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INTERNATIONALIZATION OF UNIVERSITIES THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN THE ERASMUS + KA2 PROJECTS

The article is devoted to highlighting the specifics of the role of the ERASMUS+ program in meeting the educational needs of modern Ukrainian students. It is concluded that the participation of Ukrainian students in such programs reflects their desire to internationalize the educational space, expand their horizons and form a system of various competencies within the European integration of Ukrainian education. The article unfolds the direction of scientific research on the effectiveness of student participation in international projects. In particular, it dwells on the issues on which modern projects within the ERASMUS+ framework are based. It also proceeds to outlining the technological professional competencies, which enable the integration of the younger generation into the world's educational space in a timely and effective manner. The summary of topical projects in which students of Poltava V. G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University take part is presented in this work. In particular, it is described how international programs 'Writing for inclusion' 2020-1-ES01-KA201-081827, 'Care in Education', and 'Horizon Europe Program' are implemented.

The system of functioning and integration of educational institutions in the process of participation in international projects is described. Vivid examples of the interaction of higher and secondary educational institutions are presented, aimed at implementing advanced concepts of students' care, multicultural development, and integration into the international community. The current difficulties in the subjects of educational and professional activities related to the use of advanced technologies and means of e-learning and interaction are described. The role of participation in international projects to increase the competence and competitiveness of modern specialists is determined.

It is concluded that the participation of students in ERASMUS + provides multicultural and international dialogue in the implementation of the latest strategies for preschool and school education, the implementation of art therapy in the educational process, and the usage of the vast potential of art for teaching students.

Keywords: *ERASMUS+; international projects; internationalization of education in Ukraine; multicultural development of modern youth; international dialogue; integration of Ukraine into the international educational space.*

Introduction. Growing international competition between higher education institutions requires universities to evaluate, improve or develop new strategies that will enable them to expand their international capacity. There is a need to gain competitive advantages in attracting students, especially foreign ones, to include participants in the educational process in international exchange programs, to implement joint research projects, to create joint diploma programs, etc. The internationalization of higher education is usually seen as a comprehensive strategic process that integrates programs, activities, and initiatives to strengthen the university's position in the international arena.

Thus, in the process of integrated development, the goal of each university is to develop an integrated model of internationalization of higher education at the institutional level, which combines the concepts of strategic planning of education and consolidates complex components and approaches to stakeholders.

One of the priorities of university development is its international projects. It is participation in the type of activity which appears to be the most optimal way to ensure dialogue and develop the diversity of educational space, the possibility of realizing the potential of the individual.

Aim of the Study. The purpose of the publication is to define the role of Poltava V. G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University's participation in international projects as an indicator of its successful operation and level of training improvement.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The problem of participation of student youth in various projects at the international level is reflected in a number of actual scientific studies. We can

group these studies into two significant areas of research. Within the first direction, we determine the specifics of the impact of participation in the ERASMUS + program on the process of professional development and development of students, presented in the publications of such scientists as Yu. Zayachuk, I. Myhovych and N. Noddings. The second area of research reflects the importance of participation in international projects in the context of forming students' communicative and technological competence in a specially organized and modern educational environment, presented in the works of H. Y. Durak, R. Eynon, N. Redjep, and others. Both directions of scientific thought reflect a wide range of modern achievements in the process of internationalization of education and reveal the specifics of students' achievements as a result of participation in exchange programs and academic mobility.

Presenting the main findings. Ukraine's integration into the European Research Area remains a priority today. Bilateral international cooperation with the EU member states, Eastern Partnership countries, participation in the EU Framework Program for Research and Innovation Horizon Europe Program, etc. is essential for the long-term development of higher education.

Every year, Ukrainian institutions and organizations take part in academic exchange programs, research projects, etc. In particular, participating in the ERASMUS + KA 2 projects, which help build the capacity of universities, the university actively implements cooperation in the key area (Key Action), which involves active scientific, pedagogical, and research cooperation to innovate and implement the most optimal, competitive and professional practitioner. In addition, a promising and effective direction for further development was defined in this project, which reflects the strategic partnership in the field of school education, the realization of potential in teacher training, and the maximum realization of their potential.

Existing ERASMUS + research in Ukraine conducted in participating institutions, as a rule, focuses on the exchange of experience of ERASMUS + students and the quality of institutional support for these exchanges (I. Myhovych, 2020). The question of how participation in ERASMUS + affects higher education

institutions and really contributes to their further internationalization and modernization remains relevant and unresolved. In this context, internationalization is understood as the process of integrating the international, intercultural or global dimension into the goals, functions, or delivery of higher education. Thus, this applies to various activities, such as expanding the network of international cooperation partners and deepening cooperation, developing internationalized curricula and offering foreign language courses, participating in international research projects, and so on. It is important that the international dimension takes place in both goals and practices and that it embraces all participants in the context of higher education.

A similar trend is reflected in the project ‘Writing for inclusion’ 2020-1-ES01-KA201-081827, which for the first time in Ukraine in this area, is implemented in partnership with Gymnasium №18 of Poltava City Council. The uniqueness of this project lies in strengthening the links between higher education institutions and schools, establishing a vertical educational activity, which we see as an important aspect of the diversity of modern education, including multicultural one.

The project’s target groups are primary school teachers, teaching assistants, and primary school students. In total, the project is designed for more than 100 primary school students. In addition, a number of multi-author events were organized for teachers, professors, pedagogical students, and other educational stakeholders to disseminate the results of the project.

The project develops materials and organizes activities aimed at forming a non-discriminatory attitude, establishing relationships between primary school students in European countries, using digital storytelling. Moreover, during the war between Ukraine and Russia, a strong team was formed to support Ukrainian educators and schoolchildren. The consortium of project partners, even during the war, supports the Ukrainian people and educational institutions, which in turn is a clear demonstration of the concept of ‘Care in Education’ at the European level. Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) is a unique professional development program that

helps teachers and administrators handle their stress and rediscover the joys of teaching. It is a program of professional development which helps teachers and administrators of educational institutions overcome stress and reshape their attitude to the educational process. The theory of care, which is the basis of this concept, emphasizes the relationship and the implementation of care for the expressed needs of others during the various systems of communication in the educational process. Manifestations of concern do not ignore virtue and justice. The central idea of the concept of care is the relationship that develops between people. In education, this means taking into account the expressed needs of students – not always satisfied but always included in the teacher’s discussion (Noddings, 2019).

The categories of ‘choice’, ‘continuity’ and ‘communication’ are central to the application of care theory in the context of the educational paradigm. In line with its emphasis on expressing needs, care theory recommends listening to students and engaging in discussions to learn about their interests and help them make sensible choices that are meaningful. According to the theory of care, it is important to pay more attention to continuity, i.e. the ability to keep students and teachers together for more than one year. Similarly, continuity and connectivity can be enhanced by encouraging interdisciplinary research. Finally, the theory of care emphasizes the need for critical thinking and courtesy, to educate, not to fight those who may be morally wrong (Noddings, 2019).

It is sometimes said that ‘all teachers care’. It is because they care that people go into teaching. Even for the majority who do care in the virtue sense – that is, they profess to care and work hard at their teaching – there are many who do not adopt the relational sense of caring. They “care” in the sense that they conscientiously pursue certain goals for their students, and they often work hard at coercing students to achieve those goals. These teachers must be credited with caring in the virtue sense of the word. However, these same teachers may be unable to establish relations of care and trust (Noddings, 2019)

Another important area of participation in the project is Inclusion, which is a long-term key priority for the European Union to ensure the diversity of educational space in Europe, taking into

account the multicultural context and the implementation of individualized forms of teaching. In 2010, the European Commission launched the Europe 2020 Strategy, which promotes cohesion and the development of society. The 'Writing for Inclusion' (WIN) project focuses on raising awareness, changing perceptions, and providing resources for implementing inclusion in education through the concept 'Care in Education'. This project is implemented by consortiums from four European countries, which include higher and secondary education: University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia (UVic-UCC) from Spain, Università di Firenze from Italy (UNIFI), Eötvös-Loránd University (ELTE) from Hungary, and Poltava V. G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University (PNPU) from Ukraine; and four schools: Les Pinediques, from Spain, Istituto Comprensivo Le Cure, from Italy, Erzsébetvárosi Két Tanítási Nyelvű Általános Iskola és Szakgimnázium, from Hungary and Gymnasium № 18 of Poltava City Council, from Ukraine.

The result of this project was the creation of a learning-oriented educational application that is a key tool for children to communicate with the media world around them. This application is hosted on the platform Moodle. Animated resource creation was made possible by the participation of the Physics and Mathematics Faculty, Psychology and Pedagogy Faculty, and the Department of Innovation and International Relations of Poltava V. G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University. As well as, the project partners, who provided recommendations on the stages of application development and tested this animated resource.

This project contributes to the fact that primary school teachers will increase the level of understanding of how inclusive practices can be used during the educational process in their classrooms, as well as have the opportunity to share best practices with foreign colleagues. Children, who are definitely on the focus of our consortium, will use technology as a tool for developing their own literacy. An important aspect in this context is the expansion of the information and communication competence of scientists and teachers, as the implementation of remote interaction, and participation in projects, due to the constant use of technology, significantly increase the ability

of teachers to use new technologies. This problem has been repeatedly raised in a number of scientific studies. N. Redjep, I. Balaban & B. Zugec (2021) studied the general indicators of the readiness of the educational environment for the introduction of information technology. They considered the following components of the readiness of the educational environment for the introduction of technology – planning, use of technology in the educational process (learning), development of technological competence, information culture, and provision of technological infrastructure in the educational institution.

Research also presents the results of studying the readiness of adult students (cross-graduate students, in particular) to use computer technology in the educational process (Eynon, 2020). The lower level of readiness of adult students compared to adolescents and young people to exploit technology in education was determined, which is due to the lower level of inclusion of the adult generation in the virtual world. Therefore, it is important in this context to develop the system of determinants of the effectiveness of the inclusion of technology in the educational process (Durak, & Seferoğlu, 2020). Such a system reflects the integration of social discourses, values, and the use of media in the context of the formation of technological competence.

Therefore, active participation in ERASMUS + projects promotes multi-vector integration of the subject of educational and professional activities and educational environment, rich not only in European discourses, but also the latest tools for organizing the educational environment, opportunities to use information and computer technology in educational practices.

Yu. Zaiachuk considers the activity of students in the ERASMUS + program as a manifestation of an integral part of the national strategy for improving the space of higher education in Ukraine, which is a tool for achieving academic goals and establishing international cooperation. The author notes that Ukrainian students take an active part in the implementation of international research projects, actively cooperating with EU member states and Eastern Partnership countries, the EU Horizon Europe Program, the Eionet Research and Training Program, NATO programs ‘Science for Peace and Security’, etc. Yu. Zaiachuk stressed that among the EU’s

international educational projects in which Ukraine is a partner country, the most powerful is the ERASMUS + program, which provides a significant number of students and teachers of Ukrainian universities with academic experience outside their country.

I. Myhovych (2020) also notes the significant potential of the ERASMUS + program in the formation of European integration processes in Ukrainian education. According to her, the main purpose of participation in this project is not only the acquisition of the necessary competencies by students, but also the implementation of the trend of internationalization of students in Ukrainian higher education in general. Participation in such projects supports organizations in working towards transnational partnerships and encourages the sharing of innovative practices in the fields of education, training, and youth development.

At the same time, today's challenges constantly raise the need to find new systems for organizing educational dialogue and ensuring the diversity of education in higher and school education. The events of recent months were particularly critical and urgent. Ukraine is in war which exposed all the crisis moments of society in general and education in particular. At the same time, the only finally promising way to restore and qualitatively restructure Ukraine's education system is to establish a permanent and effective dialogue with the European Educational Area, implement joint projects, research, and choose a common course of development. Indeed, a large number of projects have been implemented in time; Poltava V. G. Korolenko National Pedagogical University is one of the flagships of the integration of education in Ukraine to world trends. However, every researcher and educator is well aware that the international educational environment is even more multifaceted and diverse. At the same time, the most important task of the educational system of modern Ukraine is to establish a dialogue with the European space, the search for common trends, and development strategies.

Conclusions and Perspectives. The presented materials reflect the current achievements of scientists and teachers in ensuring the integration of Ukraine into the educational space of Europe. The implementation of multicultural and international dialogue in the

implementation of the latest strategies of preschool and school education, the implementation of art therapy in the educational process, and the application of the vast potential of art in the growth of the student's personality, in general, is an important direction for today's Ukraine. The implementation of ERASMUS + KA2 projects lays the foundation for further and effective cooperation with the European Educational Area on the basis of dialogue and emphasis on diversity.

However, the problem of implementing various international projects within the integration of the educational institution into the European educational space remains unresolved and needs further investigation. In particular, the prospect of research is to study the characteristics of the likely participation of university staff and educational institutions in a number of other projects as a basis for strong cooperation with European institutions. And the very form of scientific activity of researchers will take the form of participation in various projects.

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ІНТЕРНАЦІОНАЛІЗАЦІЯ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ ЧЕРЕЗ УЧАСТЬ У ПРОЕКТАХ ERASMUS + KA2

У статті висвітлено специфіку ролі програми ERASMUS + у задоволенні освітніх потреб сучасного українського студента. Зроблено висновок, що участь українських студентів у таких програмах відображає їхнє прагнення до інтернаціоналізації освітнього простору, розширення кругозору та формування системи різноманітних компетенцій у рамках європейської інтеграції української освіти.

Автори розглядають результати наукового дослідження ефективності участі студентів у міжнародних проєктах, зупиняються на базисних проблемах сучасних проєктів у межах ERASMUS+, окреслюють технологічні професійні компетенції, які дають змогу вчасно та ефективно інтегрувати молоде покоління у світовий освітній простір. У роботі представлено резюме актуальних проєктів, у яких беруть участь студенти Полтавського національного педагогічного університету імені В. Г. Короленка, описано, як реалізуються міжнародні програми «Письмо для інклюзії» 2020-1-ES01-KA201-081827, «Турбота в освіті» та «Програма Horizon Europe».

Розкрито систему функціонування та інтеграції навчальних закладів у процесі участі в міжнародних проєктах. Наведено яскраві приклади взаємодії вищих і середніх навчальних закладів, спрямованої на реалізацію передових концепцій опіки студентів, полікультурного розвитку та інтеграції в міжнародне співтовариство. Охарактеризовано труднощі суб'єктів навчально-професійної діяльності, пов'язані з використанням сучасних технологій і засобів електронного навчання та взаємодії. Визначено роль участі майбутніх фахівців у міжнародних проєктах для підвищення їхньої компетентності та конкурентоспроможності.

Учені доходять висновку, що участь студентів у ERASMUS + забезпечує полікультурний і міжнародний діалог у впровадженні новітніх стратегій дошкільної та шкільної освіти, арт-терапії в освітній процес, а також використання величезного потенціалу мистецтва для навчання студентів.

Ключові слова: ERASMUS +; міжнародні проєкти; інтернаціоналізація освіти в Україні; полікультурний розвиток сучасної молоді; міжнародний діалог; інтеграція України в міжнародний освітній простір.

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