

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE POSTWAR PERIOD

Larysa Saviuk

Candidate of Technical Sciences,

Corresponding Member,

Academy of Economic Sciences of Ukraine

Yuriy Drachuk

Doctor of Economic Sciences, Academician,

Academy of Economic Sciences of Ukraine

Recently, official domestic and foreign sources have been increasingly reporting on the possibility of ending Russia's large-scale aggression against Ukraine by the end of 2025. Therefore, even now, ahead of any scenario on the battlefield for the independence of our country, Ukraine's scientific and educational circles should develop a plan to reform and transform the educational services sector as a crucial factor in national economic growth.

In the postwar period, the higher education system (HES) is of particular importance and strategic importance in the field of education as a tool for training highly qualified, competitive engineering, pedagogical and managerial personnel. The training of such personnel should ensure the harmonious entry of the restored Ukraine into the European and global economic space.

It should be noted that during the military aggression against our country by the Russian Federation, the HES's suffered irreparable large-scale infrastructure and personnel losses. The statistics of the HES's infrastructure losses are striking in their magnitude. Currently, 4 universities and 7 colleges in Ukraine have been completely destroyed, and another 117 universities and 162 colleges have been damaged. Most of these institutions were affected by the war in Kharkiv region. The 7 destroyed colleges that have been completely destroyed are recorded in Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, and Kherson regions [1].

Changes in the staffing and student population of Ukrainian higher education institutions have been repeatedly discussed by the educational community on various professional platforms. On the eve of the beginning of the 2022–2023 academic year, the NGO "Center for Social Research" and the independent think tank Cedoss, created on its platform, held an online discussion on "The Impact of War on Higher Education in Ukraine: Challenges and Prospects" on 23.06.2022.

Educational specialists and heads of educational institutions noted that at that time it was already necessary to look at the consequences and impact of hostilities on higher education with a 5–25-year perspective.

Problems with the organization of the educational process in the institutions of the HES's arose at the beginning of the war and continue to deepen today. The first group of problems is related to the fact that a large number of students and teachers of higher education institutions (HEI's) are in the occupied and frontline territories, with some of them there is no contact, some of these categories of subjects have become internally displaced persons or were forced to go abroad. The second group of problems relates to financial problems due to the reduction of the State Budget and the Special Budget, which is filled through student fees and cooperation with enterprises.

During the discussion, it was also noted that the university network needs to be reorganized. Namely, necessary to improve the management of civilian higher education institutions and to eliminate university branches that have lost their meaning; to separate from universities the institutions of professional postgraduate education, which in an autonomous state should be focused on the new administrative and territorial structure of Ukraine and the adult education system [2].

Education experts point to an excessive and unbearable network of higher education institutions for Ukraine and the uncertainty of the criteria for its optimization and efficiency. It is proposed to use such global approaches as structuring institutions into research universities, higher professional schools etc. In Europe, for example, the idea of creating university alliances has emerged. Ukraine may, in the future, create such higher education institutions both domestically and in partnership with foreign universities with joint educational programs, centers's for the collective use of professional equipment.

The increase in defense spending amid the war, from 6.91% in 2021 to 47.23% in 2023, resulted in a reduction in social spending from the state budget. Before the outbreak of full-scale war, education spending in Ukraine averaged 16.9% of Ukraine's consolidated budget expenditures, and in 2023, education spending fell to 6.95% [3].

In 2023–2024, the crisis problems in the Ukrainian HES's continued to deepen, which negatively affected the ranking of Ukrainian HEI's in the global education market. The logical consequence of the crisis situation in the HES's was the lack of dynamic growth in the ratings of Ukrainian HEI's in the world.

The following international criteria influence the ranking of Ukrainian HEI's [4]: academic activities that contribute to the development of science and education, including research and publishing activities and international activities; assessment of achievements based on comparisons of published information on HEI's websites and in printed publications about achievements; citation indices of works of HEI's scientists and researchers in printed and electronic publications, including international ones; popularity of HEI's in society due to successful website content and information dissemination;

achievements and prospects of HEI's in accordance with the goals of sustainable development.

In addition to these international criteria, the criteria for the preparedness of the teaching staff, the availability of modern facilities and additional opportunities for internships, practice and student development, and the relevance of the proposed specializations are also taken into account.

According to the press service of the Ministry of Higher Education (MES) of Ukraine, the World University Rankings 2025, which is one of the world's most influential sources of data on the performance of higher education institutions, includes 17 Ukrainian universities, which is three more than in 2024. The highest position was taken by Sumy State University, which entered the 801–1000 positions of the world ranking. Other 16 Ukrainian universities are ranked 1501+.

In general, all Ukrainian universities have not made progress in the world ranking over the past year, while most of them have retained their positions. For the first time, the Bogomolets National Medical University, Odesa National University named after I. Mechnikov, and the Precarpathian National University named after V. Stefanyk appeared in the ranking table. For the ninth year in a row, Oxford University of the United Kingdom has been recognized as the world's best university. The second place was taken by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the third – by Harvard University from the United States [5].

It is clear that in such a situation, educators and scientists in Ukraine should be guided by the world's pedagogical research of recent years, which is based on such a fundamental and economic concept as a systematic approach to the management of higher education institutions. Researchers are actively defining criteria for assessing the quality of management activities of educational institutions and institutions based on education management and the concept of added academic value – Added Value Academic (AVA). AVA can serve as a tool for assessing the degree to which students improve their knowledge, skills and abilities during their studies, the degree of critical and reflective thinking, and the ability to learn throughout their lives (Long Life Learning). The academic added value model can be successfully adapted, taking into account Ukrainian realities, as a methodology and applied tool for increasing the competitiveness of educational services providers in the context of globalization of knowledge and labor markets [6].

References:

1. 11 universities were destroyed and 279 damaged as a result of the war. Educational portal Education.ua. Available at: <https://www.education.ua/news/2024/11/14/11-vyshiv-zruinovano-ta-279-poshkodzhenovnaslidok-viiny/> (accessed February 10, 2025).
2. Kabanets Y. The impact of war on higher education in Ukraine: challenges and prospects. Cedoss. Independent analytical center. Public organization "Center for Society

Research". Available at: <https://cedos.org.ua/events/vplyv-vijny-na-vyshhu-osvitu-v-ukrayiny-vyklyky-ta-perspektyvy/> (accessed February 10, 2025).

3. Restoration and development of the education system of Ukraine during and after the war. LB.ua "Left Bank". Available at: https://lb.ua/blog/hanna_yatsenko/657752_vidnovlennya_rozvitok_sistemi.html

4. Antropova M. Top 10 Universities of Ukraine. Training center "GRANT". Available at: <https://znogrant.com.ua/blog/top-10-universytetiv-ukrayiny/>

5. 17 Ukrainian universities are included in the World University Rankings. Osvita.UA. Available at: https://osvita.ua/vnz/rating/93285/#google_vignette

6. Savyuk L. (2024) Mathematical models, algorithms and methods o conditions of market relations. Anti-Crisis Strategy for the Development of Socio-Economic Systems: Global Challenges: Collective monograph. Riga: Baltija Publishing, pp. 155–176.