

## Secondary education reform in independent Ukraine: the evolution of national legislation (1991–2017)

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### Abstract

This article deals with the features of the evolution of national lawmaking as a component of the state policy on general secondary education reform in independent Ukraine, in the context of socio-political, socio-economic and pedagogical changes that occurred during 1991-2017. In accordance with the following periodization, one can observe three main phases: I (1991-2002) – the period of national self-identification in general secondary education; II (2002-2013) – the period of formation of state policy on general secondary education in a new socio-economic context; III (2013-2017) – a period of comprehensive modernization of general secondary education. Each of these periods has been marked by the development and adoption of a number of strategic regulatory documents that determined or should have determined the development of general secondary education. An analysis of the documents submitted by the international scientific community indicates the development of a new approach, different from the Soviet one, for the development of general secondary education in independent Ukraine based on European values, principles (national, democratic, humanistic, child-centered, etc.), the creation of a national education system for its integration into global and European educational and research spaces.

L'articolo rivela le caratteristiche dell'evoluzione legislativa nazionale come componente della politica statale sulla riforma generale dell'istruzione secondaria nell'Ucraina indipendente, nel contesto dei cambiamenti sociopolitici, socioeconomici e pedagogici nel periodo 1991-2017. In conformità con la seguente periodizzazione sviluppata: I (1991-2002) – il periodo di autoidentificazione nazionale nell'istruzione secondaria generale; II (2002-2013) – il periodo di formazione della politica statale sull'istruzione secondaria generale in un nuovo contesto metodologico e socioeconomico; III (2013-2017) – un periodo di modernizzazione generale dell'istruzione secondaria generale. Ciascuno di questi periodi è stato caratterizzato dallo sviluppo e dall'adozione di una serie di documenti normativi strategici che hanno determinato o avrebbero dovuto determinare lo sviluppo dell'istruzione secondaria generale. L'analisi dei documenti presentati dalla comunità scientifica internazionale indica lo sviluppo di una nuova metodologia, diversa da quella sovietica, per lo sviluppo dell'istruzione secondaria generale nell'Ucraina indipendente basata su valori, principi europei (nazionali, democratici, umanistici, bambino-centrici, ecc.), la creazione di un sistema educativo nazionale per la sua integrazione nello spa-

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zio educativo e di ricerca mondiale ed europeo. Le nuove conoscenze storiche e pedagogiche ottenute contribuiranno alla fornitura di informazioni e studi sulla fonte della ricerca pertinente.

**Keywords:** Ukraine; general secondary education reform; national legislation; pedagogical thought

**Parole chiave:** Ucraina; riforma generale dell'istruzione secondaria; legislazione nazionale; pensiero pedagogico

## 1. Introduction

The current innovative processes in the educational sphere make topical the need for an interpretation of the education reforms carried out during the years of Ukrainian independence. At this time in Ukraine take place social, political, economic and cultural changes, as well as the integration of Ukraine's education in the global and the European education and research area.

When the Soviet Union collapsed and the independence of Ukraine was proclaimed in 1991, pedagogical thinking in relation to the long-term development of secondary education was intensified during the development of democratic society. The ideas are reflected in numerous individual and collective concepts developed and approved in the state regulatory documents that defined theoretical and methodological principles of secondary education.

The change of the social paradigm resulted in the transformation of essential educational components, as well as value perspectives, which are considered to be fundamental principles of further education development. Democratic changes in society directly contributed to Ukraine's national revival, particularly of the nation's language, education and culture. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the period of secondary education reform, which has not been thoroughly studied in a historical and pedagogical context. It is reasonable to start analyzing the period by interpreting the process of national law-making in order to obtain new scientific knowledge as well as familiarize the international scientific and pedagogical community with transformations taking place in the educational sphere of independent Ukraine under difficult internal and external conditions.

A historiographic search showed that Ukrainian scientists are investigating the causes, process, basic legal documents, origins and general trends of reforming the general secondary education reform in independent Ukraine. Academician O. Savchenko analyzes the main directions of school education reform in the first years of Ukraine's independence (Savchenko, 1998, pp. 2-6). Academician V. Kremen defines the main achievements in the development of the national education system and the democratization of the educational space in the first decade of the independent Ukraine (Kremen, 2003). The scientist A. Makhinko describes the features of reforming secondary education and, in particular, the fundamental principles of innovations in Ukraine's secondary schools from 1991 to 2010 (Makhinko, 2010).

In our previous works, we reveal the causes, principles, directions, course and results of reforming school education in Ukraine in the 20th and early 21st centuries and the historiography of the problem (Berezivska, 2009; 2010; 2011; Berezivska & Zhizhko, 2019, pp. 88-101). The results of the historiographic analysis indicate that the least studied periods, compared with the previous ones, is the period of general secondary education reforming in the period of the independent Ukraine (1991-2017). An important source for our research is the scientific publication "National Report on the State and Prospects of Education in Ukraine", edited by the president of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, Academician V. Kremen (2016). This publication highlights the features of state policy in the field of education during 1991-2016 (Kremen, 2016, pp. 9-10). Today, in Ukrainian historiography, there are no works (e.g. articles, monographs, dissertations) that would systematically analyze national educational lawmaking as a component of general secondary education reform in independent Ukraine.

Amid the research conducted by non-Ukrainian academicians, there were a small number of works on the history of school education reform in Ukraine as a whole, including the period under consideration, were revealed. For example, Professor Elden W. Craddock argues for the growth of democratic transformations, the formation of civil society in Ukraine in the early 2000s, and for the need to transform secondary schools into agents of change for the development of a democratic society (Craddock, 2005, pp. 24-30).

The chapter *Ukraine: History of the school system* of the monograph *The Education Systems of Europe* (2007) by foreign scientists Wolfgang Hellwig and Yana Lipenkova merits attention (Hellwig & Lipenkova, 2007, pp. 808-809). The authors positively evaluated the changes that occurred in school education with the declaration of Ukraine's independence on August 24, 1991 and the adoption of the regulatory documents (Law of Ukraine "On Education" (1991) and, State National Program "Education" (Ukraine of XXI Century) (1993), which were new and fundamentally different from Soviet laws. Scientists' opinions, which are in tune with ours, are valuable about the period 1991-1993 in Ukraine, "which represented the beginning of the reorganization of the education system, turned out to be a phase of struggle against the Soviet legacy" (Hellwig & Lipenkova, 2007, pp. 808-809). We agree with the other conclusions of the researchers: "Now in Ukraine people are learning to be active, to participate in public and political life, to defend their views and thoughts and apply democratic values" (Hellwig & Lipenkova, 2007, pp. 808-809). It is important that the features of changes in Ukraine's post-Soviet education system are considered in parallel with the same processes in other countries of the world (Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Italy, etc.). Adjunct professor of educational policy and leadership, Benjamin Kutsyuruba, highlights changes in education in general and in the Ukrainian school in particular in the context of philosophical, ideological, socio-political and economic transformations in the independent Ukraine (1991-2005) after the collapse of the USSR, which became, according to him, a critical starting point in the development of Ukrainian national identity (Kutsyuruba, 2011, pp. 287-309).

Several other studies reviewing the history of school reforms across various countries. For example, in the book *Educational Reform in Europe: History, Culture, and Ideology* (2014), edited by Richard R. Verdugo, a group of scientists discuss the history of educational reforms during various historical periods in a number of European countries (Finland, Sweden, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, England) (Verdugo, 2014). The history of general secondary education reform in Ukraine is not highlighted in these works. However, these papers are informative in relation to the methodological perspective.

An analysis of foreign historiography suggests that studying the problems of the history of school education in the independent Ukraine is gaining relevance in the global and European scientific space. This is strategically important for Ukrainian education, science, and the state. Moreover, the unbiased evaluative judgments of foreign scholars regarding educational changes in Ukraine and the methodology for studying the history of school reforms are extremely valuable for our study in a comparative and comparable dimension. Given this, as well as the lack of integral work in Ukrainian and foreign historiography, there is no doubt about the need to obtain historical and pedagogical knowledge about the history of reform of general secondary education of Ukraine in the international scientific space and therefore the relevance of scientific research.

The purpose of our study is to reveal the features of the evolution of national law-making as a component of state policy on general secondary education reform in the independent Ukraine in the context of socio-political, socio-economic and pedagogical changes during 1991-2017 in order to obtain new historical and pedagogical knowledge and informative support from relevant research. However we do not intend to highlight the course and level of the reform implementation; this may be the subject of a separate scientific study.

## 2. Methodology

For this purpose various research methods were employed. General research methods, including historical and pedagogical analysis, synthesis, generalization, retrospective, and chronological methods, became a basis for studying organizational aspects and procedural, content components of secondary education reform. Constructive and genetic methods made it possible to develop a periodization of public policy in the field of secondary education in the independent Ukraine. The terminological analysis of specific books provided an opportunity to define terms in accordance with the subject matter of the study in a pedagogical context. Comparative and correlative analysis made it possible to typologize legislative and regulatory documents and draw specific conclusions. The paradigmatic method helped to analyze and compare basic legislative documents or drafts that cover new secondary education models. Specific historical methods allowed studying the sources from a broad socio-pedagogical stance and describe their features.

## 3. Periodization

Our study considers relevant periodization of the development of secondary education in Ukraine designed by scientists according to different criteria.

The research publication *The national report on the state and prospects of the development of education in Ukraine* (2016), produced by the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine, covers tendencies, achievements and mistakes of public policy in the field of education during the period of 1991 to 2016. Three main periods of the development of the national education system were stated in the report. The 1st period (1991-2002): the national self-identification in education, the 2nd one (2003-2013): the formation of state policy in terms of new methodological, social, and economic contexts, and the 3rd one (2014-2016): complex modernization of the educational sphere (Kremen, 2016, pp. 8-10).

Taking into account the works of Ukrainian scientists (Kremen, 2003, pp. 8-10; Bidenko, 2009, pp. 213-225; Kantor, 2017, pp. 282-289; Krasniakov, 2018), we suggest distinguishing three periods of the formation of national public policy regarding secondary education reform and the development of appropriate education legislation in Ukraine from 1991 to 2017. The periods were marked by the development and approval of a number of several strategic regulatory documents. The 1st period (1991-2002) is a period of the national self-identification in secondary education; the 2nd one (2002-2013) is a period of the formation of public policy in relation to secondary education in new methodological, social, and economic contexts; and the 3rd one (2013-2017) is a period of the complex modernization of the secondary education system.

## 4. The period of national self-identification in secondary education (1991–2002)

For a better understanding of the national path of post-Soviet school reforms, it is useful to briefly recall the pre-conditions of this process. In the late '80s – to early '90s of the twentieth century Ukraine was the part of the Soviet Union. At this time an active restructuring of education was proclaimed and the social and pedagogical movement for general secondary school reform was intensified. It occurred on the basis of the following principles: democratization, de-unification, de-ideologization and national issues. In the context of the Law of the Ukrainian SSR *On Languages in the Ukrainian SSR* (1989), the Declaration on State Sovereignty (1990) and with the aim of creating a national school system, the Ministry of Public Education of the Ukrainian SSR began reforming general second-

ary education in the following areas: development of the national educational legislation, the revival of the Ukrainian school, and the restoration of the national component in the content of general secondary education. At that time, even in the Soviet reality, the formation of the national educational policy, in particular the development of legal documents for the education sector, began and was intensified with the declaration of Ukraine's independence on August 24, 1991.

Secondary education reform in Ukraine during the period of 1991 to 2002 can be assessed as a transitional and fundamental period, a kind of bridge between the Soviet authoritarian paradigm of education of the past and a new democratic personality-oriented one, that opened new horizons for education development. At this time, the Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine was established in 1992, and it was considered the highest state branch research institution providing scientific and methodological support to the national education system.

A significant achievement within secondary education reform during this period was the development of its legislative and regulatory basis, which took social and pedagogical thought into account. The main documents are as follows: the Law of Ukraine *On Education* (1991); the Concept of secondary school of Ukraine by the Ministry of Education of Ukraine (1991) (the draft was developed jointly with the Research Institute of Pedagogy of the USSR and adopted by the Board of the Ministry of Education of Ukraine on September 12, 1991); the State National *Osvita* (Education) Programme (Ukraine of the 21st century) (1993); a new version of the Law of Ukraine *On Education* (1996); the law of Ukraine *On Secondary Education* (1999); the Concept of the state standard of secondary education (1996); the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine *On the Transition of Secondary Schools to the New Content, Structure, and 12-Year Study* (2000); and the Concept of secondary education (12-year school) by the Ministry of Education of Ukraine (2001) (the draft was discussed by teachers and the public during the 2000-2001 academic year, and it was approved by the Board of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and by the Presidium of the Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine on November 22, 2001).

A partnership of the Ministry of National Education of Ukraine and the scientific and educational community resulted in the Law of Ukraine *On Education*, in which education was considered a top-priority field in the social and economic development of society. It defines the following basic principles of education: humanistic, democratic, accessible and equal conditions for the full realisation of children's abilities, talents and intellectual development; priority of human spiritual values over political and class interests; fundamental unity between education and national history and culture; independence of the education system from political, social, and religious organisations; secular and scientific nature of education; integration with science, industry, and international education; flexibility and practicability of education; equivalence of state administration and public self-government; and lifelong education (Zakon Ukrainy pro Osvitu, 2002, pp. 3-27). This document, being a conglomerate of Ukrainian teachers' and scientists' creativity, is the first national one in our independent state. During the period of 1993 to 2003 it underwent changes.

After the adoption of the Law of Ukraine *On Education*, the 1st Congress of Ukraine's educationalists (1992) approved the State National *Osvita* (Education) Programme (Ukraine of the 21st century), adopted by the decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on November 3, 1993. The Programme was produced to realise the Law of Ukraine *On Education*. It covers its purpose – prioritizing education development as a means of simultaneous development for the Ukrainian state. It also contains the following strategic tasks of education reform: the revival and development of the national education system; raising the level of education in Ukraine to that of the developed countries of the world; overcoming the monopolist position of the state in the educational sphere; and the formation of a multivariate investment policy in the field of education.

It's worth focusing attention on the chapter titled "Secondary education". It presents a radically modified structure of school education: from the single-type Soviet model to a multi-type one. According to the Programme, Ukrainian pupils got the opportunity to receive secondary education in three-stage system in educational institutions: primary school (stage 1), secondary school (stage 2), and high school (stage 3). In addition, the following types of secondary institutions were legalised: new types of schools (gymnasiums, lyceums, special institutions for gifted children, schools (classes) with an in-depth focus on certain subjects, educational complexes, Sunday schools, private schools, etc.); and boarding schools focused on specialized, in-depth training in technical, humanitarian, sport, artistic, aesthetic and other spheres, which also opened separate classes for gifted children.

The Programme was a relevant one, since it defined the following strategy of the development of education in Ukraine for the coming years and the future of the 21st century: development of a sustainable system of continuing education in order to achieve high education levels, maintenance of the possibility of spiritual self-improvement of individuals, and development of intellectual and cultural potential as the highest value of the nation (Derzhavna Natsionalna Prohrama "Osvita", 1993).

After the adoption of the Programme, school education experienced significant changes. In particular a new version of the Law of Ukraine On Education (1996); Law of Ukraine On Secondary Education (1999); and the Concept of the state standard of secondary education (1996). These documents declared reforms in the educational sphere of the independent Ukraine.

However, being an integral component of continuing education secondary education of Ukraine required radical changes in the context of integration and globalization of "the world's social, economic, and cultural processes", and due to the prospects for the development of state for the next two decades. At the state level, the task was to modernize the goal of school education and accept new curricula and duration of studies (Pro Perekhid Zahalnoosvitnikh Navchalnykh Zakladiv na Novyi Zmist, Strukturu i 12-richnyi Termin Navchannia, 2000, pp. 1-2). These statements were proclaimed in the decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine *On the Transition of Secondary Schools to the New Content, Structure, and 12-Year Study* (2000).

Thereby, there was a need to develop the Concept of secondary education (a 12-year school). It was discussed by teachers and the public during the period 2000-2001, and then it was approved by the decree of the Board of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and by the Presidium of the Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine in 2001 (Kontseptsiia 12-richnoi Zahalnoi Serechnoi Osvity) (Proekt, 2000, pp. 10-31).

Undoubtedly, the State National *Osvita* (Education) Programme (Ukraine of the 21st century) set the priorities for the development of school education and pedagogical principles of education reform, which were then implemented in practice. However, the pace and depth of transformation did not meet the requirements of individuals, the society and the state. In this regard there was a need "for radical modernization of the sphere" (Kremen, 2003, p. 178). It was noted in the National doctrine of the development of education, approved at the 2nd all-Ukrainian Congress of educationalists in 2001 and adopted by the president of Ukraine in 2002. It was the start of a new period of secondary education reform, which required an objective and impartial assessment.

According to the academician V. Kremen (who served as the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine from 2000 to 2005), 11 years of development of the Ukrainian education system "did not avoid contradictions and difficulties, but the main thing was the tendency towards dynamism and modernization". The scientist identified the following main achievements of the development of the national education system and of democratization in the field of education: development of a new legislative basis, creation of national textbooks and educational press,

modernization of the content of education, and the variability of the system of educational institutions and educational programs (Kremen, 2003, p. 178).

We would like to mention one more opinion, discussed by the scientists of the NAES of Ukraine:

The period of 1991 to 2002 was marked by the development of a dynamic and self-sufficient national system of education that maintained the progressive traditions of the past and, at the same time, it began corresponding to public relations and accumulated innovative potential for future development. The period of national self-identification started in 1991, when laws on education and scientific and technical activities were adopted, but this period resulted in the disintegration of the Ukrainian education system with the post-Soviet educational space, development of the national educational legislation, and adoption of the National doctrine of education development” (Kremen, 2016, p. 4).

Thus, the period from 1991 to 2002 is characterized by the development of the national educational legislation, new methodological principles of the state educational policy, and the intensification of pedagogical thinking in relation to the future development of secondary education.

This period ends with the adoption of the Concept of secondary education (a 12-year school). The Concept defines the principles for modernization of secondary education and a secondary school functioning with a 12-year period of study (Kremen, Liashenko, Maksymenko & Topuzov, 2015).

## **5. The period of formation of public policy in the sphere of secondary education in terms of new methodological, social and economic context (2002-2013)**

During the period from 2002 to 2013 “the state education policy was carried out under conditions of the European integration and the world globalization” (Kremen, 2016, p.4). The second period was marked by the following strategically important documents: the National doctrine of the development of education and the National strategy of the development of education in Ukraine for the period through 2021 (Natsionalna Doktryna Rozvytku Osvity, 2002, pp. 4-6). The former document was adopted by the Decree of the President of Ukraine in 2002. The latter was approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine in 2013 (Pro Natsionalnu Stratehiiu Rozvytku Osvity v Ukraini na Period do 2021 Roku, 2013, pp. 54-67). We shall characterise them in brief.

The National doctrine of the development of education (2002) should provide “sustainable and advanced innovative development of education” over a period of 25 years for the sake of an “individual’s development, self-assertion, and self-realization through life” (Pro Natsionalnu Doktrynu Rozvytku Osvity: Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrainy vid 17 Kvit. 2002 r, 2002, pp. 4-6).

According to V. Kremen, the former Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine, the main task of the document was “to bring the education system in line with the needs of the 21st century and the needs and interests of the Ukrainian citizens for the sake of their development”, and “for the sake of dynamic progress of our country in the context of the European and world civilizations” (Kremen, 2001, pp. 1-2).

The National doctrine of the development of education defines the system of conceptual ideas and views on the strategy and main directions of education development, particularly secondary education, in the first quarter of the 21st century (Pro Natsionalnu Doktrynu, 2002, pp. 4-6). The document considered the national character of education to be one of its main priorities. It provided and specified equal access to quality education and continuousness of education, the introduction of information and communication technologies in the education system, and

combined education and science for the sake of modernizing the education system. Moreover, great attention was paid to the strategy of language education, teachers' training, and international cooperation and integration in the field of education. The document considered education to be a driving force for the development of civil society, and a basis for ensuring people's health. The implementation of the National doctrine should contribute to the transition to humanistic and innovative education.

In order to solve the presented problems, Ukrainian teachers developed and approved a number of concepts, among them the Concept of the State program of the development of education for the period from 2006 to 2010 (2006), and the Concept of the State goal-oriented School of the future social program for the period from 2007 to 2010 (2007).

The Concept of the State program of the development of education for the period from 2006 to 2010 approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 12 July 2006 was aimed "at enlarging the number of educated people and at integration of Ukraine into the European education area" (Pro Skhvalennia Kontseptsii Derzhavnoi Prohramy Rrozvytku Osvity na 2006-2010 Roky, 2019).

The Concept of the State goal-oriented *School of the future* social program for the period from 2007 to 2010 was produced in order "to improve the national system of secondary education, to find effective ways to improve the quality of educational services, and to develop an innovative model of the educational *School of the future* institution, a kind of standard for organising education process in an educational institution" (Pro Skhvalennia Kontseptsii Derzhavnoi Tsilovoi Sotsialnoi Prohramy 'Shkola Maibutnoho' na 2007–2010 rr., 2007, pp. 82-85).

According to the document, its purpose is to improve education services and test innovative models of the newest institutions. Their activities were aimed at advancing the development of the education system. The Program covered the following tasks: to raise the quality of education services by establishing educational centers; to improve the system of upbringing a person of high morality and culture; to establish and test innovative models from the newest institutions, providing them with scientific and methodological support, materials and technical equipment; to ensure equal access to high-quality education; to create conditions for pupils to choose the newest institutions of their future profession according to their individual characteristics and abilities, and while taking the needs of the labor market into account; to encourage pupils to develop their desire for professional self-realization; and to introduce pedagogical innovations and new technologies. The document also defines the ways of solving anticipated problems, the deadlines, and the expected results of its implementation.

The National strategy of the development of education in Ukraine for the period through 2021 (2013) was produced "due to the necessity for improving the quality and competitiveness of education in new economic, social, and cultural conditions, and intensification of Ukraine's integration into the international education area". The document outlines the following goal: to increase access to high-quality and competitive education in accordance with the requirements for innovative stable social and economic development and ensure an individual's development, taking into account his or her individual abilities and needs for a lifelong learning. It also defines strategic directions and primary tasks that should be realized through state education policy in Ukraine for the period till 2021. In particular, there is a focus on the following tasks, which should be realized in the secondary education system: compulsory secondary education for all children and young people; optimization of the system in educational institutions taking into account the demographic, economic, and social prospects of regional development and social needs; diversifying of models for organizing education; creating favorable conditions for the development of private educational institutions' systems; modernization of the content, forms, and methods of education processes in terms of personal orientation and the competence approach; improvement of educational processes through the

introduction of achievements of psychological and pedagogical science, pedagogical innovations, and information and communication technology; creating favorable conditions for setting differentiation of training, improvement of vocational guidance and training, core training, and individual approach towards pupils' education development taking into account their personal needs, interests, and abilities.

The implementation of the National strategy should contribute to the organization of the education system for a new generation, which would promote individual progress and intellect; development of Ukrainian educational legislation for efficient regulating the implementation of strategic directions in education development in Ukraine, effective functioning of all educational subsystems; popularization of experience regarding successful education reform; improving the quality of national education and promoting innovative developments in education in accordance with international standards. In general, all this will help to significantly increase the intellectual, cultural, spiritual, and moral potential of society and that of individuals (Pro Natsionalnu Stratehiu, 2013, pp. 54-67).

During the period from 2002 to 2013 new methodological principles of secondary education were modernized under the conditions of European integration and civilizational challenges. It means that a new paradigm of humanistic innovative education was developed. However, "the national education contradicted to the best European and world practices". In particular, in 2010 the process of transitioning to a 12-year secondary education was annihilated without sound reason (Kremen, 2016, p. 4).

## **6. The period of complex modernization of the secondary education system (2013-2017)**

The secondary education reform during the period from 2013 to 2017 took place during the following events: the Revolution of Dignity (21 November 2013 to 22 February 2014), the actualization of European values, the signing of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union, a socio-economic crisis and Russian aggression. It resulted in the need to analyse the achievements and prospects of education, which is regarded as a foundation of Ukraine's development, in line with the 21st century challenges of European integration and globalization.

In order to implement the National strategy of the development of education in Ukraine for the period till 2021 and due to the Order of the Ministry of Education of Ukraine No. 1314 (issued on November 21, 2012), the Institute of Education Problems of the NAES of Ukraine developed an original document, the Concept of a child-friendly school (2014) (Bekh, 2014, pp. 23-32). The authors of the document consider it to be a relevant one, since there is "a need to accumulate and discuss the best practices regarding favorable conditions for providing integral well-being of children in secondary education establishments and popularization of this idea among teachers' community" (Bekh, 2014, pp. 23-32).

The document has the following structural components: grounding of the problem, regulatory basis for its development, aim and tasks, theoretical and methodological principles and content, school conditions, and expected results of the Concept realisation. If it is successfully implemented a system of child-friendly schools should appear.

The Concept of the development of education in Ukraine for the period from 2015 to 2025 is among the other public initiatives (Proekt Kontseptsii Rozvytku Osvity Ukrainy na Period 2015-2025, Rokiv, 2014, p. 76). The draft document was developed by the Strategic *Osvita* (Education) advisory group, headed by Heorhyi Kasianov. It was established within the framework of the joint project of the *Vidrodzhennia* (Revival) International Fund and the *Instytut Rozvytku Osvity* (Institute of development of education) Charitable Foundation in July 2014 to provide advisory and expert support to the Ministry of Education and Science in order to develop the *Roadmap of Ed-*

*ucation Reform*. Ukrainian teachers as well as scientists from the Netherlands and Lithuania, took part in its development. The concept is an original one, and it has the following logical structure: problems, experience, prospects; the main directions of the reform; the content of education; standards; programs (preschool education, secondary education, civic education); access to quality education; teachers' staff, teachers' professional development, and social status; teachers' training; and management, financing, and quality control. The authors identified the problems in the field of education, which had acquired a systemic nature, and proved the need for systemic education reform. They consider the National doctrine of the development of education to be "the most striking example of imitation of changes" (Proekt Kontseptsii Rozvytku Osvity Ukrainy na Period 2015-2025, Rokiv, 2014, p. 76).

The Concept of secondary schools of Ukraine (2015) prepared by the scientists of the NAES of Ukraine (Liashenko, 2015) is an innovative one. It was produced in terms of the new methodological principles, taking into account the positive and negative results of secondary education reform, since the adoption of the Concept of secondary school of Ukraine in 1991. The following reasons of the document were grounded by the authors: "globalization challenges of today cause the necessity to coordinate such parameters of secondary school as purpose, content, organization, and results of training in accordance with international tendencies of education development" (Liashenko, 2015). The concept defines the aim, tasks, and principles of the activities, content and organization, and structure of schools; the educational potential of school on the basis of national orientation, humanization and democratization of education, cultural and multicultural orientation, social responsibility, self-activity, and self-regulation; and the stages and conditions of its implementation. According to the Concept, primary school (grades 1-4) provides primary education; gymnasium (grades 5-9) covers basic secondary education; and lyceum (grades 10-12) provides an opportunity to receive secondary and/or vocational education depending on the specialization. Moreover, the document covers the issues related to information support in and informatization of the school learning environment; psychological support in the education process; school management; and monitoring of the quality of school education.

The Concept of primary education (2016) developed by the specialists of the Department of primary education of the Institute of Pedagogy at the NAES of Ukraine (Savchenko, 2016, pp. 1-4), also deserves our attention. Based on new methodological principles, the following was grounded by the authors: the purpose of a 4-year primary education, and factors influencing its quality; the main problems and directions of modernizing primary education; its content and structure (the 1st cycle, grades 1-2, has an adaptive and game nature; the 2nd cycle, grades 3-4, is the basic one); organization of the education process; control and evaluation of pupils' educational achievements; and description of primary school-leavers.

The discussion of new prospects for the development of secondary education resulted in the development of the Concept of the state policy in the field of secondary education reform New Ukrainian school for the period till 2029 (2016), (Kontseptsiia Realizatsii Derzhavnoi Polityky u Sferi Reformuvannia Zahalnoi Srednoi Osvity 'Nova Ukrainaska Shkola' na Period do 2029, Roku, 2019) approved by the Ordinance of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. The document covers the following: the reasons for its development (the need to solve the problem of degradation of secondary education quality during the period from 1992 to 2016); the aim of school education reform (radical and systemic secondary education reform); the approval of new state standards of secondary education, taking into consideration competencies necessary for successful self-realisation of an individual; the introduction of a new principle of partnership pedagogy based on cooperation between a pupil, their parents and the teacher; increasing teachers' motivation by paying higher wages, providing teachers with academic freedom, and encouraging their professional development; the introduction of a child-centred principle (a focus on pupils' needs); im-

provement of the education process; development of school structures that will help pupils to study new content in education and acquire the key competencies necessary for successful self-realization; decentralization and effective secondary education management; equitable distribution of public funds, which will ensure equal access to quality education for all children; organization of modern learning environments that will provide pupils, teachers, and parents with the necessary conditions, means and technologies for training; organization of conditions for training pupils in rural areas or for regular transportation to schools). The Concept defines the ways and means to realize the reform (taking into account the world's best practices, of developing fundamentally new state standards of secondary education, reforming pedagogy and secondary education management system, moving to a 12-year secondary school structure with a 3-year core school of academic or professional orientation, improving the system of government financing of secondary education, etc.) (Kontseptsiiia Realizatsii Derzhavnoi Polityky u Sferi Reformuvannia Zahalnoi Serednoi Osvity 'Nova Ukrainska Shkola' na Period do 2029, Roku, 2019).

This state document became the governmental agenda for action for modernization of school education. The Concept of secondary school of Ukraine prepared by the scientists of the NAES of Ukraine made its basis (NAPN Ukrainy, Postanova Zahalnykh Zboriv NAPN Ukrainy, 2018).

The greatest achievement of this period is, of course, the adoption of the Law of Ukraine On Education (2017), developed as a result of cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Science and the NAES of Ukraine (Zakon Ukrainy "Pro Osvitu", 2019). Article 12 titled "Complete Secondary Education" defines the following aim: the intellectual development, training and socialisation of an individual, who is ready to live in society and communicate with nature, who is eager for self-improvement and lifelong learning and ready for a scrupulous life choices and self-realisation, responsibility, labour and civic activities. According to the law, complete secondary education has three stages: primary education (grades 1-4), basic secondary education (grades 5-9), and core secondary education (grades 10-12).

In the course of the study, it was found out that Ukrainian teachers took an active part in developing the strategic aims, principles, and directions of education in Ukraine. The National report on the state and prospects of the development of education in Ukraine states "the NAES of Ukraine took an active part in developing regulatory, theoretical, scientific, and methodological principles of the new national system based on democracy and humanocentrism" (Kremen, 2016, p. 27).

## 7. Conclusions

After gaining state independence, one of the priorities of educational policy in Ukraine in the context of fundamental socio-political, socio-economic and pedagogical changes was the reform of general secondary education. This process took place in conditions of the struggle against the Soviet communist past for the state independence and democratic values, with Russian aggression toward Ukrainian sovereignty. From the first national Law of Ukraine *On Education* in 1991 and with the new Law of Ukraine *On Education* in 2017, reform was accompanied by significant and internal political, economic and social difficulties. It had an undulating and a controversial nature but it united teachers and scientists and activated independent pedagogical opinion. It is necessary to note that the creation of conceptual texts became a new type of activity of the Ukrainian teachers, because throughout the Soviet era they were usually guided by the documents developed mainly by all-Union and Russian party and state bodies. The ideas of Ukrainian teachers did not influence the planned educational changes in the Soviet era.

The achievements of this process include the development of the national educational legislation by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, and the educational community, which ensured the following: the transition from the Soviet authoritarian paradigm of education to a new democratic personality-oriented one, the revival and creation of a national system of general secondary education, the transition from a Soviet-type model of the same type in a diverse structure to a 12-year secondary school with a three-year specialized school of an academic or professional direction and the development of fundamentally new state standards for general secondary education.

Each of the periods we have analyzed (I (1991-2002) – the period of national self-identification in general secondary education, II (2002-2013) – the period of formation of the state policy on general secondary education in a new methodological and socio-economic context; III (2013-2017) – the period of the comprehensive modernization of general secondary education), was marked by the creation and adoption of a number of strategic regulatory documents that determined or should have determined the development of general secondary education. They were the Concept of formation of the system of secondary educational institutions for the development of talented children (1996); the Concept of a 12-year secondary education (2001); the Concept of the state policy in the field of secondary education reform *New Ukrainian school* for the period till 2029 (2016); the State National *Osvita* (Education) Program (Ukraine of the 21st century) (1993); the National doctrine of the development of education (2002); the National strategy of the development of education in Ukraine for the period till 2021 (2013); and the Law of Ukraine On Education (1991, 2017).

The study revealed generally positive trends in national lawmaking. The creation and improvement of educational legislation took place in accordance with society's need for the development of a national, democratic and humanistic Ukrainian school and achieved the strategic goal – integration into the world and the European educational space. At this time pedagogical thought intensified regarding the prospective development of general secondary education based on European values and principles (national, democratic, humanistic, child-centric, differentiation, individualization, variability, etc.) and took into account the achievements of the Ukrainian and foreign pedagogical science and educational practice when developing regulatory documents. In addition, negative trends were identified too, particularly the inhibitory impact on the implementation of educational reforms of the unstable political and socio-economic situation in the state, the struggle between the old and new philosophies of education, and the unpreparedness for changes in the main subjects of educational reform – teachers, the lack of an adequate financial and material base, etc.

In general, the analysis of the presented documents testifies to the development of a new methodology, different from the Soviet one, for the development of general secondary education in independent Ukraine. However, according to Ukrainian scientists, “so far it has not been possible to fully implement the productive ideas and approaches laid down in the reform basis, to avoid a number of significant errors and miscounts, which have led to a number of problems and shortcomings in modern school education.” In particular, the task of improving the quality of general secondary education with the aim of integrating Ukraine into European and global educational and research spaces, is currently being updated.

All the aspects of this topic cannot be covered in one article. This is the first attempt of a systematic historical and pedagogical analysis of the problem of reforming general secondary education in the independent Ukraine by the means of source study. Various types of documents were not considered, particularly regarding the content of general secondary education and the development of children and youth in Ukraine which will be studied in further publications.

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