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### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN UKRAINE: CURRENT STATE, PROBLEMS AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS

*The article deals with the current state of vocational education in Ukraine, an attempt was made to identify problems and outline the directions for further development to enhance the international competitiveness of future specialists in the labour market. The development of social partnership on the basis of consolidation of efforts of relevant institutions, local authorities, employers, scientists and public associations, the development and the introduction of modern financial support mechanisms for vocational education institutions, the correspondence of professional training to the needs of the labour market, improving the material and technical base in accordance with the scientific-technical and technological progress, etc., will promote the achievement of the educational standards of the European level in the field of vocational education.*

**Key words:** vocational education, life-long learning, modernization, directions of development, labour market.

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### ПРОФЕСІЙНА ОСВІТА В УКРАЇНІ: СУЧАСНИЙ СТАН, ПРОБЛЕМИ ТА НАПРЯМИ РОЗВИТКУ

*У статті розглядається сучасний стан професійної освіти в Україні, здійснено спробу виокремити проблеми та окреслити напрями подальшого розвитку для підвищення міжнародної конкурентоздатності майбутніх фахівців на ринку праці. Розвиток соціального партнерства на основі консолідації зусиль відповідних інституцій, місцевих органів виконавчої влади, роботодавців, науковців і громадських об'єднань, розробка і запровадження сучасних механізмів фінансового забезпечення закладів професійної освіти, відповідність фахової підготовки запитам ринку праці, вдосконалення матеріально-технічної бази відповідно до науково-технічного і технологічного прогресу тощо сприятиме досягненню освітніх стандартів європейського рівня у сфері професійної освіти.*

**Ключові слова:** професійна освіта, навчання впродовж життя, модернізація, напрями розвитку, ринок праці.

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### ПРОФЕСИОНАЛЬНОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ В УКРАИНЕ: СОВРЕМЕННОЕ СОСТОЯНИЕ, ПРОБЛЕМЫ И НАПРАВЛЕНИЯ РАЗВИТИЯ

*В статье рассматривается современное состояние профессионального образования в Украине, предпринята попытка выделить проблемы и наметить направления дальнейшего раз-*

*вития для повышения международной конкурентоспособности будущих специалистов на рынке труда. Развитие социального партнерства на основе консолидации усилий соответствующих институтов, местных органов исполнительной власти, работодателей, ученых и общественных объединений, разработка и внедрение современных механизмов финансового обеспечения учреждений профессионального образования, соответствие профессиональной подготовки запросам рынка труда, совершенствование материально-технической базы в соответствии с научно-техническим и технологическим прогрессом и т.д. будет способствовать достижению образовательных стандартов европейского уровня в сфере профессионального образования.*

**Ключевые слова:** профессиональное образование, обучение в течение жизни, модернизация, направления развития, рынок труда.

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**Formulation of the problem.** Nowadays the critical situation in Ukraine is due to the problem of training skilled personnel that is ready to fulfill their professional duties in crisis conditions. The aging of labour resources has led to the fact that the age of people involved in the production is close to the pension, as a result of the decrease in the training of specialists in vocational schools and the lack of vocational guidance work. On the one hand, there is a shortage of skilled personnel in a number of professions, on the other hand – there is an overestimation in other professions, which stipulates the need to define the policy of vocational education in the conditions of market economy, which would be oriented to meet the needs of the individual in vocational education providing the labour market with skilled personnel.

**Research analysis.** In the domestic pedagogical science there has been accumulated significant experience in preparing qualified personnel, vocational training and education, the formation of personality in the system of vocational education. The problems of the development of the vocational education system in the XXI century, the didactics of continuous vocational education, the theory and methodology of vocational training, the unemployed population training, forecasting of vocational education systems taking into account international trends are defined by O. Hluzman, S. Honcharenko, Z. Kurlyand, N. Nychkalo etc.

The main conceptual positions, theoretical and methodological approaches to the analysis of vocational education have been developed by a number of well-known pedagogical scientists (O. Anishchenko, H. Vasyanovich, S. Honcharenko, I. Kozlovskaya, I. Likarchuk, V. Luhovyi, N. Nychkalo, V. Stakhnevych, O. Stepanovych, O. Sukhomlynska). The features of vocational education national systems were studied by N. Abashkina, H. Bednarchyk, F. Shlyosek, T. Yakymovych.

The subject of the research by a number of scholars was to find out the impact of education on the employment and social protection of youth: A. Batyuk, M. Landel, M. Semykina, N. Stativka, H. Tovkanets, V. Tulenkov and others.

**The purpose of the article** is to consider the current state of vocational education in Ukraine, to identify problems and outline the ways of its further development in order to increase the international competitiveness of future specialists in the labour market.

**Presenting the main material.** Improving the educational system and the quality of professional training of specialists in Ukraine is a drastic socio-cultural problem. Its solution is to bring education in line with new socioeconomic requirements and determine the priority directions of educational policy. In recent years the quality of labour potential in Ukraine has been continuing to deteriorate, there is an aging workforce which creates certain obstacles for the normalization of reproduction processes. Moreover, in most cases the quality of the labour force does not meet the current requirements for its vocational education, mobility and economic activity in general.

Vocational education should meet the needs of the state in qualified personnel and at the same time the needs of the individual in high-quality vocational education, covering various segments of the population, especially the following: young people who are studying in vocational schools; unemployed citizens who need pre-professional training or retraining; senior students who are involved in vocational training, students of higher education institutions. The imbalance of professional training and labour market demands the necessity of changes in the organization of the vocational education system.

In such a situation we should pay attention to N. Nychkalo's opinion about the need to overcome controversies, in particular, between global and local; general and individual; traditions and modernity; promising and immediate tasks; competition and equality of person's opportunities; spiritual and material. The influence of globalization and integration processes actualizes the problem of competitive manufacturing personnel training with an international significance. New views on a person have caused new challenges in all spheres of society and above all – in educational [4].

The qualified training of competitive personnel is possible only through the use of courses and curricula that are constantly adapting to the current and future needs of society. The excellence of curricula is one of the main factors in ensuring a high quality education which must not be confined to simple cognitive learning, but also help students acquire skills and competence in business communication, acquire creative and critical analysis, independent thinking and work in society.

Youth is considered to be the most problematic component of the national labour market. High level of unemployment among young people is dangerous because socio-economic and demographic consequences. According to M. Semykina, «the unresolved problem of youth employment leads to an increase in unemployment and lower living standards, the spread of passive (dependence), unregulated (shadow employment) and destructive (criminal) behavior patterns, as well as encourages labour migration, causes psychological changes (changes in the hierarchy of value orientations)» [7, 220].

Thus, the reforming of vocational education requires the modernization of the whole system of national education and the approximation of educational traditions to the world level. The final goal of modern reforms should be the achievement of a new qualitative training of a specialist, who is competitive in the domestic and world labour market. Qualitative vocational education can only be considered if it covers almost all young people and will provide them with the necessary professional competence to enter the labour market.

It should be noted that in the Global Competitiveness Index of World Economic Forum, in 2014 Ukraine has ranked 76-th out of 144 countries rising to 8 positions. A year ago the country lost 11 positions, falling down to 84-th among 148 countries [9].

The last 10 years are the time of a quick reorientation of most national educational systems from socialization in a national culture to the development of a common educational policy for training young professionals for living and working in a market-oriented competitive global economy. The search for talents and the requirement for new competences, including job skills, are at the forefront. The main goal of professional education is to empower people through the development of their abilities, to improve the professional relevance of acquired education, to provide better opportunities for orientation and adaptation in the working environment.

On the basis of the research of the organizational aspect of modern vocational education systems, T. Yakymovych distinguishes between the following types of interaction between theoretical and practical training: parallel (theoretical training takes place in educational

institutions simultaneously with the manufacturing training at an enterprise), consequent (professionally directed theoretical training takes place in educational institutions, after this – specialization in an enterprise), concentric (highly specialized theoretical and manufacturing training is conducted at the enterprise) [10].

In conditions of market economy, information and technological progress, the state needs a comprehensive system of continuous vocational education that corresponds to national interests and world economic development trends, provides training of skilled workers and junior specialists who are capable of lifelong learning, raising their level of qualification, obtaining, if necessary, another a profession. According to the world trends, national vocational education is shifting to lifelong learning [3].

Thus, the system of vocational education involves the development of social partnership through the consolidation of the efforts of relevant institutions, local authorities, employers, academics and public associations [5]. Therefore, the successful functioning of vocational education institutions of all levels requires the investigation of the labour market conditions for the training the necessary quantity of highly skilled, competitive specialists who will meet these needs. Forecasting the labour market needs of qualified professionals should be crucial in improving employment, as there is a steady demand for skilled workers. V. Kremen proposes to work out the mechanism of multi-channel and multilevel financing, preferential taxation of enterprises which provide financial and material support for the development of vocational education and training in order to prevent the reduction and eventual closure of vocational education institutions [6].

The promotion of educational tasks is intended to update the content of vocational education on the basis of competences accumulation, the development of a national system of qualifications, the intellectualization and the scientific provision of vocational education, the computerization of the educational process and the implementation of scientific and technological achievements. The process of improvement should be advanced, constantly changing, should take into account the dynamic changes in science, economics, production technology and be oriented on the latest technologies [8, 11].

Over the past decades the concept of «human capital» (G. Becker, J. Minsler, L. Turou, T. Schultz) has been effectively applied in practice in the countries with a developed market economy, which defines the investment nature of the costs on education and training of workers and proves that the investment in education, vocational training and employee mobility will significantly increase the value and the cost of labour forces and bring a significant income. It is important that vocational education is one of the investments types that a person can make for raising his capital [2].

The impact of education on economic indicators determines its economic value. At the level of an individual – these are indicators of the labour payment, at the enterprise level – total income, profitability, at the state level – national income. In addition, the economic value of education is also determined by the population employment. The tendencies, the peculiarities of the development of various stages of labour potential formation in the conditions of the transformational economy have been analyzed in A. Krykliy's researches. The scientist has developed the original methods of planning and determining the socio-economic efficiency of continuing vocational training. If we take into consideration the dynamics of technological and structural changes, business strategy, innovation processes, organizational improvements, the saturation of labour market, supply and demand in individual specialties in programs and content of professional training we will get a resource of economic value of education [1].

Consequently, taking into account the current state and existing problems in vocational education of Ukraine, we will outline the following ways of its development:

1. Strengthening the participation of employers and entrepreneurs in determining the content of education, assessing the quality of vocational education and attracting non-traditional teaching staff like entrepreneurs, engineers, managers, lawyers who will bring students closer to the realities of their future specialty.

2. The importance of developing and implementing modern financial support mechanisms for vocational education.

3. The peculiarities of the organization of the educational process in getting new specialty are supposed to be improved. The possibility of a cross-entry on the basis of a bachelor's diploma has opened up wider ways for additional qualifications employment for the youth. However, it is worth mentioning about the imbalance between general education and professional knowledge and skills. The new unified curricula and discipline programs which take into account the aspects mentioned above are to be developed.

4. The need for qualitative training of skilled workers with an inclination to continuous learning, mobility and flexibility.

5. Further development of vocational education in Ukraine is impossible without the achievement of educational standards of the European level considering national peculiarities.

**Conclusions.** The modernization of the domestic vocational education system, which would enable competitiveness in the modern labour market and ensure the social protection of a person in a changing world, requires the solution of a number of contradictions: between the low quality of training and the need for highly skilled specialists willing to work in a crisis economy; the discrepancy of the material and technical base of vocational education with the scientific and technological development and the financing of the functioning of professional educational institutions; the imbalance between the popularity of some specialties and the real needs of the economic sectors on them etc.

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*Стаття подано до редакції 19.09.2017 р.*