Downshifting as a case of voluntary downward social mobility in Ukraine
Balance between work and leisure in the dimension of values

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Voluntary downward social mobility is comparably new trend of social behavior. In Ukraine it is compelled in most of cases because of job cuts, but now there are few but very reasoned voluntary decisions for shift to less money and more time to fulfill the life.

The sociological perspective allows us to examine changing value orientations toward work and leisure, what can be one of reasons of sea changes in life style by acting voluntary downward social mobility. The downshifting phenomenon involves not only an economic trade-off of work hours for leisure, but embraces a value system that rejects the culturally dominant work obsession and accepts the vital meaning of leisure.

Within the framework of my broader thesis research I conduct an analysis of data from World Values Survey (WVS). My idea is a particular focus on Ukraine comparing to countries, where relevant researches on changes in relative importance of work and leisure is in the focus of studying downshifting. It has been revealed that over time leisure becomes more important for people, while work becomes less important. Balance between work importance and leisure importance is positive in Ukraine, which means that in our country still there are more people for whom work is important, then those who consider leisure as vital.

While analysis of quantitative data give the opportunity to generalize trends and changes in values, further qualitative research will build a holistic picture of experience, beliefs and social environment of Ukrainian downshifters, what can bring us to understanding the significance of this new trend of social behavior for society.

Key words: downshifting, voluntary downward social mobility, work, leisure, importance, balance.