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DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN WESTERN UKRAINE: SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS

ABSTRACT

The primary objective of the article is to provide a substantive basis for recommendations concerning the advancement of university education in Western Ukraine in connection with specific factors of regional socioeconomic development. A retrospective analysis of the socioeconomic landscape in Western Ukraine has been conducted as a foundational step toward the subsequent evolution of university education. Furthermore, through a combination of theoretical exploration and the analysis of pertinent statistical data, a comprehensive retrospective evaluation of the state of university education in the region has been undertaken, with the aim of elucidating its alignment or divergence in relation to the prevailing circumstances precipitated by the Russian war of aggression.

Recommendations for the enhancement of university education have been formulated, guided by the imperative to address the unique exigencies of the region comprehensively. The proposed recommendations, if implemented, are anticipated to satisfy the educational requirements of the region.

An analysis of socioeconomic factors and contemporary trends in the development of Western Ukraine, which serves as a prerequisite for the exploration of the trajectory of university education in the region, is presented in the article. The article also delves into an examination of the research and educational potential, the current developmental status, and the competitive standing of university education within the region. It was stated that the ongoing evolution of university education in Western Ukraine must be attributed to a number of socio-economic factors stemming from the Russian war of aggression. These factors encompass the escalating significance of the region as a transit zone for internally displaced persons and migrants, the relocation of enterprises and companies, the fortification of cross-border cooperation, alterations in the employment landscape, and augmented demand for professions in construction, renewable energy, and the IT sector.

Keywords: university education, Western Ukraine, regional development, social and economic factors

JEL Classification: I22, O43

INTRODUCTION

Local developmental dynamics are intricately shaped by a myriad of factors, encompassing both internal elements within the region and those situated in its proximate or more distant environs. From an economic perspective, this process is notably contingent upon the competitiveness of enterprises and their adeptness in continually adapting to market exigencies, as posited in [14]. Higher education institutions, commonly identified as universities, emerge as central agents within the "knowledge square," embodying the interconnected realms of education, research, innovation, and societal service. Their pivotal role in fostering sustainable development within a given region is underscored by their facilitation of talent flows, thereby contributing to the mutual advancement of education, research, and the labor market, as articulated in the [33].

Western Ukraine, encompassing Volyn, Transcarpathian, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, and Chernivtsi oblasts, is distinguished by specific socioeconomic factors and

unique dynamics shaped by the repercussions of the Russian war of aggression. Positioned both as the most distant from the conflict zones and as a conduit for the transit and reception of migrants, goods, and businesses, this region experiences distinctive influences that significantly impact the trajectory of university education development.

The overarching aim of this study is to provide substantiated recommendations for the advancement of university education in Western Ukraine during the post-war period. Specific objectives include conducting a comprehensive retrospective analysis of the socioeconomic landscape in Western Ukraine as a foundational step for the ongoing development of university education. Additionally, the study seeks to undertake a thorough retrospective examination of university education in the region, elucidating its alignment or divergence in relation to the current circumstances. Ultimately, the study aims to articulate recommendations for the development of university education in the region, ensuring their implementation aligns with the region's distinctive needs and circumstances.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Western Ukraine serves as a focal point of scholarly inquiry, drawing attention from both policymakers and practitioners. The monograph edited by V. Kravtsiv in 2013, titled "Carpathian Region," disseminates the outcomes of fundamental research elucidating issues and prospects related to the development of the Carpathian region within Western Ukraine. Scholars such as V. Kyfiak [13] and A. Putytskyi [18] contribute to the exploration of challenges impeding cross-border cooperation between Western Ukraine and neighboring countries. Analytical reports [33] and publications [13] delve into the applied aspects of reforming cross-border cooperation within the context of Ukraine's European integration aspirations, thereby enhancing local and regional development.

Migration processes in the Western region constitute a distinct focus of inquiry, with individual studies [9, 13] and collective works [27, 30] centering on the examination of these phenomena. Rooted in the migration theory of "push-pull" [25]. Additionally, the spatial patterns and features of social network development in Western Ukraine discerned through a survey of university students, are expounded upon in [34].

While existing scientific endeavors by Ukrainian researchers predominantly concentrate on national-level examinations of higher education, such as the information-analytical collection "Education in Independent Ukraine: Development and Competitiveness" [22], a notable gap remains in the comprehensive analysis of university education specifically within Western Ukraine. To address this lacuna, this study endeavors to substantiate recommendations for the development of university education in Western Ukraine during the post-war period. The articulated objectives encompass a comprehensive retrospective analysis of the socioeconomic landscape in the region as a foundational prerequisite for further university education development, an examination of the alignment or incongruence of university education with the current situation, the identification of probable and desirable scenarios for university education development, and the substantiation of recommendations ensuring their alignment with the distinctive needs of the region.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the article is to provide a substantive basis for recommendations concerning the advancement of university education in Western Ukraine in connection with specific factors of regional socioeconomic development. The main objectives include making a retrospective analysis of the socioeconomic landscape in Western Ukraine as a foundational step towards the subsequent evolution of university education; making a comprehensive retrospective evaluation of the state of university education in the region; to substantiate the alignment/divergence of university education in Western Ukraine in relation to the prevailing circumstances precipitated by the Russian war of aggression.

METHODS

In order to implement research tasks, we used theoretical methods (theoretical analysis - for the analysis of existing scientific findings and comprehensive understanding of ways to solve a scientific problem; to substantiate the alignment/divergence of university education in Western Ukraine), as well as methods of descriptive and comparative statistics (to make a retrospective analysis of the socioeconomic landscape in Western Ukraine, to make a comprehensive retrospective evaluation of the state of university education in the region).

The overarching algorithm employed in the research comprised two interconnected stages. The initial stage - analysis of socioeconomic factors and current trends - served as a foundational step, involving the scrutiny of socioeconomic factors

and prevailing trends within Western Ukraine. The second stage entailed a meticulous examination of the current state of university education.

In the initial phase of this inquiry, conventional general economic and demographic indicators, coupled with elements of descriptive and comparative statistics, constituted the methodological framework. The empirical foundation for this stage of the research rested on the official data sourced from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine and statistics departments of administrative regions. This methodological approach facilitated the identification of socioeconomic factors and contemporary trends shaping the developmental landscape of Western Ukraine. Significantly, these discernments served as indispensable precursors for understanding the imperatives influencing the trajectory of university education in the region.

In the second phase of this investigation, an analysis was conducted to scrutinize the operations of universities in Western Ukraine and to evaluate their scientific and educational capacities in ensuring the provision of high-quality training for master's and Ph.D. students. The research methodology employed adhered to a territorial-hierarchical model governing the functioning of the higher education system in Ukraine. The examination of universities in Western Ukraine was predicated on several key indicators, encompassing the number of students, licensed capacities for master's and Ph.D. training, enrollment figures for master's and Ph.D. programs, the proportion of universities offering such programs, the relocation of universities to Western Ukraine, the quantitative and qualitative composition of research and academic staff, the competitive standing of universities, rankings based on expert evaluations, and the enrollment of foreign students.

The empirical foundation of this investigation relied upon official data procured from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, resources extracted from the Unified Electronic State Database on Education, and expert assessments sourced from the Center for International Projects "Euroeducation", particularly the Academic ranking of higher education institutions of Ukraine for the year 2022. This comprehensive approach to data collection and analysis facilitated a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted dimensions characterizing the scientific and educational landscape of universities in Western Ukraine.

RESULTS

Western Ukraine, positioned advantageously in terms of geography and transit, boasts a substantial expanse of borders with European Union countries. Shared historical developmental traits with these neighboring nations contribute to the distinctive characteristics of this region, delineating its specific advantages, challenges, and contemporary developmental trajectories. The socioeconomic peculiarities intrinsic to Western Ukraine, notably those influenced by the ongoing Russian war of aggression, constitute a paramount factor shaping the landscape of university education in the region.

As of 2022, the aggregate population of Western Ukraine amounted to 9.1 million individuals, constituting 18% of the total national population. Notably, this region has exhibited comparatively modest rates of population decline since 2001, registering a decrease of 5.2%, in contrast to the national decline of 19% observed across Ukraine during the same period [31] (Figure 1). Additionally, Western Ukraine demonstrates elevated birth rates, with a rate of 8.6‰, representing a 30% surplus relative to the national average [3]. Consequently, cohorts within the young population are notably more substantial, mitigating the emergence of critical depopulation concerns. Despite the overarching population decline evident in all oblasts of the Western region, specific urban centers such as Lutsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Mukachevo, Ternopil, Chernivtsi, along with suburban districts of regional centers, and the metropolis of Lviv exhibit positive population dynamics. Migration processes wield a considerable influence on the demographic landscape of Western Ukraine. Over an extended temporal trajectory, this region has consistently functioned as a donor region for labor migrants, manifesting a persistent negative migration balance, with the notable exception of the pandemic period.

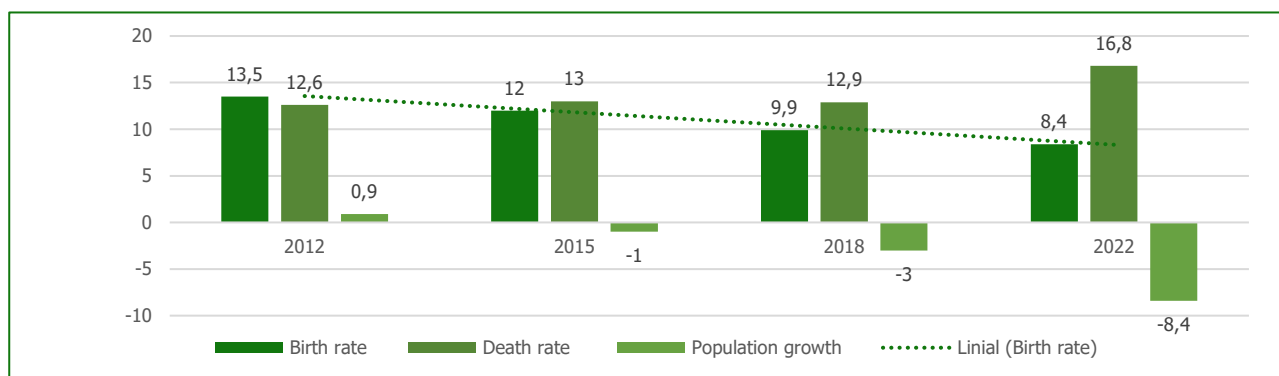


Figure 1. Dynamics in population growth in Western Ukraine, persons per 1000 inhabitants, 2021. (Source: based on data of [3])

Western Ukraine exhibits a notably low level of economic development, as evidenced by its contribution to the national economic metrics. In the year 2020, the region generated 15.3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 15.7% of the Gross Value Added (GVA) of Ukraine (Figure 2) [3]. This proportion is approximately one-third less than the region's share of the total population. The average GDP per capita stands at a mere 64.7% of the national average. In the national ranking, the oblasts within Western Ukraine are situated within the 17th to 24th ranks based on this indicator, with the exception of Lviv oblast, which holds the 7th position [3]. The economic underdevelopment of these territories has persisted over the past half-century, and efforts to ameliorate the situation through regional policy instruments have not yielded the anticipated results.

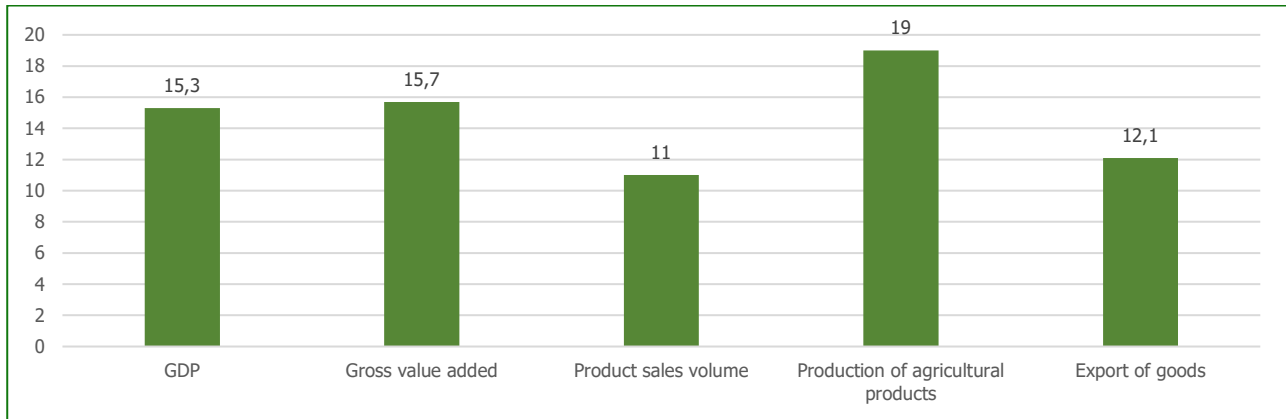


Figure 2. Share of Western Ukraine in macroeconomic indicators, 2020 (%). (Source: based on data [3])

The economic landscape of Western Ukraine, as delineated by the composition of the Gross Value Added (GVA) structure, categorizes most oblasts within the region as industrial and agricultural in nature. Ternopil and Chernivtsi oblasts stand out as exceptions, with their economic structures notably skewed towards the agricultural sector. The predominant industries, namely industrial production, agriculture, and wholesale and retail trade, collectively contribute nearly 50% to the regional GVA (refer to Table 1). In terms of product sales volumes, these economic activities command an even more substantial share, accounting for 82.4%. Notably, the industrial sector is marked by a prevalence of low-tech industries, particularly electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning (30.9%), and manufacturing (63.7%). Traditionally, high shares are observed in the production of food, beverages, and tobacco products, as well as woodworking and paper production.

Table 1. Share of product sales volume by commodities, 2021 (%). (Source: based on data of [3])

Goods, services	Share in total product sales
Mining and quarrying	4.8
Electricity supply, gas, steam and air conditioning	30.9
Water supply, sewerage, waste management	1.2
Food, beverages, and tobacco	17.8
Textile, clothes, leather goods	2.3
Wood, paper products, printing	8.9
Chemicals	2.5
Rubber and plastic, other mineral goods	10.7
Metal goods	2.7
Engineering	11.9
Other goods and services	6.9

Mechanical engineering, representing a notable innovation-driven industry, assumes a prominent role in the industrial structure, with the Transcarpathian oblast standing out at 32.4%. A positive trend in recent years has been the proliferation of machine-building enterprises specializing in electric cable systems for global automotive companies, particularly in Ivano-Frankivsk, Uzhgorod, Kolomyia, Brody, and Chernivtsi. In 2020, the agricultural sector contributed approximately 19% to Ukraine's overall agricultural output. Within the realm of agricultural production, household entities take precedence, constituting 57.5% of the sector in 2020. Particularly in Thanscarpathian and Chernivtsi oblasts, where the rural population traditionally engages in vegetable cultivation, horticulture, and berry production, this share surpasses 70% [3].

In recent times, Western Ukraine has become increasingly synonymous with tourism and recreation, owing to its picturesque mountainous landscapes, rich cultural and historical heritage, proximity to four European Union countries, and a relatively favorable environmental milieu [34]. Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the influx of both domestic and international tourists witnessed a substantial surge. This upswing in tourism prompted the active development of the corresponding infrastructure, leading to a noteworthy increase in revenues for local budgets. Notably, in Ivano-Frankivsk oblast, the period spanning from 2014 to 2018 witnessed a 1.4-fold increase in local budget revenues. Additionally, the realm of rural green tourism experienced a surge, with a notable 88% growth in the number of local entrepreneurs engaged in this sector [32, p. 37].

The Western Ukraine region is host to an extensive network of nearly 400,000 business entities, constituting 20.3% of the national average. Notably, these entities are prominently characterized by the prevalence of "private persons-entrepreneurs," signaling a noteworthy level of entrepreneurial engagement within the local population. The revenues derived from entrepreneurial activities in Western Ukraine surpass the national average by a factor of 1.6 [32, p. 37].

The leadership of the Western region, as substantiated by official statistics, is evident in key social indicators. The Regional Human Development Index, a composite measure encompassing life expectancy, welfare, working conditions, and education [28], attests to this dominance (Figure 3). Notably, six out of the seven oblasts within Western Ukraine secure positions within the top ten in the national ranking based on this comprehensive index.

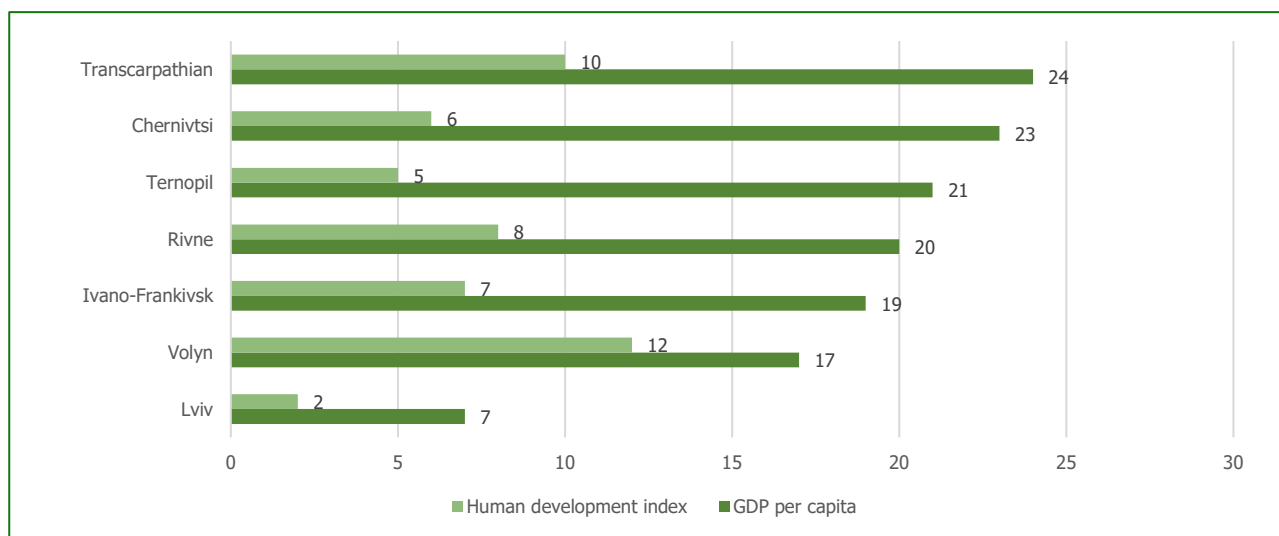


Figure 3. Economic and social indicators by oblasts of Western Ukraine, 2020. (Source: based on data of [3])

The distinctive geographical positioning of Western Ukraine intricately shapes its cross-border cooperation initiatives, primarily enacted through the endeavors of three Euroregions - namely, "Bug," "Carpathian," and "Upper Prut." Collaboration between the oblasts of Western Ukraine and neighboring regions encompasses a spectrum of joint projects, particularly within the realms of science and education, security, environmental conservation, and water resource management [13]. The identification of new trajectories for cross-border cooperation in the medium term is elucidated in the State Program [2]. In the contemporary landscape, cross-border cooperation assumes a pivotal role as a conduit for translating European standards in governance, business, and intercultural collaboration [35]. Noteworthy prospects lie in the commercialization of research through the establishment of international consortia involving universities, research institutions, and business infrastructure dedicated to supporting startups in high-tech domains [4].

The comprehensive impact of the Russian war of aggression has exerted a substantial influence on the region's socioeconomic development. The region has assumed a transient role as a refuge and transit area for both internally displaced persons and migrants. As of early May 2022, estimates suggest the presence of approximately 1 million internally displaced persons in Western Ukraine, constituting 10-12% of its total population (see Table 2).

Table 2. Number of internally displaced persons in Western Ukraine, 2022. (Source: authors' developments based on [9])

Oblast	Total population	Number of internally displaced persons, thousand		Share of total population, %	
		Officially registered	According to data from mobile service providers	Officially registered	According to data from mobile service providers
Volyn	1020.8	52.4	61.0	5.1	6.0
Thanscarpathian	1243.7	110.0	380.0	8.8	30.6
Iv.-Frankivsk	1350.6	35.0	42.0	2.6	3.1
Lviv	2476.1	311.0	350.0	12.6	14.1
Rivne	1140.9	450.0	52.0	39.4	4.6
Ternopil	1021.0	66.0	75.0	6.5	7.3
Chernivtsi	889.9	100.0	n/a	11.2	n/a

The intensification of hostilities in Eastern and Northern Ukraine has precipitated a compelled relocation of enterprises, companies, and state administrative structures (employment centers, education departments, etc.), as well as universities, aimed at safeguarding assets, equipment, and personnel. Throughout the period of March-April 2022, nearly 400 enterprises underwent relocation to Western Ukraine, with Lviv oblast hosting the largest contingent of relocated enterprises, numbering almost 140. Expert assessments indicate a nearly threefold increase in the count of IT specialists in Western Ukraine, particularly in Lviv, where the number has surged from 30,000 to 100,000 individuals. This scenario, coupled with the presence of pertinent university education, establishes a conducive environment for the ongoing development of the IT sector in the region.

The role of Western Ukraine within the national framework of university education is delineated by several pertinent observations. In the year 2021, a total of 53.1 thousand students graduated from universities in the region, representing 20% of the national total. However, the proportion of master's degree graduates constituted only 14% of this cohort. Lviv oblast accounted for the highest number of graduates across all levels of education (38%), as well as the highest percentage of master's degree graduates (45%). In contrast, Transcarpathian oblast exhibited the smallest figures, contributing 7% and 4% respectively to the overall graduate numbers, while Chernivtsi oblast contributed 9% and 4%, respectively [36].

As of the commencement of the 2021/2022 academic year, Western Ukraine hosted 66 universities, constituting 17% of the total nationwide. The aggregate student population in the region amounted to 221,830 individuals, representing 21% of the total student body in Ukraine. Predominantly, Lviv oblast emerged as the primary hub for university education, accommodating 90,385 students, which accounts for 41% of the total student enrollment in the region. Approximately 22% of the university students in Western Ukraine are pursuing master's degrees. Notably, Chernivtsi and Ternopil oblasts exhibit the highest share of master's students at 35% each, while Volyn oblast records the smallest proportion at 10% [37].

The provision of master's level education in Western Ukraine involves the engagement of 59 universities across diverse categories (refer to Table 3). Expert assessments indicate that these universities, characterized by limited capacity, face challenges in delivering high-quality education. Instances of program duplication and the offering of programs in specialties misaligned with the university's profile are observed, leading to substantial resource consumption [11].

Table 3. Number of universities by size, 2022. (Source: [37])

Category	Number of universities
Category II (6000-9999 students)	2
Category III (3000-5999 students)	9
Category IV (1000-2999 students)	12
Category V (<1000 students)	41

As of the conclusion of May 2022, a total of 6 universities have undergone relocation to Western Ukraine. Among these relocated institutions, only one, namely the Luhansk State Medical University, boasts an enrollment exceeding 1,000 master's students, totaling 1,639 individuals. The proportion of the licensed volume allocated for master's student training in relocated universities constitutes 7.4% of the overall capacity in Western Ukraine. Notably, students from relocated universities comprise 2,607 individuals, constituting 5.2% of the total master's student population in the region [37].

Across most oblasts of Western Ukraine, the figures for the licensed volume surpass the actual enrollment numbers of master's students. For instance, in 2022, despite a license volume of 62,984 places, only 49,694 master's students were admitted [37]. Additionally, there were 5,383 places licensed for the training of Ph.D. students, with 17% and 15% allocated to Lviv and Transcarpathian oblasts, respectively [37]. This analysis underscores a consistent trend of diminishing enrollment in both master's and Ph.D. programs.

A crucial determinant for the effective operation of universities lies in the demand for their educational services from prospective applicants. Scrutiny of 15 out of the 59 premier universities in Western Ukraine reveals that, despite having a cumulative license volume of 11,990 places (constituting 19%), they cater to the training of 31,737 master's students, which corresponds to 64% of the total enrollment [37]. Notably, factors influencing student preferences include the quality of education (16.2% of responses), university reputation and prestige (12.3%), as well as the presence of a developed infrastructure and technical facilities (11.0%). Considerably less significant factors include the opportunity to acquire a globally recognized double diploma (10.0%), the appeal of program offerings (10.0%), and the prospect of employment within the field of study during the academic pursuit (7.6%). It is essential to recognize that postwar considerations will likely alter the criteria influencing university selection. These shifting preferences necessitate strategic adaptations to enhance the competitiveness of universities in Western Ukraine.

The competitive standing of universities in Western Ukraine is discernible through their rankings in various assessments. For instance, in the Academic Ranking of Ukrainian Higher Educational Institutions "Top-200 Ukraine 2021" [1], 11 universities from the region are positioned within the top 40 universities nationwide.

A comprehensive examination of the academic staff, encompassing both research and teaching personnel, at universities in Western Ukraine reveals that, on the whole, these institutions exhibit superior indicators compared to the national average in Ukraine. Particularly noteworthy is the observation that universities in Lviv oblast boast significantly higher numbers of research and teaching staff when contrasted with the national average, as well as the corresponding ratios calculated based on student enrollment figures. Within the composition of the pedagogical staff, the predominant majority (89.8%) comprises research and teaching personnel, while the teaching staff constitutes 10%. Notably, the proportion of researchers is relatively insignificant, standing at 0.2% [36].

An additional characteristic of university education in Western Ukraine is its appeal to international students. The aggregate enrollment of foreign students in 2021 reached 12,822 individuals, constituting 17.4% of the overall population of international students studying in Ukraine [36].

DISCUSSION

The findings of this investigation underscore the disparity between the contemporary evolution of university education in Western Ukraine and the socio-economic variables that emerged in the wake of the Russian war of aggression. We concur with the imperative to formulate a regional strategy grounded in the principles of efficacious utilization of the designated developmental drivers within the scrutinized region [4]. Nevertheless, we contend against constraining these drivers solely to leveraging the region's touristic and recreational potential, crafting a favorable ecological perception, and exploiting the investment potential of migrant labor for local advancement [4].

The considerable population flux to and from the region [14] coupled with the ongoing relocation of business entities precipitate substantial transformations in the labor market. These inherently inertial processes represent a consequential and protracted hazard to university education in the region [19]. While university education is posited as a pivotal determinant in local developmental dynamics [6], the identified developmental factors within the investigated region may give rise to several adverse phenomena. These include an accentuation of the proclivity towards educational emigration, incongruence between the educational framework and the current as well as prospective demands of the labor market, and a misalignment of the competencies of university graduates with the requisites of employers.

CONCLUSIONS

The Russian war of aggression has precipitated substantial socioeconomic upheavals in Western Ukraine. The region has assumed the role of a haven for internally displaced persons and a prominent transit zone for a considerable influx of migrants. Simultaneously, a process of relocating enterprises, companies, and universities is underway, contributing to a noteworthy expansion in the workforce within the IT sector. These transformations are poised to exert a discernible impact on the envisaged scenarios for the region's development, including those pertaining to university education.

The characteristics of university education in Western Ukraine encompass several noteworthy aspects. These include an uneven trajectory of development, a prevalence of low-capacity universities with enrollments of up to 1,000 students, a tendency toward program duplication, alterations in the educational and scientific potential due to the inclusion of relocated universities, an imbalance between the license volume and the overall count of master's students, a diminished competitive standing of universities, a decline in enrollment for master's and Ph.D. programs, modest representation in international rankings and relatively lower positions in domestic rankings. Additionally, there is an observable inclination toward an increased enrollment of foreign students, a scarcity of researchers within university faculties, and a predominant emphasis on the provision of educational services.

In the ongoing evolution of university education in Western Ukraine, due consideration must be given to a myriad of socioeconomic factors stemming from the Russian war of aggression. These factors encompass the escalating significance of the region as a transit zone for internally displaced persons and migrants, the relocation of enterprises and companies, the fortification of cross-border cooperation, alterations in the employment landscape, and augmented demand for professions in construction, renewable energy, and the IT sector.

The university education system in Western Ukraine necessitates substantial reform encompassing various dimensions: the enhancement of the university network, the implementation of training programs aligned with labor market demands, heightened endeavors in student recruitment from both Ukraine and abroad, augmentation of the prestige and image of universities, fostering scientific careers for university graduates, cultivation of competitive advantages, concentration of university resources on critical processes for effective operation during crisis situations, fortification of international cooperation and project-oriented engagement with stakeholders, and the amplification of the research component in academic activities.

The envisaged avenues for subsequent scholarly inquiry reside in an exploration of the repercussions of socio-economic factors arising from the Russian war of aggression on the regional development of Ukrainian macro-regions, namely, the Northern, Central, Southern, and Eastern regions. Specifically, the focus is directed toward assessing their influence on both the present state and the prospective trajectory of university development. An integral aspect of this academic endeavor involves the articulation of recommendations and the formulation of strategic and investment plans tailored to foster the advancement of universities within these regions. Such endeavors aim to optimize the latent potential within these regions, strategically aligning them to fulfill the imperative of training professionals. This imperative is construed in terms of meeting current and future requisites for socio-economic progress, fortifying national defense capabilities, and facilitating post-war reconstruction initiatives.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors have contributed equally.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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РОЗВИТОК ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ В ЗАХІДНОМУ РЕГІОНІ УКРАЇНИ: СОЦІАЛЬНО-ЕКОНОМІЧНІ АСПЕКТИ

Метою дослідження є обґрунтування рекомендацій щодо розвитку вищої освіти в Західному регіоні України. Здійснено комплексний ретроспективний аналіз чинників соціально-економічного розвитку досліджуваного регіону як передумови перспективного розвитку вищої освіти. Використання теоретичних методів дослідження та аналізу первинних статистичних даних дало змогу здійснити комплексний ретроспективний аналіз розвитку вищої освіти в Західному регіоні України, метою якого було виявлення відповідностей / невідповідностей поточній ситуації, спричиненій вторгненням російських військ на територію України. Розроблено рекомендації щодо розвитку вищої освіти в контексті забезпечення регіональних соціально-економічних потреб. Упровадження запропонованих рекомендацій сприятиме задоволенню освітніх потреб досліджуваного регіону.

Здійснено аналіз соціально-економічних факторів та сучасних тенденцій розвитку Західного регіону України як передумови розвитку вищої освіти. Охарактеризовано науково-освітній потенціал, сучасний стан розвитку та рівень конкурентоспроможності вищої освіти регіону в контексті оцінки можливостей її післявоєнного реформування. З'ясовано, що перспективний розвиток вищої освіти в Західній Україні визначається низкою соціально-економічних чинників, які виникли внаслідок російської агресії. Ці чинники охоплюють зростання значення регіону як транзитної зони для внутрішньо переміщених осіб і мігрантів, переміщення підприємств і компаній, зміцнення транскордонного співробітництва, зміни в структурі зайнятості та збільшення попиту на професії в будівництві, відновлюваній енергетиці й IT-секторі.

Ключові слова: вища освіта, Західний регіон України, регіональний розвиток, соціально-економічні фактори

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