

**EDUCATION IN UKRAINE: EUROPEAN INTEGRATION ACHIEVEMENTS  
AND PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT IN THE WAR AND RECOVERY**

**Olena LOKSHYNA**

*doctor science education, professor,*

Head of Comparative Education Department,

Institute of Pedagogy of the

National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine

**ORCHID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5097-9171>

**Rezumat.** *Articolul este dedicat realizărilor și perspectivelor integrării europene a învățământului ucrainean în contextul orientărilor pentru cooperarea europeană în domeniul educației și formării profesionale. Autorul analizează reformele de integrare europeană a învățământului ucrainean; dezvăluie daunele cauzate sistemului educațional ucrainean de războiul rf împotriva Ucrainei din 24 februarie 2022; schițează perspectivele de dezvoltare ulterioară a învățământului ucrainean.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** *Ucraina, educație, integrare europeană, realizări, război, perspective.*

**Abstract.** *The paper is devoted to the achievements and prospects of European integration of the Ukrainian education in the context of benchmarks of European cooperation in education and training. The author analysed the European integration reforms of the Ukrainian education; exposed the damage caused to the Ukrainian education system by the war of russia against Ukraine, starting from February 24, 2022; outlined the prospects of further development of Ukrainian education.*

**Keywords:** *Ukraine, education, European integration, achievements, war, prospects.*

Geographically, historically and mentally Ukraine is a European state. The European choice of Ukraine was approved by the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union (2014). In 2022, Ukraine, like the Republic of Moldova, received the status of a candidate for EU membership. The European choice of Ukraine ensures the integration of the Ukrainian education into the European Educational Area. It involves synchronizing the parameters of its development with the European standards. The **purpose of the paper** is to analyse the achievements of the Ukrainian education in the area of the European integration through the prism of the EU education and training strategy. To achieve the defined purpose, the method of analysis of the EU documents has been used to highlight the benchmarks of education and training development. The author has analysed the statistical data of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine to reveal the damage to the Ukrainian education as a result of russia's war against Ukraine.

Obtaining the status of a candidate for EU membership requires the movement toward the Copenhagen criteria (1993, 1996), which must be fulfilled by a country to join the EU. In education and training, the convergence of national policies and the achievement of common goals take place within a cooperation framework through an open method of coordination [5].

The Treaty on European Union (1992) recognized education and training as a field of EU interest. The Treaty introduced the principle of subsidiarity, according to which EU had the right to support and supplement certain aspects of the educational policies of the Member States if the activities proposed by it could not be fully implemented by them [10].

With the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy (2000) the principle of subsidiarity was replaced by an open method of coordination. The latter is considered a “soft” law, initiated a new cooperation format between Member States. The open method of coordination is based on:

- Jointly identifying and defining objectives to be achieved (adopted by the Council);
- Jointly established measuring instruments (statistics, indicators, guidelines);
- Benchmarking, i.e. comparison of EU countries' performance and the exchange of best practices (monitored by the Commission).

Unlike resolutions and directives the framework programmes, benchmarks, and recommendations are not binding. At the same time, “soft” law is considered an effective tool to achieve political goals, which works based on demonstration and persuasion [4].

The first EU Work Programme on Education and Training to the year 2010 defined three strategic goals:

- Increasing the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the European Union

- Facilitating the access of all to the education and training systems;
- Opening up education and training systems to the wider world [1].

The Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training ('ET 2020')) outlined the following four goals:

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship at all levels of education and training [2].

The Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training in 2021-2030 (2021) proclaimed the European Education Area as the goal of cooperation for the next ten years. The European Education Area is seen as a tool to enable citizens to continue learning at different stages of life and for the Member States and stakeholders to work together to provide everyone with high-quality, innovative, and inclusive education and training to support economic growth and employment opportunities.

For this purpose, it is proclaimed the need for further:

- Harmonization of the national education systems by means of transparency, exchange of experience and determination of common goals and fields of activity at the political level and;
- Comparability of qualifications and mutual recognition of educational diplomas/certificates and study periods, as well as academic degrees.

Four strategic priorities include:

- Improving quality, equity, inclusion and success for all in education and training;
- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality for all;
- Enhancing competences and motivation in the education profession;
- Reinforcing European higher education;
- Supporting the green and digital transitions in and through education and training [3].

It is important for Ukraine that the European Education Area is an open initiative for all European countries within the framework of the pan-European programmes (Bologna Process, Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, etc.).

Since 2014, Ukraine has been implementing structural reforms aimed at harmonisation of the national education with the European standards. Initially, the European-oriented legislation has been adopted. These are the Laws of Ukraine “On higher education” (2014), “On Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activities” (2015), “On Education” (2017), “On the Professional Pre-higher Education” (2019), “On Full General Secondary Education” (2020).

The new legislation has ensured the implementation of the European-oriented reforms at all levels of education. These are the:

- Introduction of a 12-year school (4+5+3), which operates in the vast majority of the European countries,
- Introduction of a three-level system of higher education within the framework of the Bologna process,
- Harmonization of the National Qualifications Framework with the European Qualifications Framework [7, 8].

Within the framework of the Jean Monnet program, Ukraine continues to be supported in the area of teaching, learning, and research on European integration issues. The Erasmus+ program for 2021-2027 expands the possibilities of international cooperation to fulfil the tasks of the European Education Area, the Digital Education Action Plan, the European Competence Programme, and other EU flagship initiatives.

Unfortunately, Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine launched on February 24, 2022, stopped the innovative development of the country, took away from children and youth the right to quality education, and the opportunity to teach in conditions of safety and dignity from teachers. According to the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, in the period from February 24 to September 18, 2022, 390 children died, and 757 were injured of various degrees of severity [9].

According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine at the beginning of 2021/2022 13,991 institutions of general secondary education functioned in Ukraine. In the period from February 24 to September 18, 2022, 2,528 educational institutions were affected by bombings and shelling. 285 of them were destroyed. As of June 22, 2022, 1,185 secondary education institutions were located in the temporarily occupied territory.

Another significant challenge for the Ukrainian education in wartime conditions is the forced large-scale movement of the participants in the educational process within Ukraine and abroad, which led to an aggravation of ensuring access to education for Ukrainian schoolchildren and students. Of the 4,230,358 students who started their studies on September 1, 2021, many of them were forced to change their place of residence and study, 79,015 students (1.9% of the total number of 2021/2022 students) were finishing the academic year in other Ukrainian schools. Starting from February 24, 2022, 648,873 students (or 15.3% of their total number) from all regions of Ukraine went abroad with their families.

With the support of the international community, in the difficult conditions of the war, Ukraine continues to implement the goal of the European integration of the national education. The conclusion of the European Commission dated June 17, 2022, which recommends that the European Council recognize the European integration perspective of Ukraine and grant it the status of a candidate for EU membership, contains the recognition that Ukraine has a well-developed education system with a high level of literacy coverage (almost 100%) and rather good results in the PISA-2018. The Conclusion of the European Commission also emphasizes the significant amount of financing for the education sector (5.7% of GDP in 2021) and the high degree of coverage of Ukrainians in higher education [6].

The European integration course of Ukraine's education development is evidenced by the long-term objectives set by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in August 2022, which include:

- Harmonisation of the legal framework regulating education and science in Ukraine with the educational and research legislation of the European Union;
- Restoration of educational infrastructure, the creation of modern institutions that will provide decent conditions for the development of the younger generation and for Ukrainians to receive quality education at world-class standards'
- Intensification of the process of internationalization of education and science in Ukraine, its integration into the European educational space; increase in the number of international educational and scientific cooperation projects [6].

The integration achievements of the Ukrainian education create the prerequisites for considering the priorities and targets of the Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030). This is to be one of the tasks of the development of the Ukrainian education in the post-war period.

### References:

1. Council of the European Union. (2001). *Report from the Education Council to the European Council "The concrete future objectives of education and training systems"*. [15 Sept., 2022]. Available on: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-5980-2001-INIT/en/pdf>
2. Council of the European Union. (2009). *Council Conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training ("ET 2020")*. [14 Sept., 2022]. Available on: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52009XG0528%2801%29>
3. Council of the European Union (2021). *Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)*. [15 Sept., 2022]. Available on: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226(01))
4. EUR-Lex. Publications Office of the European Union. *Open method of coordination*. [15 Sept., 2022]. Available on: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/glossary/open-method-of-coordination.html>
5. European Commission. *Conditions for membership* [14 Sept., 2022]. Available on: [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/conditions-membership\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/conditions-membership_en)
6. Ministerstvo osvity` i nauky` Ukrainy`. Instytut osvity`oyi anality`ky` (2022). *Osvita Ukrainy` v umovakh voyennogo stanu. Informacijno-anality`chny`j zbirny`k*. [onlajn]. Ky`yiv, 2022 [15 Sept., 2022]. Available on: <https://mon.gov.ua/storage/app/media/zagalna%20serednya/serpneva-konferencia/2022/Mizhn.serpn.ped.nauk-prakt.konferentsiya/Inform-analityc.zbirn-Osvita.Ukrainy.v.umovakh.voyennoho.stanu.22.08.2022.pdf>
7. LOKSHYNA O., DZHURYLO A., HLUSHKO O. & SHPARYK O. (2021). Secondary education reform priorities under globalisation: the case of Ukraine in comparison with China, Germany and Poland. *Second International Conference on History, Theory and Methodology of Learning* (ICHTML 2021). Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine, May 12-14, 2021. V. Hamaniuk,

- S. Semerikov and Y. Shramko (Eds.). SHS Web of Conferences. Volume 104 (2021). Published online: 04 May 2021. P. 1–11. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202110401004>
8. LOKSHYNA O.I., HLUSHKO O.Z., DZHURYLO A.P., KRAVCHENKO S.M., NIKOLSKA N.V., TYMENKO M.M., SHPARYK O.M. (2021) *Tendenciyi rozvy`tku shkil`noyi osvity` v krayinax YeS, SShA ta Ky`taii :monografiya /;* za zag. red. O.I. Lokshy`noyi. [Elektronne vy`dannya]. – Ky`yiv : KONVI PRINT, 2021. – 350 s. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32405/978-617-8124-17-5-2021-350>
  9. Ofis Genprokurora Ukrainy`. (2022). Zlochy`ny`, vchy`neni v period povnomasshtabnogo vtorgnennya rf stanom na 19.09.2022. Zlochy`ny` proty` ditej. Available on: <https://www.gp.gov.ua/>
  10. Treaty on European Union. (1992). *Official Journal C 191*, 29/07/1992 P. 0001 – 0110. [15 Sept., 2022]. Available on: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:11992M/TXT>