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DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN POLICY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN UKRAINE ON THE BASIS OF SUSTAINABILITY

РОЗБУДОВА ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОЇ ПОЛІТИКИ РОЗВИТКУ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ УКРАЇНИ НА ЗАСАДАХ СТАЛОСТІ

The article explores the transformational processes in Ukrainian higher education in the context of new challenges posed by European integration, which are driven by internal needs for the modernization of the educational space and external globalization factors. The aim of the study is to conduct a comparative analysis of national models of education governance in leading European countries and, based on this analysis, to substantiate the priority directions for the development of higher education in Ukraine under the new conditions of European integration. The methodological framework of the study includes systems analysis, structural-functional, comparative, and scenario-based approaches, which made it possible to describe existing models and develop recommendations for strategic planning of higher education reforms in Ukraine. The study identifies common features in the functioning of public institutions, such as ministries of education, scientific councils, and independent agencies, that implement higher education policy through mechanisms of funding, accreditation, research support, and quality assurance. It further reveals how these bodies adapt their activities to the requirements of European programs, particularly Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and others. The study systematizes the factors influencing academic mobility in EU countries. The findings show that the success of mobility implementation depends on legislative support and the organizational capacity of universities, the level of digital infrastructure, political stability, intergovernmental cooperation, and the degree of intercultural tolerance in host countries. Based on the conducted analysis, the author proposes a personal vision of the priority areas for the development of higher education in Ukraine in the context of the new challenges of European integration. The practical value of the study lies in its applicability for the development of national policy on academic mobility, quality assurance, the institutional architecture of the educational market, and Ukraine's integration into the European Education Area.

Keywords: *integration processes, academic mobility, educational services market, competitiveness, sustainable development.*

У статті досліджено трансформаційні процеси вищої освіти України в контексті нових викликів європейської інтеграції, які зумовлені внутрішніми потребами модернізації освітнього простору та зовнішніми глобалізаційними чинниками. Метою дослідження був порівняльний аналіз національних моделей управління освітою в провідних країнах Європи та обґрунтування на цій основі пріоритетних напрямів розвитку вищої освіти України в умовах нових викликів європейської інтеграції. Методологічна база дослідження включає системний, структурно-функціональний, порівняльний та сценарний аналіз, що дозволило описати існуючі моделі та розробити рекомендації для стратегічного планування реформ у сфері вищої освіти України. У результаті дослідження виокремлено спільні риси функціонування державних інститутів, таких як міністерства освіти, наукові ради та незалежні агентства, які реалізують політику в сфері вищої освіти через механізми фінансування, акредитації, підтримки досліджень та контролю якості. Розкрито, як ці органи адаптують свою діяльність до вимог європейських програм, зокрема Erasmus+, Horizon Europe та інших. В дослідженні систематизовано чинники, що впливають на академічну мобільність у країнах ЄС. З'ясовано, що успішність реалізації мобільності визначається законодавчим забезпеченням та організаційною спроможністю університетів, рівнем цифрової інфраструктури, політичною стабільністю, міждержавною співпрацею та ступенем міжкультурної толерантності в приймаючих країнах. На основі проведеного аналізу запропоновано власне бачення пріоритетних напрямів розвитку вищої освіти України в контексті нових викликів євроінтеграції. Серед них визначено: адаптацію до стандартів ЄС і норм Болонського процесу, створення інклюзивних інституцій для забезпечення рівного доступу до освіти, розвиток партнерств між університетами, бізнесом і громадянським суспільством, а також імплементацію стратегій глокалізації та глобалізації вищої освіти. Практична цінність дослідження полягає у можливості використання його результатів під час розробки національної політики академічної мобільності, забезпечення якості освіти, формування інституційної архітектоніки освітнього ринку та інтеграції України до Європейського освітнього простору.

Ключові слова: *інтеграційні процеси, академічна мобільність, ринок освітніх послуг, конкурентоспроможність, сталий розвиток.*

Problem statement. In the context of intensified European integration processes and global transformations, the educational services market emerges as a crucial factor in the socio-economic development and competitiveness of the state. For Ukraine, which aspires to full participation in the European Higher Education Area, there is an urgent need for a systematic understanding of institutional mechanisms, models of public education governance, academic mobility, and strategic development orientations. The analysis of international experience and the adaptation of European practices in the development of the educational services market are prerequisites for shaping an effective educational policy capable of ensuring the quality, accessibility, and resilience of higher education under current challenges.

Given Ukraine's European integration course, priority is being given to areas that contribute to enhancing the quality of education, ensuring academic mobility, developing international partnerships, integrating digital technologies, and expanding access to education. Particularly relevant is the creation of a unified educational space oriented toward synergy among universities, the labor market, and EU institutions. Therefore, research and identification of priority directions for the development of higher education under the new challenges of European integration constitute an important step toward forming an effective strategy for the modernization of education in Ukraine.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The relevance of sustainability as a paradigm for the functioning of higher education institutions is explored in the work of A. Avelar and M. Pajuelo-Moreno (2024), who emphasize the research, teaching, and community engagement roles of universities in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. They argue that universities should play a key role in promoting sustainability, not only by embedding it into curricula but also by fostering partnerships with local communities and government institutions. The authors call for a redefinition of the mission of higher education institutions toward social responsibility and ecological awareness. Z. Kilasonia (2023) outlines the interconnection between the SDGs and the higher education system, stressing that the integration of sustainability into the strategic governance of universities must be systematic and interdisciplinary. The researcher highlights the need for universities to act as drivers of sustainability-oriented change by creating an institutional environment that supports innovation, gender equality, environmental consciousness, and ethical leadership. The study by R. Sebire and S. Isabelles-Flores (2023) further emphasizes the importance of implementing sustainable practices in the daily operations of universities.

An important reference point in the development of a European policy for higher education in Ukraine is the EU Strategy for 2021–2030, analyzed by O. Lokshina (2023), who highlights its integrative significance for Ukrainian educational policy. The author emphasizes the relevance of sustainability, digital transformation, and social inclusion as guiding principles for the reform of higher education in Ukraine. Similar views are reflected in the research by S. Kalashnikova and O. Orzhel (2022), who proposed approaches to optimizing the network of higher education institutions, taking into account both demographic and economic factors as well as the need for high-quality regional access to education. The authors stress that the processes of consolidation or reorganization of institutions should be based on the principles of sustainable development and social responsibility. V. Lugovyi et al. (2023) examine the transformation of higher education in Ukraine through the lens of war and post-war recovery, emphasizing the need for resilient governance models. V. Kruglov and D. Tereshchenko (2022) underline the importance of educational integration into the European space as a means of stabilizing and modernizing the higher education system. From a forward-looking perspective, S. Tsymbaliuk and I. Dehtiarova (2024) draw attention to the challenges and opportunities for reforming higher education in the context of war and European integration.

A number of studies have addressed the impact of war and the COVID-19 pandemic on the functioning of Ukrainian higher education institutions. A. Kurapov et al. (2022) and Y. Lavrysh et al. (2022) highlight the socio-psychological dimensions of these crises, particularly the stress factors affecting both students and academic staff. N. Mospan (2021) demonstrates how the COVID-19 pandemic acted as a catalyst for transformations within the higher education system, while A. Hari et al. (2023) compares international experiences of pandemic-related academic mobility, which is of significant importance for the adaptation of educational policies in Ukraine. O. Glushko (2024) explores the European experience of the competence-based approach, which serves as a fundamental element in building a quality educational model. V. Barvinok et al. (2022) propose a model of knowledge transfer between education and the labor market as a means of increasing the relevance of acquired competencies. O. Shparyk (2021) analyzes the conceptual foundations of digital transformation in education within the context of European and American discourses, emphasizing its importance for achieving digital sustainability. T. Nogueira et al. (2022) demonstrate the significance of Erasmus+ programs in promoting the Sustainable Development Goals and enhancing academic mobility. N. Pavlikha and O. Totska (2020), provide detailed insights into the mechanisms of higher education development management under conditions of European integration. N. Machynska (2023) and O. Maksymenko (2021) examine the alignment of Ukrainian reforms

with European practices, including decentralization as a prerequisite for local resilience.

The goal of the article. The aim of the study is to conduct a comparative analysis of national models of education governance in leading European countries and, based on this analysis, to substantiate the priority directions for the development of higher education in Ukraine under the new conditions of European integration.

Presentation of the main results of the research. In order to forecast the prospects for the development of the educational services market in the context of new challenges of European integration, the method of scenario analysis was used. This approach made it possible to formulate reasonable conclusions about the prospects and directions of modernization of the educational services market in the context of European integration. Particular attention should be paid to examining the institutional environment, models of public education governance, factors influencing academic mobility, and mechanisms for implementing innovative educational programs [1; 2; 3; 4; 6; 7; 8].

Understanding the architectonics of these structures and their functions are important for the formation of a modernized higher education system in Ukraine, compatible with European principles and capable of integration into a single educational space (table 1) [5; 13; 28; 31; 32].

In EU countries, these institutions are core components of the institutional environment that guarantee the stability, efficiency, and adaptability of educational systems to emerging challenges. Studying the functions and roles of public education authorities in leading European countries provides insights into national models of governance and helps identify effective practices that could be implemented in Ukraine on its path toward full integration into the European educational space (table 2) [11; 21; 22].

Factors influencing the processes of academic mobility in the EU countries are systematized in Table 3.

Academic mobility in the EU countries is considered as a complex multi-level process, which is influenced by numerous interrelated factors of various nature. The generalization allows us to distinguish several groups of factors: regulatory, institutional, financial and economic, socio-cultural, educational and scientific, information and technology, political and cross-cultural. Each of these groups forms unique conditions for ensuring the effective functioning of academic mobility within the European Higher Education Area [25]. Socio-cultural and cross-cultural factors affect the degree of intercultural openness, overcoming language barriers and effective social adaptation of mobility participants in the new environment. Educational and scientific aspects include the prestige of educational programs, the scientific potential of universities, the level of infrastructure that contributes to the attraction of foreign students. No less significant are information and technological factors, the availability of digital platforms, online courses and tools for virtual mobility, which significantly expand the geography and accessibility of participation [15]. Thus, a multifactorial approach to the analysis of academic mobility allows you

Table 1

Institutional environment of the EU educational area

Level	Institute	Main functions
European Level	European Commission	Development of EU educational policy, financing of Erasmus+, Horizon Europe programs.
	Education Council of the EU	Coordination of strategic decisions on education at the EU level, identification of educational priorities.
	Bologna Group and Bologna Secretariat	Monitoring and implementation of the Bologna reforms, ensuring the compatibility of education systems, supporting the mobility of students and teachers.
	European University Association (EUA)	Maintaining the quality of education, developing ESG standards, international cooperation and developing scientific research.
	European Higher Education Quality Assurance Register (EQAR)	Control over the activities of accreditation agencies, ensuring compliance with ESG standards, promoting mutual recognition of accreditations.
National level	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)	Control over the activities of national agencies for quality assurance of education, implementation of ESG standards.
	National Accreditation Agencies	Issuance of accreditations for educational programs, verification of compliance with national and European requirements.
Local level	European Students' Union (ESU)	Representation of students in political processes, protection of academic rights, promotion of access to education.
	European Qualifications Recognition Information Network (ENIC-NARIC)	Recognition of foreign diplomas, assistance in confirming qualifications in EU countries.
	European University Alliances	Creation of joint curricula, double diplomas, exchange of teachers and students, joint research projects.

Source: [5; 13; 28; 31; 32]

Table 2

Examples of state institutions in leading European countries

Country	State Institute	Functions and role
Germany	Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)	Development of educational policy, financing of universities, support for scientific research.
France	Ministry of Higher Education and Research	Control over the activities of universities, funding research, ensuring the quality of education.
United Kingdom	Office for Students (OfS)	Regulation of universities, protection of students' rights, control over the quality of education.
Italy	Ministry of Universities and Research (MUR)	University management, program accreditation, research funding.
Spain	Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities	Development of educational and scientific programs, support for innovations in higher education.
Netherlands	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW)	Formation of policy in the field of higher education, financing of universities..
Poland	Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland	Control over the activities of universities, accreditation of educational programs, support for scientific research.

Source: [11; 21; 22]

Table 3

Factors influencing the processes of academic mobility in the EU countries

Group of factors	Content of factors
Regulatory	Harmonization of legislation (Bologna Process) Diploma Recognition (ECTS, Diploma Supplement) Transparency of enrollment procedures
Institutional	Partnership agreements between universities Internationalization of universities Administrative support
Financial and economic	Funding for mobility programmes (Erasmus+) Grants, scholarships Cost of living and tuition
Socio-cultural	Level of intercultural openness and tolerance Language barriers and access to language courses Social adaptation of mobility participants
Educational and scientific	Reputation of universities and programs Variety of educational programs and research Infrastructure and equipment
Information and technology	Digital infrastructure Online education and virtual mobility
Political	Political stability in the EU countries Education policy of the EU and countries Interstate relations and cooperation
Cross-cultural	Differences in cultural values and traditions Religious and ethnic characteristics of the participating countries Level of tolerance towards foreigners and readiness for intercultural dialogue

Source: [6; 7; 15]

to better understand the specifics of its implementation and determine the directions of its strategic development [16; 17; 18].
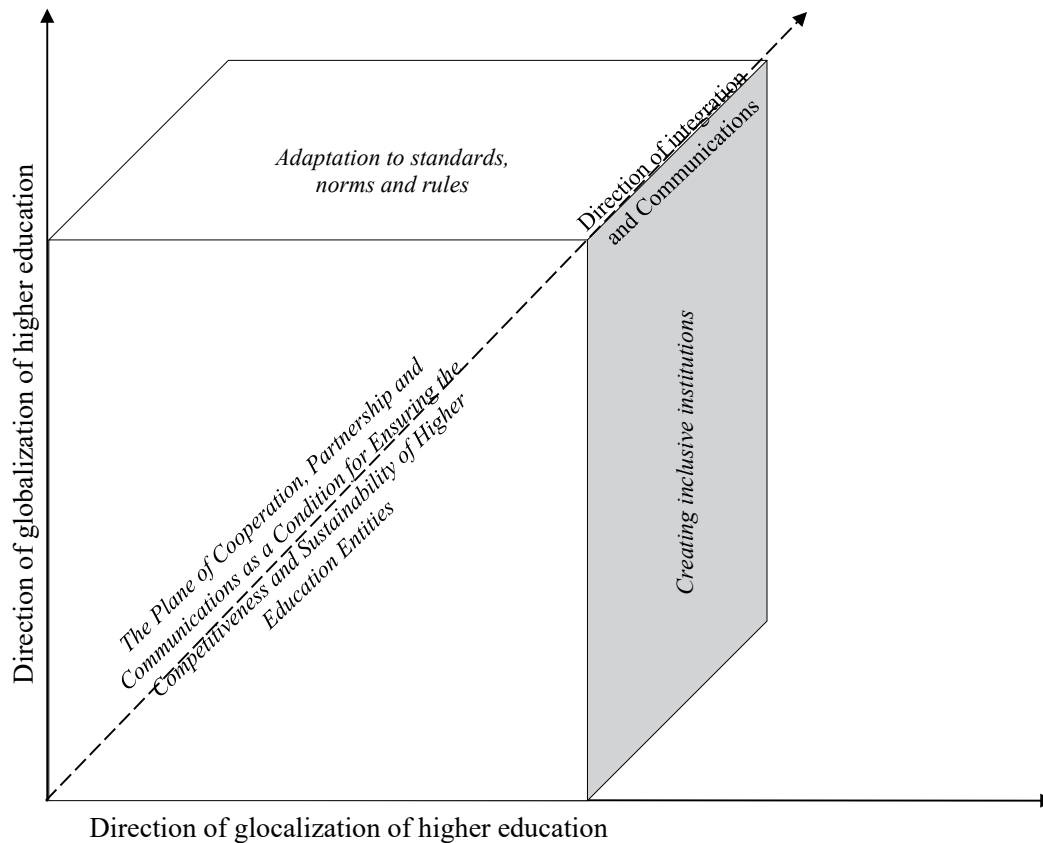
The key priority areas and dimensions for the development of higher education under the new challenges of European integration are presented in Fig. 1.

In addition, an important factor is the development of the plane of cooperation, partnership and communications, which allows the formation of sustainable competitiveness of educational market entities.

A comprehensive analysis of the factors of academic mobility (regulatory, institutional, financial and economic, socio-cultural, technological, etc.) showed that the implementation of mobility as a tool of internationalization is possible only if the whole range of conditions and barriers is taken into account. This means that for the sustainable development of higher education in Ukraine, it is important to implement changes simultaneously in several areas: improving the legislative framework, strengthening the institutional capacity of universities, building financial mechanisms to support mobility, developing digital infrastructure and cultivating a culture of openness.

Conclusions. The analysis made it possible to identify a wide range of interrelated factors influencing the

Figure 1. Priority Areas and Dimensions of Higher Education Development under the New Challenges of European Integration

Source: author's development

processes of academic mobility, which cover the regulatory, institutional, financial, socio-cultural, educational, information and technological and political planes. Their comprehensive consideration is a prerequisite for the effective implementation of mobility as a tool for the internationalization of higher education.

Priority areas for the development of the market of educational services in Ukraine have been identified, among which an important role is played by adaptation to European standards, strengthening institutional capacity, formation of an inclusive and open educational environment, as well as the development of partnerships and international communication. The prospect of further research is the study of strategies for the development of the market of educational services in the context of new challenges of European integration.

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