

Prokopenko S. Information Volatility as a Cognitive Stressor: Implications for Employability Under Conditions of Extreme Crisis / S. Prokopenko // Changing nature and the future of work (SIG CNOW): Proceedings, AMCIS 2026, Reno, Nevada, August, 20-22, 2026. – 6.

**Abstract.** This paper examines how a volatile information environment functions as a cognitive stressor in digitally mediated crisis contexts. While employability research emphasizes skills and adaptability, it largely assumes stable informational conditions under which these capabilities are enacted. Drawing on 50 semistructured interviews with Ukrainian managers conducted during wartime (2022–2023), we analyze how high-frequency, emotionally charged, and uncertain information flows shape cognitive load, emotional regulation, and work-related behavior. Reflexive thematic analysis reveals that information volatility, characterized by rapid fluctuations in emotional tone, uncertainty regarding veracity, and continuous exposure, produces cognitive overload, fragments attention, and destabilizes sensemaking processes. The paper contributes to research on employability, digital work, and crisis management by conceptualizing informational instability as a structural constraint on workforce capacity.

**Key words.** Informational Environment, Cognitive Overload, Sensemaking Disruption, Employability Constraints