

# EAST-CENTRAL EUROPE

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## PERSPECTIVES OF HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM IN UKRAINE

Historical perspective of development of higher education system in Ukraine is evident. It presupposes integration in Europe, raising of cultural standards of the society, creation of objective prerequisites for competitiveness at the world intellectual market. This aim would be promoted by the humane directions of legislative reforms carried out in the sphere of education.

In accordance with the principal theses of humane psychology, we suppose that humane directions of educational reforms are based on:

- creating the required economical prerequisites for self-realization of personality in society;
- development of spiritual needs of the personality in continuing education;
- stimulating and supporting personality's creative activity aimed at realization of its creative potential.

### Educational reforms in the context of the dialogue of cultures

System of education, inherited by Ukraine from the totalitarian empire is characterized as: anti-national, non-scientific, extensive, non-effective, bureaucratic, anti-intellectual one. These characteristics testify to the fact that the system of education in Ukraine is in the state of protracted crises.

Analysing the effectiveness of the system of education in the USA, professor N. Smelser (California University) noted that "Americans usually consider education to be the basis of success". At the same time he marks that "class affiliation, racial origin and sex influence students' learning". In our opinion, comparisons of the type "our system of education is better/worse than..." are not scientific, since the man cannot choose time and place of his existence. "He is doomed to choosing himself in this world".

Higher education reforming in Ukraine is the problem of implementation of the idea of spiritual, national revival of the new independent state. It presupposes the increase of educational and cultural standards of the society, integrating in international scientific community.

Accentuating these theses we mean the necessity of substantiating the way of cultures' dialogue – the openness to other cultures and preservation of one's national peculiarities. According to the opinion of the leading educationists of Ukraine (O. Sukhomlynsky, M. Yarmachenko, M. Stelmakhovich), it is this approach that will contribute to enrichment of the national culture with values common to all mankind.

We are sure that integration of international experience in the field of education is a transformation of cultural and educational values in correspondence with specific character of development of one nation or another, with its mentality. Thus, for Ukrainians' mentality more typical is not rationalistic outlook, but emotional-aesthetical disposition. It is no mere

chance, that in Ukrainians' philosophical comprehension of the world, a motif of the "philosophy of the heart", cordocentrism in present.

Investigating modern state of reforms in the field of higher education in Ukraine, we come to conclusion that effective realization of the reforms is possible, provided creative collaboration of Ukraine with the countries of Europe.

Integration of higher education of Ukraine into the world education space does not mean its "complete destruction and reconstruction on the basis of the best foreign models". We regard the extension of the dialogue of cultures to be the prior direction of higher education reforming in Ukraine. It is important to realize that democratic state formation is not possible without assimilation of the world spiritual values.

Ethic code of international communication presupposes respectful attitude to other cultures as to one's own. The dialogue of cultures will contribute to comprehension of the recent increase of significance of "pluralistic education", when children of different nationalities study together.

## Topical issues of professional teacher training

Introduction of a new fundamental subject – history of education – into the content of professional teacher training in Ukraine testifies to higher education reforming process. In this connection, as a natural result, there arises a number of new issues: necessity of new curricula; mastering of new methods of teaching and assessment of effectiveness of students' and teachers' activity. Nevertheless, what is considered to be new from the point of view of national experience, is actually the well-forgotten old.

Thus solution of new educational problems presupposes historical and comparative investigations to be carried out. The main question to our mind is connected with historical necessity to change the content of professional teacher training in Ukraine in the direction of deliverance from ideological dogmata of the past. Historical experience of the past decades testifies to the fact that the basis of totalitarian ideology was "undisguised technocratism". Significant facts of this phenomenon are bias against humanitarian values, humane culture (closing of humanitarian university faculties, deportation of "bourgeois" intellectuals, destruction of national culture and existentialist-humane mentality.)

Overcoming totalitarian traditions depends first and foremost on the outlook of personality. Analysing the present spiritual situation, K. Jaspers noted that man's personal qualities are situationally conditioned by "the people, whom he meets and by potentialities of the faith facing him".

Professional teacher training is simultaneously dealt with by representatives of many branches of science. Many of them in the new social-economic situation realize the necessity of recomprehending previous values and searching new ones. The self-knowledge process is brought about in the best way when man is not only comprehending his past, but also forecasting his future.

However the future can not be investigated. Only those things can be investigated which have already taken place. "Future is hidden in the past and in the present. Vision of the present is as dependent on perception of the past as on forecasting the future. Our thoughts of the future influence our vision of the past and the present."

The future of higher education system of Ukraine is reflected in the principal state documents – the Programme "Education" (Ukraine of the 21. century), legislative Acts on the

main directions of higher education system reforming. In the context of the views on the future some educational issues of the past and the present are brought forward.

## Perspectives of higher education reforming in Ukraine

Investigating the issues of higher education development in Ukraine we proceed from the fact that strategical objects of reforming processes in the field of education in Ukraine are conditioned by historical, social-economic, cultural factors of democratic society formation, of national traditions revival, deliverance from the past ideological stereotypes.

As the main contradictions we can stress: the collapse of totalitarian regime, formation of state sovereignty of Ukraine, economic crisis, and wretched state of culture, education, vague perspectives for the nearest future. At the same time one may ascertain considerable extension of freedoms both because of economic difficulties and psychological stereotypes of the past. In this connection a question is raised, "How could spiritual degradation of the nation be prevented?"

The content of reforming concept in the field of education testifies to its being aimed at future. The concept of higher education reforming in Ukraine is aimed at raising the standard of education and culture of the society. This aim is supposed to be achieved through raising higher education in Ukraine to world standards and through its integration into international scientific – educational community. We proceed from the fact that the idea of higher education system reforming in Ukraine encloses the historical perspectives of a democratic European state – Ukraine formation.

Principal perspective directions of higher education reforming in Ukraine can be defined as follows:

- Democratization and humanization of pedagogical process.
- Renewal of the content, means and methods of teaching, introduction of new pedagogical technologies.
- Introduction of a new system of methodical and informational maintenance of higher school.
- Creation of the state system of talented youth selection and training.
- Enhancing the prestige of pedagogical work at higher educational institutions, introduction of new forms of stimulating the material interests and moral encouragement of educators.
- Increasing effectiveness of scientific research work at higher schools.

Alongside with national transformations, the sphere of international collaboration is supposed to be considerably developed.

- Expansion of opportunities for getting higher education by the citizens of Ukraine at educational institutions of other countries.
- Participation of higher educational institutions of Ukraine in international programmes of academic exchange.
- Organization in Ukraine of higher educational institutions common with foreign ones.
- Involvement of leading foreign scholars in teaching at higher educational institutions.

The course of reforming processes is constantly the subject of discussions and studies at national conferences and symposiums. Thus in May 1995 the All-Ukrainian scientific-practical conference took place in Kharkiv. Its main object was the improvement of theoretical concept of private education under the conditions of transition to market relations and of

national education integration into the world system. At the conference it was emphasized, that "in democratic state formation process, the object of higher educational institutions must be satisfaction of personality's educational and qualification needs". It was noted that "private educational institutions could be used by the state ones as experimental basis for the study of innovational searches in the sphere of higher education".

Realization of the concept of higher education reforming in Ukraine, as any new and indispensable cause, meets a number of impediments. Concrete reasons of inadequate to demands of the times rates of concepts realization is immediately dependent on real social-economic situation in Ukraine. Now we can summarize that it has acquired sovereignty, but for the present it is on the initial stage of its realization. Social-economic factors are the main reasons of reforming processes impediment in the field of education, which, by its historical mission, must promote market economics development and contribute to society democratization.

Perspectives of higher education reforming in Ukraine are immediately dependent on the social-economic situation in the country. First and foremost it should be noted that specific character of the transitional period influenced the efficiency of scientific activity. Practically the impoverishment of science is taking place. Standard of scientists' creative motivation, necessary for creative teaching and research-activities, is being lowered. The negative influence of this tendency is observed in students' attitude to studying process, whereas students being future scientists, those who promise well, but have not sufficient motivation standard to devote themselves to science. In general the problem comes to gradual loss of prestige of scientific activity, of scientific career, of knowledge. This negative tendency complicates coming out of the prolonged transitional economic period. Coming out of the exclusive circle – economics – education – economic is possible on condition of the state's concern in the nation's scientific potential, in the revival of intellectual elite in Ukraine.

The decrease in financing the branches of education and science resulted in powerishment of educational institutions, educators and scientists, a great number of students. The better part of the personnel emigrate abroad into highly developed countries.

Deputies of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, analysing the state of education, noted that negative processes in social-economic sphere caused the crisis phenomena in education. It was noted that Ukraine's future, its intellectual and cultural potential is being imperilled.

It is expedient to refer to negative tendencies noted by the Minister of Education of Ukraine:

- legislative acknowledgement of education as prior sphere of the society is not provided in practice;
- analysis of national problems and elaboration of state programmes is accomplished failing to take into account education as one of productive factors of economics and science;
- motivation for acquisition of fundamental education is catastrophically decreasing.

One negative tendency more is the annually increasing loss of scientific personnel of highest qualification, the break-up of scientific schools, decrease of youth replenishment in science. Recently 5000 scientists left higher schools in Ukraine, among them 190 doctors and almost 2000 candidates of sciences, and the process is going on.

Following the investigation of the issues of higher education reforming in Ukraine carried out in 1995 we conclude that one of the main problems of higher education reforming in Ukraine is insufficiently elaborated concept of higher education, which should be improved and concretized taking into account world pedagogical experience and real social-economic situation in Ukraine.

The problem of legislative support of the reforms is reflected in the President's Decree "On the main directions of Higher Education Reforming in Ukraine" of September 12, 1995.

According to it, the Ministry of Education of Ukraine, National Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Educational Sciences are charged with elaboration of strategical directions of higher education development in Ukraine.

Scientific and research work will be aimed at working out of:

- conception of higher education reforming at the stage of transition to market economics;
- conception of humanist education at higher institutions;
- conception of reforming and developing the ecological thinking and capability of building up harmonious relations with nature.

The President's Decree presupposes gradual integration of higher education of Ukraine into the international system. In this connection there increases the significance of educational researches aimed at the study of the following issues:

- acknowledgement and nostrification of certificates of education, academic degrees and ranks;
- formation of the centre of international accreditation;
- formation of the centre, co-ordinating the use of foreign sponsors' financing aid;
- formation of the mechanism of co-ordinating the international activity of higher educational institutions of Ukraine.

Thus we can draw a conclusion that proper attention has begun to be paid to higher education development in Ukraine, at a state, legislative level.

Analysing the problem of development of higher education system in Ukraine we state:

- 1) Effective implementation of conceptual tasks of higher education reform in Ukraine is immediately conditioned by the qualitative substantiation of their urgency in the context of the reforming processes taking place in Eastern and Western Europe.
- 2) The reforming processes have evolutionary character and are orientated at those in the countries of East Central and Western Europe.
- 3) The importance of grounding the strategical tasks of education in the context of reforms in Western and Eastern Europe.

Effective implementation of the main directions of higher education reforming in Ukraine can be based first and foremost on the experience of educational reforming processes in East-Central European countries (Poland, Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia).

Within such a context the researchers of education in Ukraine face the problem of study and generalization of polycultural experience of reforming in East-European countries in the period of 1989–1995.

The experience of East-European countries could contribute to more effective implementation of the main strategical directions of higher education reforming in the period of transition to the market economy.

This experience requires thorough comparative study, namely: improvement of specialists training structure, quality assurance of higher education, elaboration of new licencing, certification and accreditation mechanisms.

Of greatest important can be the experience of improvement of social maintenance of scientific-pedagogical staff (establishment of the system of funds of higher education support and development), improvement of enterprise in the sphere of science, joining up the efforts of innovational structures in the system of higher education.

Practical significance of comparative researches of higher education reforming in Poland, Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia consists first and foremost in substantiation of perspective ways of higher education system of Ukraine integration into the international system of education on the basis of appropiated experience.

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## HIGHER EDUCATION INNOVATION AND REFORM\*

### CASE STUDY OF UKRAINIAN PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION

Ukrainian higher education is in the middle of a significant transformation that began with Perestroika in 1985, accelerated with its independence from the Soviet Union in December 1991 and the ascension of an initial democratically elected government strongly committed to Ukrainian independence and continues under the auspices of a new government which assumed power in summer of 1994. This paper will focus on the emergence of a small number of private institutions of higher education which have either begun embryonic operation since Ukraine's independence in 1991 or are currently seeking licenses from the Ministry of Education.

Beginning with some background on the overall higher education in Ukraine the paper shifts to an examination of the chief emerging structural types of private higher education and will examine some of the chief exemplars of private higher education in that nation with a special emphasis upon three particular categories: finance, governance and function. Finally, the paper will examine the emerging patterns of interaction between the emerging sector of private higher education and the Ukrainian government.

The data cited for this paper were chiefly gathered as part of two consultations sponsored by the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and the Ukrainian Association of Private Higher Education (UAPHE) in late Spring of 1994 and 1995. The consultations were designed to assist the UAPHE and Ministry with their planning. As part of consultations 44 interviews were conducted with faculty and administrators from eight private institutions of higher education and various officials within the Ministry. The purpose of those interviews was to gather data on the reasons behind the development of private higher education and its scope, function, governance and financing. To gather an external or consumers' perspective on the utility of Ukrainian higher education in an emerging market economy additional interviews were also conducted with managers of five American or Western European companies with substantial operations in Kyev region. While the data base for this study is limited it does provide the basis for this initial study of the indigenous private higher education system in Ukraine.

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