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UKRAINIAN ACADEMY OF ACMEOLOGY

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# HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER COMPETENCE IN CHANGE

according to the results of the project  
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“High School Teacher Competence in Change” No. 21720008

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The monograph is written according to the results of the project № 21720008 “High School Teacher Competence in Change” with the support of the International Visegrad Fund and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The work presents common and different approaches to system of education and higher education in Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. Authors specify a set of actions that contribute to improving the quality of high school teacher’s activities and development of their professional competencies.

The publication is intended for scientific and pedagogical workers who are interested in theoretical, methodological and practical issues of improving the professional activity of teachers, modernizing and ensuring the quality of higher education in conditions of its reformation.

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# RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF ACADEMIC STAFF AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMPETENCES OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

Recommendations are based on the integration of the results of the research carried out in each project participating country and generalized tendencies regarding the development of higher education at the institutional, national and European levels.

## *Standardization of high school teacher's activities as a basis for assessing its quality*

One of the urgent problems of the development of the European educational environment is the harmonization of national education systems and the search for approaches to assess academic staff qualifications. Considering a wide space of study, this problem is of particular importance for academic staff who are directly involved in the future specialists' training. Taking into account the fact that lecturers, as direct organizers of the educational process, are given academic freedom to develop variability in educational programs, it is important to meet a certain standard in the assessment of their professional competence and performance.

Analysis of the concept of "standard" in various European documents and regulations showed that there is no single approach to its definition. Instead of the term "standard", the synonymous terms "program basis", "framework curriculum", "framework program" and others, which indicate the framework limitations of this normative document, are used. In the countries participating

in the international project "High School Teachers Competences in Change" № 21720008 (Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, Czech Republic), this concept, though appears in the field of education, is missing in official documents. However, with the introduction of competence-based approach to the content of education, comprehending the phenomenon of standardization, the approach of determining the final results (the so-called "regulation of output") dominates in Europe. In fact, on the one hand, it is a guide to what results are planned to be achieved at the national level, on the other hand, the professional standard for lecturers is a tool for the implementation of the education strategy in a rapidly changing globalized world. The main function, which is performed by professional standards, is the approximation of the sphere of academic staff' work and staff training through the establishment of regulatory requirements to their knowledge, skills, personal qualities, and results achieved. So, the question of what a competence-oriented standard of lecturers' activity should be like is relevant and requires understanding and defining common approaches to its standardization.

Western scholars who dwelled on this topic believe that standards should be easily comprehensible and not too complicated (R. Conway, R. Murphy, A. Res, K. Hall) (Kleinhenz, E., Ingvarson, L. (2007). Standards for Teaching. Theoretical Underpinnings and Applications. New Zealand Teachers Council [Electronic resource]. Access mode: [www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/communication/publications/research0012](http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/communication/publications/research0012). Pdf. 5).

This opinion of scholars is supported by international organizations in the field of education. For example, in the documents of the European Committee of Education Trade Unions (ETUCE) it is noted that competences should be formed at a high level and be traced through the professional characteristics of the teacher at different stages of the professional career. At the same time, they should be based on the principles of relationship between theory and practice and focus on the development of the ability to critically comprehend their own and others' pedagogical experience [ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education). *Teacher Education in Europe*. (2008). An ETUCE Policy Paper, Brussels: ETUCE, 170 p.].

In accordance with the latest works by G. Sykes and Plastrik and R. Plastrik, standards are instructions that are often used to accomplish multiple goals. For example, the following:

- a single model for the organization of certain activities;
- rules to be followed;
- indicators that contain certain information;
- perfect samples;
- principles on the basis of which the process is carried out etc. [Sykes, G., Plastrik, P. (1993). *Standard Setting as Educational reform. Trends and Issues Paper no. 8*, Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education and American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. ED 358 068, p. 4–5].

Studying the problem of standardization as an important aspect of the educational policy of any state, we can distinguish two opposite approaches to the definition of standards and their importance in improving the quality of teaching. The first one is a bureaucratic and technical approach to reporting, focused on the measurement, monitoring, comparison, and regulation of an individual behavior of a lecturer. The second one, a developing essence of using standards with a broad interpretation of the concept of “competence” as indicators of the performance of multidimensional activities of a lecturer. At the same time, it is important to take into account the social and economic contexts that directly or indirectly affect lecturers' activities and its results. Therefore, standardization can be both a tool for the overall assessment of the quality of academic staffs' activities and the embodiment of the idea of its social diversity, as well as an indicator of shortcomings and

difficulties encountered in teaching. It is also important that the standard affects the processes of teacher development training and their adaptation to external changes and requirements, making it possible to identify the best positive experience and disseminate it.

According to scholars from the participating research teams from Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic, an integrated approach to standardization and evaluation of academic staff is the most productive. It includes:

- determining the competence field of academic staffs activities, determining key competencies that reflect the professional and functional essence of this activity;
- developing a unified diagnostic tool for assessing and comparing the formation of lecturers' competencies;
- defining methodological strategies to help teachers choose development opportunities and meet individual needs of professional development;
- managerial, but not a directive nature of competence standards of academic staff, which in its essence does not contradict creative features of the teaching profession;
- taking into account national contexts and traditions of higher education.

Thus, the abovementioned actualizes a *complex standardization*, which is carried out as a purposeful and systematic establishment and application of a system of interrelated requirements for the professional competence of academic staff as an object of complex standardization, and to the possession of a set of individual competencies.

Some basic requirements for the development of professional standards of academic staff in the conditions of its modernization and reform:

- the structure of the standard should be competency based and result-oriented on a particular type of professional activity of a lecturer;
- the main method of forming the content of the professional standard for academic staff can be a functional analysis of various competence profiles of their activities, which reflect its multifunctional nature, and the distribution of the content of competencies that make the content of these profiles, in accordance with the qualification levels of lecturers;

Professional standards for lecturers are one of the most important components of national qualification systems and a prerequisite to the formation of a national qualifications framework adapted to the European one.

### ***Similarities and differences in the development of education systems of Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, and Czech Republic***

It should be noted that in all participating countries (Poland, Ukraine, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic) higher education is developing within the democratic type model, which includes the humanization of the educational environment, ways of interaction between all subjects of the educational process. A common feature of the goals and guidelines of higher education is the universal and fundamental values of Western civilization — the assertion of the individuality of each personality, the development of critical thinking, the ability to act independently in different situations, the importance of social cooperation, responsible usage of freedom, ideological pluralism, etc.

The high social mission of the academic staff is actualized under modern circumstances and due to the fact that education in the 21 century becomes the main engine of development of civilized society in various directions. For example, education is:

- the system of a directed influence on individuals for the purpose of their socialization, when the content of the educational process is determined by the state requirements of the economic and political systems;
- the basic channel of culture broadcasting in accordance with the current values and standards;
- the catalyst for change in all spheres of human life, the basis of the progress of society;
- a tool for personality development, its self-realization, advancement on the way of self-improvement.

The research results showed that goals and values of higher education in countries participating in the international project No. 21720008 “High School Teacher Competences in Change” with the assistance of the International Visegrad Fund and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands are more similar than different. At the same time, there are significant differences between countries in the details of certain goals stated in educational documents. It is common for all project participating countries to increase the number of goals in higher education, their focus on quality and its high performance, a holistic and integrated approach to the definition of such goals.

Global world processes associated with the acceleration of changes in the modern post-industrial society (informatization, automation,

transformation of social institutions, financial system, demographic situation, etc.) affect transformations that occur not only in the field of education and higher education but regarding the adaptation of European educational goals to local requirements and conditions of the future labor market as well. Essentially opposite processes of globalization and localization are constantly adjusting the goals of higher education in Poland, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

The dominance of the competence-based idea as the basis for the selection of the educational content and evaluation of the quality of its results, makes it possible to determine common approaches to the criteria and performance indicators of lecturers in higher education institutions of project participating countries. In the competence space of academic staffs’ activities in these countries, we have identified common competency guidelines, which are associated with social, cultural, economic challenges, the evolution of educational goals of the EU. Among the main guidelines, the following competencies are identified: foreign language and digital competences, which updated the unifying processes in the EU and the ICT revolution; civil and intercultural competences related to the need for social interaction; self-improvement competence aiming to adapt the individual to constant changes, etc.

Analysis of the educational legislation, regulatory and strategic documents in participant countries, which are associated with the modernization and optimization of higher education, allowed to determine general directions of these processes:

- ensuring the quality of education; implementation of the basic educational principle “equal access to a qualitative education”;
- practice-oriented nature of professional training of future specialists;
- finding a balance between the socio-economic opportunities of countries and the objectives of higher education;
- bringing the structure of higher education in line with international standards; updating and rethinking the content of educational programs according to a competency-based approach;
- development of research in universities; active implementation of ICT in the educational process and increasing the volume of e-learning materials;
- decentralization of management and expansion of autonomy of educational institutions;
- continuous training of teachers within higher education.

### Conceptual approaches to the development of the project "High School Teacher Competence in Change"

The conclusions made by international research teams regarding the results of the diagnostics of academic staff competencies and their generalization give grounds for justification of recommendations on certain changes that should be implemented at the *institutional, national and European levels*. These levels are certain hierarchical parallels at which, according to the degree of generalization, there should be changes in the content, methods of organization and management of academic staff as a system of interrelated requirements to their professional competence, which is the object of complex standardization. Therefore, the recommendations are structured within such thematic components: *content, organizational, managerial*, which allows to cover all aspects of the scientific problem systematically. This scientific idea can be represented graphically.

### Description of recommendations on standardization and competences of the project "High School Teacher Competence in Change"

Recommendations are presented in the above-mentioned thematic areas. There is a description of each of them below.

Guided by the competency-based idea of the development of higher education in the EU, it is important to define a standardized framework of competencies for academic staff, using the development and set of competencies specified in the project studies.

Existing methods, assessment technologies for measuring levels of competence development of academic staff, should be enriched with diagnostic tools developed by project participants. Further specification and differentiation is required within appropriate indicators of expected levels of competence of lecturers of higher education: *reproductive, productive and creative*. A sample of the matrix structure of assessing the formation of competencies of academic staff is presented in *Table 1*.

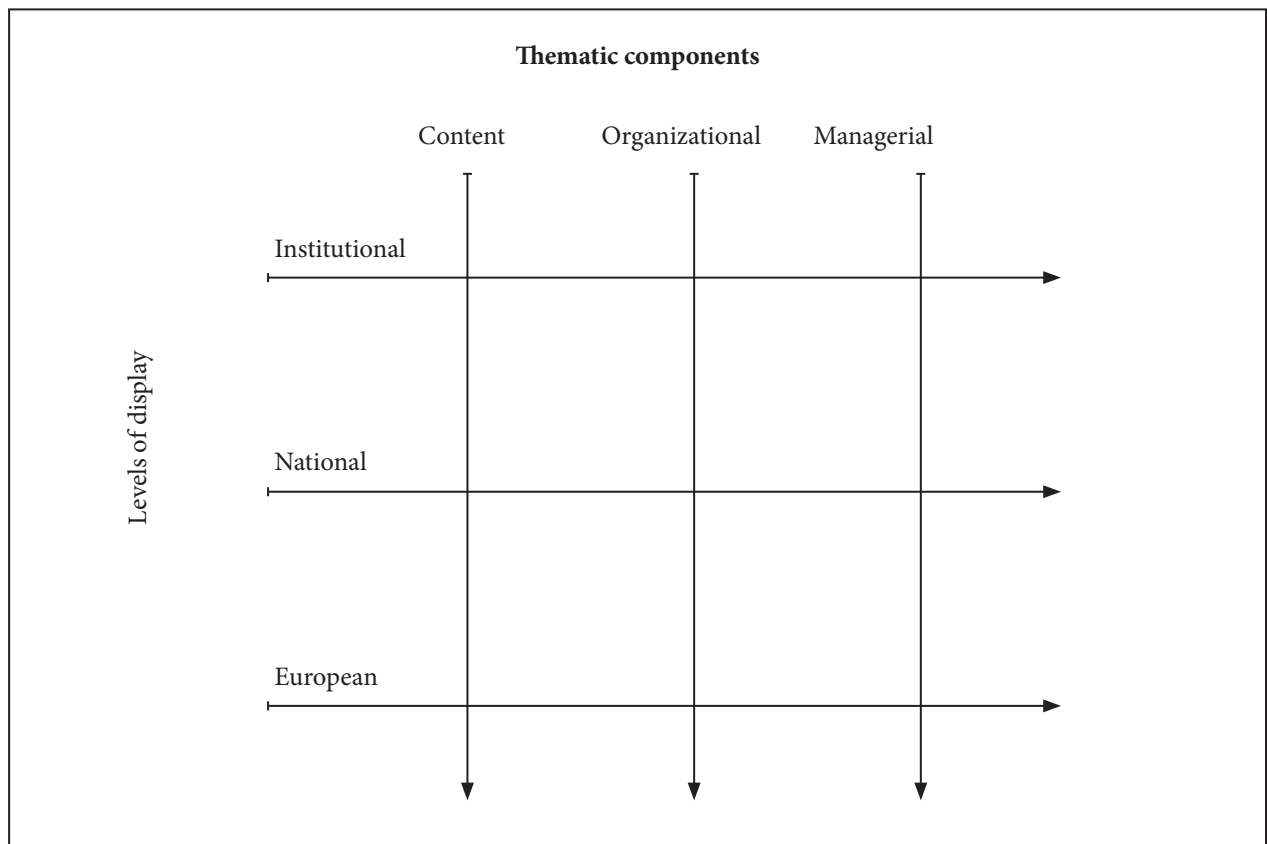


Figure 1: The matrix of higher school lecturers' competence changes



Table 1

STRUCTURE OF COMPETENCY FORMATION ASSESSMENT

Academic staff

Competence profiles	Names of competencies	Competence levels		
		reproductive	productive	creative
Professional and pedagogical	1. Innovative 2. Professional self-improvement 3. Digital 4. Communicative and interactive 5. Managerial	<p>Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are able to update and are opened to new, but tend to traditional solutions of educational problems, fragmentary improve the content, forms and methods of training;</li> <li>• perform scientific tasks of an innovative nature with coordination of mentors;</li> <li>• increase the level of their professional competence by participating in scientific and educational activities at various levels according to the plan of professional development;</li> <li>• partially use digital technologies in the educational process.</li> </ul> <p>The vast majority of lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organizes the educational process on the principles of a knowledge-based approach, use reproductive methods of interaction with students;</li> <li>• perform management tasks with the help of a manager and/or colleagues.</li> </ul>	<p>Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are able to update, to accept new information;</li> <li>• improve the content, forms and methods of teaching in accordance with the needs of the market and employers;</li> <li>• perform scientific tasks of an innovative nature;</li> <li>• systematically increase the level of their professional competence by participating in scientific and educational activities at various levels;</li> <li>• use digital technology, informationally ensure the implementation of the content of educational programs;</li> <li>• organize the educational process according to a competency-based approach, implement interactive methods of interaction with students;</li> <li>• independently perform management tasks;</li> <li>• reasonably use management tools in creating an educational environment of a higher educational institution.</li> </ul>	<p>Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• initiate innovations in the educational process of a higher educational institution;</li> <li>• systematically improve the content, forms and methods of teaching in accordance with the needs of the market and society, specifics of the target audience;</li> <li>• independently perform scientific tasks of an innovative nature;</li> <li>• systematically increase the level of their professional competence through participation in scientific and educational activities at various levels;</li> <li>• initiate activities to improve the skills of lecturers;</li> <li>• confidently use multi-vector digital technologies, informationally ensure the implementation of the content of educational programs;</li> <li>• effectively build interaction with students on the competency-based approach; use different methods of interaction with students (interactive, subject-subject, student-centered. etc.);</li> <li>• successfully solve management problems and achieve high educational results;</li> <li>• effectively create an educational environment of a higher educational institution.</li> </ul>

Competence profiles	Names of competencies	Competence levels		
		reproductive	productive	creative
Social and personal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Socio-cultural</li> <li>2. Professional and personal responsibility</li> <li>3. Leadership</li> <li>4. Civic</li> </ol>	<p>Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• generally support the model of professional behavior, which contributes to the process of harmonious cultural and moral choice, a dialogue of cultures, its humanistic direction, but do not always succeed;</li> <li>• have a sufficient level of administrative and moral responsibility for the results of the educational process;</li> <li>• do not show leadership qualities in interaction with colleagues and students;</li> <li>• do not show a definite civic position, which implies the focus of the educational process on the formation of civic qualities among students, enriching their spiritual, national, linguistic cultures, the broad involvement of young people to civic values and their learning in the process of professional training.</li> </ul>	<p>Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the model of behavior that contributes to harmonious cultural and moral choice, a dialogue of cultures, humanistic direction of pedagogical activities in the process of professional activities;</li> <li>• have a significant level of administrative and moral responsibility for the results of the educational process;</li> <li>• show leadership qualities in interaction with colleagues and students, but not always confident in themselves;</li> <li>• show their civic position, focusing on the educational process on the formation of civic qualities among students, enriching their spiritual, national, linguistic cultures, the broad involvement of young people to civic values and their learning in the process of professional training.</li> </ul>	<p>Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• successfully choose models of behavior that contribute to harmonious cultural and moral choice, a dialogue of cultures, humanistic direction of pedagogical activities in the process of professional activities;</li> <li>• have a high level of administrative and moral responsibility for the results of the educational process;</li> <li>• by the nature of their activities they are universal leaders who are characterized by following their principles, being initiative, group-work, self-confidence, able to show organizational, scientific and technical abilities;</li> <li>• demonstrate their own civic position;</li> <li>• form civic competence among students, enrich their spiritual, national, and linguistic culture, civic values and their knowledge in the process of professional training.</li> </ul>
Academic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research</li> <li>2. International cooperation</li> <li>3. Scientific PR</li> <li>4. Methodological</li> <li>5. Academic integrity</li> </ol>	<p>Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• combine scientific and teaching activities at a sufficient level, fragmentary use results of national and foreign scientific research in daily educational practice;</li> <li>• present and disseminate results of their own research;</li> <li>• are not fully proficient in scientific methodology and research tools;</li> <li>• they comply with the requirements of academic integrity.</li> </ul>	<p>Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• combine scientific and teaching activities; implement the results of national and foreign scientific research in educational practice, attempt to implement research-based education;</li> <li>• present and disseminate results of their own research; have full knowledge of scientific methodology and research tools;</li> <li>• comply with the requirements of academic integrity.</li> </ul>	<p>Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effectively combine scientific and teaching activities;</li> <li>• use the latest results of national and foreign scientific research in educational practice;</li> <li>• implement research-based education;</li> <li>• successfully present and disseminate results of their own research;</li> <li>• are fluent in scientific methodology and research tools;</li> <li>• popularize ideas and adhere to requirements of an academic integrity.</li> </ul>



At the level of educational institutions, it is advisable to introduce an internal system of professional development of University lecturers, based on a differentiated approach to the formation of target groups based on the results of preliminary diagnosis. The content of the program of academic staff's competence development includes such topics of content modules as:

**Module 1. *Diagnostics of competence development of a higher school lecturer***

*The purpose of the module:*

- to identify difficulties in the work of academic staff that reduce the effectiveness of their activities;
- diagnose and self-diagnose lecturers, develop personal programs of competence development.

**Module 2. *Competence paradigm of modern higher education***

*The purpose of the module:*

- to familiarize lecturers with trends in the development of the educational policy in the EU, reforms of the national education system, new requirements for the competence of the lecturer of higher education.

**Module 3. *BarCamp of competence development of academic staff***

*The purpose of the module:*

- implementation of lecturer's personal programs of competence development;
- variability of lecturer's choice of individual strategies of competence development in the framework of the following profiles: professional and pedagogical, social and personal, academic.

**Module 4. *Competency-based practices***

*The purpose of the module:*

- exchanging innovative experiences, an introduction of new educational technologies and research methods in the educational process.

The effectiveness of the implementation of the Program of competence development of lecturers can be provided by relevant electronic educational materials and the Internet platform of scientific and methodological support of professional activities of academic staff.

*Organizational*

Adaptation of higher education goals on a national level to local socio-economic conditions, demographic changes and labour market requirements. The essentially opposite processes of globalization and localization are constantly adjusting the goals of higher education in different EU countries.

The introduction of standardized quality assessment procedures for teachers at the national and institutional levels takes into account such aspects:

- determining a set of requirements for the development of professional competence of lecturers;
- considering the educational results of students as an indicator of a professional activity of lecturers;
- introduction of the procedure of the inspectorate (performance standards) of professional achievements of academic staff as a certain procedure of independent monitoring and evaluation of the quality of their activities;
- implementation of a system of incentives for lecturers, taking into account the results achieved, etc.

To study the experience of the Ukrainian Academy of Acmeology in development of professionalism of academic staff and to intensify its implementation in the work of its international section.

At the institutional level, it is advisable to organize and introduce into the educational practice a system of lecturers' self-assessment (self-evaluation) of the formation of their own competencies in the above-mentioned competence profiles: professional and pedagogical, social and personal, and academic (self-analysis and evaluation of professional competencies are carried out separately). The introduction of the method of self-assessment in the practice of higher school lecturers' activities contributes to their professional development, will make them closer to achieving standardized results of their activities.

*Managerial*

Development of common-European guidelines on standards of academic staffs' performance as a specific recommendation, a competency framework of higher school lecturers' activities. Conducting a clear division of labour responsibilities for academic staff of all categories (assistant, lecturer, associate professor, professor).

Reorganization of the system of management, funding, and management of education through decentralization, deregulation, development of interconnected direct and backward links of higher education institutions with stakeholders.

Achieving transparency and openness of the education management system based on the analysis of ratings of the academic staff of universities, which allows to assess the real state of the problems, to make expected conclusions, to create a database of factual data (evidence), which allows to establish the compliance of their activities with set objectives and goals. Evidence needed to assess, stimulate and guide the development of higher education and its institutions at the national level.

Introduction of institutional, academic and financial autonomy of higher education institutions, the introduction of University management as a new model of institutional management, where the professionalism and competences of a lecturer are key to the effective operation of higher education institutions.

The recommendations have general character and partly reflect the proposals of participating

countries. Details of this proposals contained in the research teams' reports of each country participating international project No. 21720008 "High School Teacher Competences in Change" with the assistance of the International Visegrad Fund and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Thus, a systematic study and assessment of the competencies of academic staffs, the identification in the partner-countries (Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia) certain common factors that affect their activities at the global and local levels, allowed on the basis of an integrated approach to develop a set of recommendations for the standardization of lecturer's activities. It is based on the structural and logical understanding of this phenomenon at the institutional, national and European levels, where standardization covers the content, organizational and managerial aspects of its implementation. The developed recommendations can serve as guidelines for further development of theoretical, practical and diagnostic approaches to standards of academic staffs' activities at different levels: institutional, national and European.

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# CONTENTS

<i>Introduction</i> .....	3
<b>Development of academic staff competences in Ukraine</b> <i>(L. Khoruzha, M. Bratko, O. Kotenko, O. Melnychenko, V. Proshkin)</i> .....	10
<b>Development of academic staff competences in Poland</b> <i>(Ł. Kwadrans, B. Grabowska, A. Minczanowska, E. Smyrnova-Trybulska, A. Szafrńska)</i> .....	24
<b>Development of academic staff competences in Slovakia</b> <i>(B. Kasachova, D. Guffová)</i> .....	35
<b>Development of academic staff competences in Czech Republic</b> <i>(J. Malach, M. Khmura)</i> .....	51
<b>Summarized results of the development of academic staff competences in Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia and Czech Republic: statistics and analytics</b> <i>(V. Proshkin, L. Khoruzha)</i> .....	74
<b>Recommendations on the standardization of academic staff activities and suggestions for the further development of university teachers competences</b> <i>(L. Khoruzha)</i> .....	85
<i>Appendix</i> .....	93