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NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

In recent years, there has been a surge in non-formal education in Ukraine, its spread and impact on various social, age and professional groups. There is also a growing number of people who are professionally engaged in the development of non-formal education, forming innovative techniques and methods that are effective in teaching adults [3]. Positive changes are also taking place in the legislative field. In 2019-2020, preparatory work was carried out on the development of the Law of Ukraine “On Adult Education”, a new concept of *Adult Education* in Ukraine was introduced, and already on February 8, 2022, the Government supported the draft Law “On approval of the Procedure for recognition in higher and professional higher education of learning outcomes, obtained through non-formal and/or informal education” [5].

The development of non-formal education is promoted by such world organizations as the UN, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and others [2]. Non-formal education for Europeans is a part of the concept of *life-long education*, which allows young people and adults to acquire and maintain the skills and competences necessary for adaptation in a global and constantly changing environment. Responding to a greater demand in Europe, non-formal education has been perceived by European employers at the same level with formal education for a considerable period of time. Hence, the development of non-formal education in Ukraine follows the European trends in the modern system of adult and youth education.

Concerning *non-formal education* in Ukraine – it is institutionalized, intentional education which is planned by the subject of educational activity. The determining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an appendix, an alternative and / or complement to the formal education in the process of lifelong learning. It is implemented in order to guarantee the right of access to education for everybody. It is intended for people of any age, but does not necessarily imply an uninterrupted path of education. In particular, it may consist of short-term programs and/or low-intensity programs provided in the form of short courses, workshops and seminars [4, 6].

The recommendations of the EU Council for the Assessment of Non-formal and Informal Education [1] indicate that the evaluation of learning achievements, namely knowledge, skills and competences acquired by means of non-formal and informal education, can play an important role in expanding the opportunities of employment and mobility. It can also increase motivation for continuing education, especially for low-skilled individuals and representatives of socially and economically disadvantaged groups [6].

Meanwhile, many scholars agree that these issues are particularly relevant for Ukraine, as the service market of non-formal (and informal) education has been developing rapidly in the last 10 years. First of all, the regulator of formal education is losing the Soviet system of public procurement, often having no idea what profession and how many people are required by the modern labour market [4]. Secondly, practical skills and flexibility of employees are appreciated more due to the recent boost of the main branches of national economy: industry, construction, agriculture, trade, management. Finally, the COVID-19 crisis and the today’s military conflict on the territory of Ukraine have radically changed the way people live, work and study [2]. Thus, the

question arises, “how many non-formal education institutions do we have and what way do they function”? The demanded information about them is still officially absent. However, for the present, the EU and the OECD, as well as the UNESCO are paying much attention to this issue [2, 6].

It is worth mentioning that non-formal education may include programs that promote literacy for adults and young people, education for non-attending schoolchildren, develop life and work skills which are aimed at social or cultural development [3, 6]. Being a refugee, an internally displaced person or a temporary unemployed worker, each Ukrainian citizen has to be guaranteed the right to education. It encourages the development of non-discriminatory learning and training. This type of education also helps to ensure equal access to studying, improve women’s access to vocational training, science, technology and continuing education, increase their participation in both private and public activities, from household decision-makers to active citizens in the community affairs and national development. The effectiveness of such literacy and non-formal education programmes are bolstered by family, community and parental involvement [3].

All things considered, non-formal education in Ukraine is developing in the context of European trends, perceives European values, which have been constantly implemented in its varied practice: courses, workshops, seminars, training. Among the common goals and values of non-formal education in Ukraine and European countries respectively are: creating conditions for leadership, communication, language learning, teamwork skills, learning social roles; developing critical thinking, self-awareness and awareness of others, responsibility; socialization, creative realization and professional self-determination of adults and youth as well as promoting active citizenship, supporting community activities [2, 6]. Thus, being experienced, meeting the challenges of complex multilateral world and following all the recommendations given by the European Council, Ukraine will be ready to represent its own competitive system of non-formal education to the foreign partners in the nearest future.

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