities and the entrepreneurial spirit of the people were also seriously affected. According to the Business Registration Department's report, in 2021, there are 116,839 newly

registered businesses, down 13.4% compared to 2020, the lowest level since 2017 until now. The registered capital for establishment in 2021 is also only VND 1,611,109 billion, down 27.9% compared to 2020. Besides, the number of enterprises returning to operation in 2021 is 43,116 enterprises, down 2.2% compared to 2020.

In particular, during the nationwide quarantine in April 2020, about 81% of businesses said they were affected by the crisis, causing their sales to decrease by 52% compared to the same period in 2019. This led to the situation. The financial situation of many businesses was severely affected, many companies had to close, supply chains were broken, workers lost their jobs due to isolation at home (Bui Quang Tuan, Ha Huy Ngoc, 2022).

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused many disturbances in the Vietnamese labor market, millions of workers have been negatively affected by unemployment, rotational leave, reduced working hours, reduced income, etc. This is the first time in the past 10 years that the Vietnamese economy has suffered a serious decline in the number of labor market participants and jobs. The average income of workers in deficit, the unemployment rate, underemployment and the rate of informal workers have all increased sharply compared to the decreasing trend of recent years. However, with the determination of the government and the joint effort and consensus of the people, the labor and employment situation in the last months of 2020 has improved markedly. This achievement not only helps to achieve the goal of epidemic prevention, but also contributes to protecting the country's economic growth and development. The results of the Labor and Employment Survey for the quarter of 2020 show that the Covid-19 outbreak has had a negative impact on workers' participation in the labor market and employment income generation. With the complicated development of the Covid-19 epidemic, especially new variants of the virus that are currently spreading rapidly, the impact of the epidemic on life and production in the near future is unpredictable. In order to actively respond and adapt to the development of the epidemic, both to control the epidemic, and to promote production and activities, measures need to be taken simultaneously and immediately (Phan Thi Cam Lai, 2022).

Labor market in vietnam under the negative impact of the COVID-19 ***Impact on employment situation***

The COVID-19 pandemic that appeared in Vietnam has directly affected the situation of labor and employment in all industries and in all regions of the country from rural to urban areas. According to a report from the General Statistics Office, the number of unemployed people of working age in the first quarter of 2020 was nearly 1.1 million people, an increase of 26.1 thousand people compared to the previous quarter and an increase of 26.8 thousand people over the same period. The unemployment rate of working age in the first quarter of 2020 was 2.22%, an increase of 0.07 percentage points compared to the previous quarter and an increase of 0.05 percentage points over the same period last year. The unemployment rate in the urban area 4 is 3.18%, up 0.08 percentage points compared to the previous quarter and the same period last year; this rate of rural areas was 1.73%, up 0.06 percentage points compared to

the previous quarter and up 0.03 percentage points over the same period last year (Pham Minh Thu, et al, 2022).

In the second quarter of 2020, the epidemic situation became more complicated when there were many dangerous infections in the community and especially the application of social distancing regulations made the unemployment rate increase. The economy was stagnated, many businesses had to suspend, relax or quit their jobs. This makes the unemployment rate of working age increase to a record in the last 5 years along with many workers leaving the labor market. A report from the General Statistics Office showed that by mid-April 2020, nearly 5 million workers had been affected by the pandemic. Of which, 13% lost their jobs, 59% had to temporarily quit their jobs and 28% had to relax (Anh Minh, 2020).

Although economic recovery efforts coupled with epidemic prevention and control have partly improved the grayscale of the domestic labor and employment situation, in the third quarter of 2021, the whole country still has more than 28.2 million People aged 15 years and older are negatively affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, causing employees to lose their jobs, take time off work or take alternate leave, reduce working hours, reduce income, etc. Compared to the previous quarter the number of employees adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in the third quarter increased by 15.4 million people. Most of the affected people are of working age, from 25 to 54 years old, accounting for 73.3% of the total number of affected workers (GSO, 2021).

Out of a total of more than 28.2 million people negatively impacted by the Covid-19 epidemic, 4.7 million people lost their jobs, accounting for 16.5%; 14.7 million people had to temporarily stop or suspend production and business, accounting for 51.1%; 12.0 million people had their working hours cut or forced to take time off work, or alternate leave, accounting for 42.7%, and 18.9 million workers had their income reduced, accounting for 67.2%. In which, the two regions that are heavily affected are the Southeast and the Mekong Delta, with the number of workers in the two regions negatively impacted by the pandemic accounting for the highest percentage, 59.1% percent respectively and 44.7%. This figure is much lower in the Northern Midlands and Mountains and the Highlands, at 17.4% and 19.7%, respectively (GSO, 2021).

Labor in urban areas suffers more damage than in rural areas. 46.2% of workers in urban areas are negatively affected by the Covid-19 epidemic, while this figure in rural areas is 32.4%. In terms of gender, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a particularly severe impact on female workers, especially women who are the main or sole earners in the family. Up to 83% of female workers in the survey had their wages reduced or lost their jobs; among them, 32.3% are the main or sole earners in the family (ILO, 2020, p.31).

Impact on employee's income

The average monthly income of employees in the third quarter of 2021 is 5.2 million dong, down 877 thousand dong compared to the previous quarter and 603 thousand dong lower than the same period last year. The average monthly income of male employees is 1.40 times higher than that of female workers (6.0 million

VND compared to 4.3 million VND); the average income of workers in urban areas is 1.35 times higher than in rural areas (6.2 million VND compared to 4.6 million VND). The complicated developments of the Covid-19 epidemic have seriously affected the lives of workers. Compared to the second quarter of last year, the quarter that saw the average income "bottom-fishing" due to the implementation of social isolation under Directive 16, the average monthly income of workers in the third quarter of this year was even lower (lower than 329,000 VND). This is the lowest income recorded in recent years. In which, workers in the Southeast region experienced the biggest decrease in income. Compared to the previous quarter and the same period last year, the Delta variant has wiped out about a quarter of the average monthly income of workers in this region. In the third quarter of 2021, the average income of workers in the Southeast region is 5.7 million VND, down 2.4 million VND (respectively down 29.8%) compared to the previous quarter and down 1.9 million VND. down 24.9% respectively) over the same period last year. In particular, workers in the epidemic epicenter Ho Chi Minh City were even more severely affected with a deep drop in average income, down 2.6 million VND (decreased 31.0% respectively) compared to the previous quarter and down 2.5 million VND (equivalent to 30.3% decrease) compared to the same period last year. The average monthly income of workers in Ho Chi Minh City is only 5.8 million VND, the lowest level in recent years (GSO, 2021).

After the Southeast region are the workers in the Mekong Delta. The average income of workers in this region is 4.5 million VND, down 873 thousand VND (equivalent to 16.1%) compared to the previous quarter and down 623 thousand VND (equivalent to 12.1% decrease compared to the same period last year). period of the previous year). The least affected by the Covid-19 pandemic are workers in the Northern Midlands and Mountains. The average monthly income of workers in this region is 4.4 million VND, a slight decrease compared to the previous quarter (down by 93,000 VND) (General Statistics Office, 2021).

Compared to workers in Ho Chi Minh City, workers in Hanoi are less affected. The average income of workers in Hanoi is 7.0 million VND/person, down about 1.0 million/person, (equivalent to 12.5%) compared to the previous quarter and down 342 thousand VND, down equivalent to 4.6% over the same period last year (GSO, 2021).

Some economic sectors also recorded the difficult situation of workers as their average income continuously decreased through each outbreak of the pandemic. These are the following industries: Accommodation and catering services with an average income down 21.2%, down about 1.2 million dong respectively compared to the previous quarter; the transportation and warehousing industry with average income decreased by 20.3%, equivalent to a decrease of about 1.6 million VND compared to the previous quarter.

In addition, the number of unemployed people applying for unemployment insurance increased significantly in February 2020, with more than 47,000 people filing, an increase of 59.2% compared to January 2020 (nearly 30,000 people) and increased by 70% over the same period last year (nearly 28,000 people); In Ho Chi Minh City alone, there were 9,872 applicants, an increase of nearly 4,500 people (80%) compared to January 2020 and an increase of more

than 3,600 people (57%) over the same period last year (Vietnam Trade Union, 2020).

However, the Covid-19 epidemic also contributed to changing working habits and promoting the application of information technology of employees to adapt to unpredictable developments of the pandemic. The survey results showed that, in the first quarter of 2021, more than 78,000 employees said that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they had switched from not applying information technology to applying information technology in the workplace.

Impact on industries, production and business activities of enterprises, affecting labor supply in most localities in the country

The Covid-19 pandemic has also caused huge impacts on businesses in almost all economic sectors. In Vietnam, the GDP growth rate in the first quarter of 2020 was 3.82%, the lowest level in the past decade (GSO 2020). The sectors most affected are tourism and accommodation, aviation, retail, and export manufacturing sectors such as textiles, footwear, woodworking, electronics and food processing. In particular, the tourism industry is heavily affected. According to the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, Vietnam's tourism industry is estimated to lose "between 6 and 7 billion USD" in the first two quarters of the year by Chinese tourists alone will drop 90 - 100%. Besides China, according to estimates of the authorities, the number of visitors from other countries entering Vietnam will also decrease sharply, about 50% - 60% during the epidemic period (Propaganda Department of Binh Thuan province, 2021, p.15).

After the tourism industry is the transportation sector, with the aviation industry suffering the heaviest losses due to the Covid-19 epidemic. According to the Civil Aviation Administration of Vietnam, Vietnamese airlines may lose about 30,000 billion VND in revenue in 2020. In which, Vietnam Airlines is expected to reduce 12,500 billion VND, Jetstar Pacific is expected to reduce about 732.8 billion VND (Minh Son, 2020).

In an interview with social organizations in Ho Chi Minh City, Dong Nai and Binh Duong in April 2020, the number of unemployed workers concentrated in the tourism and electronics industries with nearly 100% employees have their wages reduced or have lost their jobs.

On the other hand, due to the prolonged development of the Covid-19 epidemic along with the implementation of Directives 15 and 16, thousands of businesses faced difficulties, tens of thousands of businesses were dissolved or temporarily stopped operating or operate moderately with only 30-50% of employees due to the requirement of social distancing. In addition, the labor supply for the market also decreased because workers returned to their hometowns for fear of the epidemic or had to be isolated, leading to a shortage of labor resources in many businesses. The results of the survey to assess the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic on a national scale showed that out of 22,764 businesses, 17.8% were short of workers. The highest proportion of enterprises with labor shortage was recorded in the Southeast region, with 30.6%. In which, provinces with high shortage are Binh Duong (36.9%); Binh Phuoc (34.4%) and Ho Chi Minh City

31.8%. Some of the industries that reported the most labor shortages were electronics, computers and optical products (55.6%), leather and related products (51.7 %), apparel manufacturing (49.2%), electrical equipment manufacturing (44.5%), textile industry (39.5%) (GSO, 2021).

In addition, the pandemic creates double difficulties for migrant workers: on the one hand, their income and employment are affected (87.9% of migrant workers lose their jobs or have their wages reduced); On the other hand, due to lockdown and social distancing measures, they were separated from their families for months. Only 8.8% of migrant workers have returned to their hometown, the rest remain in the workplace to continue working or find a new job (International Labor Organization, 2020).

Some measures of the state of vietnam from the impact of the COVID-19

After Vietnam discovered the first case of COVID-19 infection on January 23, 2020 at Cho Ray Hospital, Ho Chi Minh City, the Prime Minister issued Official Dispatch No. 121/CD-TTg and consecutively On January 28 and 30, 2020, the Prime Minister issued Directives No. 05/CT-TTg, Directive No. 06/CT-TTg, which thoroughly grasped the spirit of "fighting the epidemic like fighting the enemy", mobilizing The whole political system has stepped in to prevent the epidemic. The National Steering Committee for Epidemic Prevention and Control was established. After the epidemic broke out strongly in the 4th outbreak, it had a strong impact on people's lives and directly affected the operation, production and business processes of all domestic enterprises.

On March 21, 2020, the Politburo issued Notice of Conclusion No. 172-TB/TW on the prevention and control of the Covid-19 epidemic, which required all levels of Party committees, authorities, departments and branches. Unions need to continue to focus on disease prevention and control with the highest sense of responsibility, resolutely not to let the epidemic break out, and at the same time perform urgent tasks, support the business community, maintain production, business, care for the people, proactively prepare plans to recover the economy. Encourage the people and business community to promote patriotism, compassion and social responsibility, join hands in epidemic prevention and control, and support functional forces to successfully complete their tasks. Some specific support policies are as follows:

Support for people and businesses

To the people

On April 9, 2020, the Government issued Resolution No. 42/NQ-CP on measures to support people facing difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Accordingly, employees working under the labor contract regime must agree to suspend the performance of labor contracts or take unpaid leave for 01 month or more because businesses are facing difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic. , who have no revenue or no financial resources to pay salaries, they will be supported at the rate of VND 1,800,000/person/month. The real-time support period of temporary suspension of the performance of labor contracts, unpaid leave,

monthly depending on the actual situation of the epidemic, from April 1, 2020 and not more than 3 months (Government, 2020).

The employer has financial difficulties and has paid at least 50% of the termination salary in advance to the employee according to Clause 3, Article 98 of the Labor Code during the period from April to June 2020 can borrow unsecured loans up to 50% of the regional minimum salary for each employee according to the actual salary payment time but not more than 3 months with 0% interest rate, maximum loan term is 12 months at the Bank. Social Policy bank to pay the remaining salary and disburse monthly directly to the person who has stopped working.

Individual business households with tax declaration revenue of less than 100,000,000 VND/year and temporarily suspending business from April 1, 2020 will be supported with 1,000,000 VND/household/month on a monthly basis depending on the actual situation of the business but not more than 3 months. Employees whose labor contracts or work contracts are terminated but are not eligible for unemployment benefits; employees who do not have a labor contract and lose their jobs are supported with 1,000,000 VND/person/month on a monthly basis depending on the actual situation of the epidemic but not exceeding 3 months. Valid from April to June 2020.

People with meritorious services to the revolution who are enjoying monthly preferential allowances will receive an additional support of 500,000 VND/person/month. The application period is 3 months, from April to June 2020 and is paid once. Social protection beneficiaries who are receiving monthly social allowances will receive an additional support of 500,000 VND/person/month. The application period is 3 months, from April to June 2020 and is paid once.

Poor households, near-poor households according to the national poverty line on the list until December 31, 2019 will be supported 250,000 VND/person/month. The application period is 3 months, from April to June 2020 and is paid once (Government, 2020). During the outbreak of the disease nationwide, in order to solve the difficulties caused by the epidemic, on September 24, 2021, the Government continued to issue Resolution 116/NQ-CP on policies to support workers Employees and employers affected by the Covid-19 pandemic from the Unemployment Insurance Fund. Accordingly, many subjects were promptly helped to ensure basic life and maintain production and business activities.

Resolution 116/NQ-CP was issued, showing the Party and State's concern and sharing for employees and employers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Contributing to supporting employees to overcome difficulties, stabilize their lives, prevent disruption of the labor supply chain and labor shortage. Support employers to reduce costs, make efforts to adapt to the new normal, maintain production and business, and create jobs for workers. Promoting the role of unemployment insurance policy as a prop for employees and employers.

To implement Resolution 116/NQ-CP, on October 1, 2021, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 28/2021/QĐ-TTg stipulating the implementation of policies to support employees and employers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic from the

Unemployment Insurance Fund. This Decision takes effect from October 1, 2021. Specific details are as follows:

Subjects receiving financial support from the balance of the social insurance fund include:

1. Employees are participating in unemployment insurance as of September 30, 2021, excluding the following cases:
 - a) The employee is working at a state agency, political organization, socio-political organization or people's armed forces unit.
 - b) Employees who are working at public non-business units whose recurrent expenditures are guaranteed by the state budget in accordance with the Government's Decree No. 60/2021/ND-CP dated June 21, 2021 financial autonomy mechanism of public non-business units and current legal regulations on financial autonomy of public non-business units.
2. Employees who have stopped participating in unemployment insurance due to termination of their labor contracts or working contracts between January 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021 have a period of premium payment unemployment is reserved according to the provisions of the law on employment, excluding those who have had a decision to enjoy monthly pension (Government, 2021).

Support level (One-time support in money, specifically as follows):

- a) Less than 12 months of paying unemployment insurance premium: Support 1,800,000VND/person.
- b) Unemployment insurance premium payment period from full 12 months to under 60 months: Support 2,100,000 VND/person.
- c) Period of payment of unemployment insurance from full 60 months to less than 84 months: Support 2,400,000 VND/person.
- d) Unemployment insurance premium payment period from full 84 months to less than 108 months: Support 2,650,000 VND/person.
- e) The period of payment of unemployment insurance from full 108 months to less than 132 months: Support 2,900,000 VND/person.
- f) The period of paying unemployment insurance premiums from 132 months or more: Support 3,300,000 VND/person.

On the business side

Not only paying attention to people's lives, the Government of Vietnam has also issued many policies to support the business community to maintain production and business. Specifically as:

Since the beginning of March 2020, the Government has launched a support package for affected businesses including an interest rate support package worth VND 250 trillion, temporarily suspending funding payments unions and pension and death insurance.

In September 2021, to cope with the stressful situation of the 4th epidemic, the Government continues to issue 2 important resolutions to support businesses and workers in difficulty: Resolution No. 105 /NQ-CP on supporting businesses, cooperatives and business households in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic.

On October 11, 2021, the Government issued Resolution No. 128/NQ-CP: Promulgating temporary regulations "Safely adapting, flexibly, effectively

controlling the COVID -10 epidemic". According to this resolution, all activities of society are based on the level of epidemic scale from the commune level as prescribed: Level 1: Low risk (new normal) corresponds to blue; Level 2: Moderate risk corresponding to yellow; Level 3: High risk corresponds to orange; Level 4: Very high risk corresponding to the color red.

Resolution 128 was issued in a timely and appropriate manner, as an opening door for businesses, creating job opportunities for people again, creating momentum for production and product supply and helping Vietnam step by step and restore the economy. This is a Resolution expected, agreed and appreciated by people, businesses and social classes, and believes that the Resolution has created a turning point in thinking and new ways in epidemic prevention. The anti-epidemic policy will be reduced to one term, unified throughout the country, contributing to the maximum protection of people's health and lives; socio-economic recovery and development; realize the dual goal of moving the whole country to the new normal.

Prioritize vaccination so that businesses can resume operations soon

A vaccine against COVID-19 is a necessary and important solution for disease prevention and socio-economic development. Countries around the world have begun implementing the largest vaccination program in human history. In Vietnam, the Ministry of Health has made efforts to access COVID-19 vaccine supplies through various channels. To date, about 105 million doses from different sources have been committed to distribute to Vietnam (Prime Minister, 2021).

According to Resolution 105/NQ-CP, the Ministry of Health will continue to rationally and effectively allocate vaccine resources against COVID-19. In which, additional priority subjects for vaccination, including employees of enterprises, cooperatives, business households in key economic regions, industrial parks, etc. -19 for workers in industrial zones is the guiding policy of the Party and State, in order to ensure the maintenance of the production chain, while implementing epidemic prevention and control, and realizing the dual goals of the Prime Minister; at the same time, creating peace of mind for employees in the face of the increasingly complicated epidemic situation.

Support to cut costs, remove financial difficulties

In addition to supporting measures for workers and businesses facing many difficulties due to the epidemic, the Government of Vietnam has also issued many policies related to the reduction of premiums or support from the balance of the short social insurance fund to promptly support workers, businesses, cooperatives, business households and employers. Besides, it also strengthens state management measures for shipping enterprises, combating the situation of taking advantage of the epidemic situation to increase unreasonable freight rates, increasing the cost burden for businesses; Implement plans to support electricity bill reduction and electricity price reduction; Implement policies on relaxation and reduction of taxes, fees, charges and land rents; implementing preferential tax policies for imported goods to finance epidemic prevention and control after being

approved by the Government; Early allow travel service businesses to reduce 80% of deposits for travel services until the end of 2023, reducing the time for settlement of deposit refunds for travel services from 60 days to 30 days.

Result

Thanks to efforts in disease prevention and control along with policies to ease social distancing and complete vaccination in the last months of 2021 and early 2022, the labor market has gradually recovered and achieved positive results. Specifically:

For workers

The work of ensuring social security, ensuring food and food has been paid attention, directed and organized in a timely manner. The government has issued the supply from the National reserve. 141.97 thousand tons of rice and many other supplies and equipment with a total value of about 2 trillion VND; supporting employees and employers facing difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic according to Resolution No. 68/NQ-CP and Resolution No. 116/NQ-CP. In 2021, the Central Government and localities have spent a total budget of 71,482 billion VND to implement support policies for nearly 742 thousand times of employers (cost 13,033 billion VND) and over 42.8 million turns of employees... (58,449 billion dong). Ho Chi Minh City alone has supported 8.85 million objects with the amount of 12,244 billion VND. Some localities with a high total support budget are Binh Duong (3,118 billion VND), Dong Nai (2,787 billion VND), Hanoi (2,063 billion VND), Ba Ria - Vung Tau (1,742 billion VND), Can Tho (VND 1,742 billion). 905 billion VND); Bac Giang (858 billion VND), Long An (737 billion VND), Khanh Hoa (505 billion VND) (Vietnam Trade Union, 2020).

The Vietnam Children's Fund has coordinated with 27 provinces and cities to support about VND 7.83 billion for about 1,500 orphaned children due to COVID-19. Trade unions at all levels have directed and ensured support to the frontline against the epidemic and union members and workers from trade union finance and socialization sources with a guaranteed budget of over 5,200 billion VND.

Through the support policies of the State, it has contributed to improving the income of workers. The average monthly income of employees in the first quarter of 2021 reached VND 6.3 million, an increase of VND 339 thousand compared to the previous quarter and an increase of VND 106 thousand compared to the same period last year. The average monthly income of male employees is 1.4 times higher than that of female employees (equivalent to 7.3 million VND compared to 5.2 million VND); the average income of workers in urban areas is 1.5 times higher than that of workers in rural areas (equivalent to 7.9 million VND compared to 5.4 million VND) (GSO, 2021).

For Businesses

Thanks to appropriate and timely policies to support businesses, in 2021, although Vietnam is greatly affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, our economy is still very positive. Accordingly, the gross domestic product (GDP) in the fourth

quarter of 2021 was estimated to increase by 5.22% over the same period last year, although higher than the growth rate of 4.61% in 2020 but lower than the growth rate of the previous quarter. IV for the years 2011-2019.

The timely issuance and implementation of Resolution No. 128/NQ-CP dated October 11, 2021 has made an important contribution to restoring production and promoting the market, gradually creating confidence for businesses. The results of business trends survey of enterprises in the processing and manufacturing industry show that enterprises are optimistic about their production and business situation in the first quarter of 2022 with 81.7% of enterprises assessing it to be stable and better than the fourth quarter of 2021.

The results of the survey on business trends of enterprises in the processing and manufacturing industry in the fourth quarter of 2021 showed that: 44% of enterprises rated their production and business situation better than in the third quarter of the year. 2021; 31.1% of enterprises think that their business and production situation is stable and 24.9% of enterprises consider it difficult (GSO, 2021).

It is expected that in the first quarter of 2022, 45.6% of businesses think the trend will be better compared to the fourth quarter of 2021; 36.1% of enterprises think that the production and business situation will be stable and 18.3% of enterprises forecast more difficulties. Despite many prosperity, the labor market in Vietnam still has some unsustainable factors. The number of employed people increased rapidly, but a large increase was in informal workers in agriculture, forestry and fishery. Unemployment and underutilized labor rates fell but remained high. Self-made labor has decreased but has not returned to the original normal state before the pandemic.

Some recommendations to restore the labor market

First, priority should be given to resources to strengthen the health system and to cover national vaccination coverage and drug purchases. The wave of epidemics caused the health system in many provinces and cities to face difficulties in terms of both human and material resources. The world's epidemic is still complicated, the health system is also the first and most important line of defense of not only the economy but also the whole country. Therefore, strengthening the health system, especially grassroots health care and preventive medicine must be a top priority in support packages. It is also necessary to ensure a wide supply of vaccines for the whole country, not only for the 2nd but also for the 3rd and 4th shots. At the same time, there is a plan to order medicines to cure diseases and prevent the pandemic from spreading in the community. .

Second, it is necessary to strengthen the social security system. The main goal is to support the populations and workers most affected by the epidemic. Specific measures include support to overcome labor disruption. In places subject to lockdown, ensure that migrant workers working in the informal sector without a contract are fully supported to stay at home, and quickly disburse support packages for those on the list. poor households as well as those participating in

formal social insurance to ensure that they receive timely support on a basis covered by the official social security system.

Third, it is necessary to support businesses more practically. In fact, the recent implementation of business support packages shows that the efficiency is not high, the target audience is not correct, or the support procedure is still complicated. Many businesses have negative profits due to the sharp increase in prices of raw materials, fuel, materials and transportation costs, burdened with costs to ensure both production and anti-epidemic... and are not in the support group. While there are a number of businesses, although production output is reduced but revenue is still high, they receive support. Especially, for businesses operating in a number of fields that are "frozen" due to the epidemic, such as tourism, hotels, restaurants, etc., the income tax exemption and reduction really doesn't mean much. In addition, it is necessary to use monetary policy tools to support businesses. Lowering interest rates is urgent. Although Vietnam's interest rates have been lowered compared to 2020, they are still high compared to other countries in the region and the world. If the interest rate is not reduced, only the financial and banking sectors will benefit, while other organizations and businesses in the production and business sectors will suffer many disadvantages.

Fourth, to ensure the successful implementation of the above measures, it is necessary to coordinate to develop and implement policies among ministries and sectors, between the Government and the National Assembly, especially the fiscal policy package, currency must have the right dose, the right time and the right audience. Some comments were concerned about inflationary pressure when developing and implementing support packages, while others wanted the economic support package to be large enough, which would reduce the risk of inflation. Therefore, agencies of the Government, the National Assembly and advisory agencies need to closely coordinate in calculating to ensure that the cash flow of support is actually put into production activities of enterprises and households instead of turning to the speculative channel of risky financial assets, which did not contribute to the growth recovery.

Fifth, the Government should have policies to encourage localities to set up official and specialized information channels to update businesses and employees on economic development strategies, labor support policies, local testing and disease control plans for them to develop and implement plans to restore and develop production.

Conclude

In general, the above statistics on labor and employment situation have reflected the difficulties and fluctuations of the economy in general and Vietnam's labor market in particular in recent years. These difficulties are a great challenge to the Government's efforts in the face of the policy of successfully accomplishing the dual goals: both economic development and victory over the pandemic. The above solutions are both urgent responses; both fundamental and long-term, in order to help the economy soon overcome difficulties and continue to develop towards the goal of building a modern Vietnam in the future.

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