

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS: EUROPEAN CONTEXT OF UKRAINIAN TRANSFORMATIONS

Roliak A.O., Semenyshyna I.V.

State Agrarian and Engineering University in Podillia

The article deals with the problem of Ukrainian lifelong teacher professional development in context of European educational environment. The international experience has been generalized based on analysis of the main international and national documents on teacher professional training. The in-service training model in the system of pedagogic education has been designed. The necessity to use the new European in-service scheme in the Ukrainian system of teacher education has been substantiated. The problem of lifelong pedagogic education modernization in European environment and world-wide is vital and deserves the future research.

Keywords: in-service training, lifelong teacher education, European educational environment, modernization.

Posing the problem in general. Teaching as a profession in a knowledge-based society is so difficult that one lifetime is not enough to master it efficiently because pedagogic knowledge is multi-faceted so every teacher will have varying levels of competence in relation to different areas of professional practice. Contemporary teachers with the “21-st Century Skills and Competences” must be capable of mobile responding to the quick changes in the world educational environment, and therefore must constantly improve their skills throughout their lives.

Consequently, the professional training of a modern teacher should not finish in a pedagogic educational institution. The whole system of pedagogic education should be structured as continuous professional development (CPD) in such a way as to enable each teacher to regularly update knowledge throughout the period of professional activity. This can be effectively promoted by a specially organized in-service teacher training system.

The problem of the efficient lifelong teachers education organization is relevant to most of the European countries so one of the most useful way to build the appropriate model of teachers continuous professional development in Ukraine is to study the in-service scheme in European educational environment.

Research and Publications analysis. General aspects of the teacher education system functioning both in Ukrainian and European environment are discussed in the scientific works of Ukrainian scholars: N. Nychkalo, O. Ohienko, L. Pukhovska, V. Kudin, N. Avsheniuk, S. Sysoieva, etc.

Analysis of scientific sources grounds that contemporary UNESCO concept for the continuous education of teachers, passing through all the professional life, is gaining a priority today. The international documents of UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the Organization for International Cooperation and Development, the International Labor Organization, highlight the peculiarities of European in-service teacher training system.

Aim of the research. On the basis of main international and national documents analysis on teacher training, the author aims to generalize international experience and substantiate the teachers continuous professional development model in the system of pedagogic education of Ukraine.

Basic investigation material. The research demonstrates that in European environment the term «advanced training» was gradually replaced by the term «professional development». Nevertheless the expressions «retraining», «advanced training» are often used in the narrow sense to determine a working teacher professional training for several specialized programs. In the broad sense, the term «continuous or lifelong professional development» is used covering teachers' various activities, including both formal and informal ways of training and self education to enhance professional competencies throughout their careers and life [8].

Generally speaking, being a teacher is demanding and there are an infinite number of areas in which teachers can develop. The most widely cited definition of continuous professional development (CPD) was offered by Christopher Day as: “...all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute through these to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers... acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice” [3, p. 44].

All teachers both newly qualified and experienced face constant needs in continuous development of their competences throughout their teaching careers. Making decisions about what to focus on can be overwhelming for individuals. Different challenges as motivation, overall time management, information, resources and technology development, etc. teachers face while planning their professional development activities. In order to know which areas to focus on for professional development, it is necessary for teachers to understand and critically assess their strong and weak points. So self assessment is a good start for every teacher, lecturer or tutor deciding which sphere of professional development to choose. The self-assessment scheme (table 1) is based on the British Council's Continuing Professional Development Framework [1] and illustrates some of the main directions of CPD programs in European dimension based on teachers needs.

And as for governments recently new standards for teachers' professional development were established bringing significant change in the way

CPD is conceptualized and implemented in European countries. In the framework of continuing professional development the Council of Europe outlines twelve professional practices for teachers: 1) planning lessons and courses; 2) understanding learners; 3) managing the lesson; 4) knowing the subject; 5) managing resources; 6) taking responsibility for professional development; 7) assessing learning; 8) integrating ICT; 9) using inclusive practices; 10) using multilingual approaches; 11) promoting 21st-century skills; 12) understanding educational policies and practice [8]. These twelve important practices may be judged as a productive approach to CPD and will help teachers with reference to the four stages of self assessment scheme (table 1), classroom practice and student learning in identifying those specific areas of professional practice where development is required. Based on the teachers needs to work over one or more spheres of above mentioned professional activities it is necessary for every system of pedagogic education to implement appropriate strategies for supporting teachers lifelong training courses.

Table 1

Self-assessment scheme

Description	Stage of development
Interest in some particular professional practice	The first stage – <i>awareness</i>
Knowledge of the particular professional practice meaning and importance	The second stage – <i>understanding</i>
Demonstration of competency in this professional practice at work.	The third stage – <i>engagement</i>
Experience a high level of professional competences in particular pedagogic practice which consistently influence on the relevant teaching activity.	The fourth stage – <i>integration</i>

Source: developed by the author according to [1]

As our research demonstrates, current European approaches to the content and organization of pedagogic lifelong professional development take into account:

- first – teachers' needs in evolving their professional skills, knowledge and competences (individual level);
- second – schools' requirements in confident, excellent practitioners (regional level);
- third – knowledge-based societies' needs in teachers ready for educating their students with the 21-st century skills (national level) [9].

These basic approaches combined with the European concept of "sustained flexibility" are means of establishing and building more effective networks for teachers professional development within a separate country and Europe as a whole [2; 3].

European and Ukrainian scholars consider the process of continuous development as the procedure of lifelong teachers competence formation [2; 3; 5; 6; 9]. From the point of view of teachers needs (individual level) one of the most important sphere of their development is connected with their academic capabilities (subject competence). As for Ukraine an effective teacher has to know his subject much deeper than the programme

volume. Therefore teachers must have the ability to renew and enlarge knowledge of the core subjects they teach in schools. We consider that there is a close relationship between teachers subject competence and other significant areas where Ukrainian teachers are given possibilities to develop, particularly, in forming their own versions of curricula, planning their lessons, analyzing world prominent concepts and technologies in education, substantiating new approaches in teaching and upbringing and generally in conducting their own scientific research.

In such a way the subject competence of a teacher is closely connected with the evidence-based research competence. We must press the point that today all programs of teacher education in European countries are aimed at developing of teachers research competences [4]. Europe needs teachers-researchers who can conduct their scientific work, organize and create their own styles of professional activities reasoning from the results of their critical and creative research.

The next section of our investigation is concerned with the regional level in organization of teachers professional development. Considering European dimension professional training programs are funded by the governments through grants, which are allocated to schools by local authorities. In determining of the main directions or the themes of the programs both teachers and institutions or schools needs are in view. The most relevant areas are: 1) professional skills development; 2) new national educational programs and relevant assessment; 3) use of information technologies (ICT competence development); 4) national professional qualifications; 5) special training, etc. [7; 8].

If we now turn to Ukrainian dimension we may stress that Modern Ukrainian pedagogical education is only at the starting point in using the competence development concept in the sense that it is used by European countries. Taking into account character and peculiarities of pedagogical activities, Ukrainian scientists include the following components into the system of teachers professional competences improvement: 1) social block of competences combined with the environment, society, social activities of a teacher; 2) motivational block of competences which involves internal motivation, interests and individual choice of a teacher; 3) cognitive block of competences including total knowledge, abilities, skills of a teacher and his capacity to develop them continuously; 4) functional block of competences is connected with the capacities of a teacher to use scientific knowledge and factual material effectively; 5) research block of competences deals with realization of scientific research in the professional activity of a teacher [6]. The current study found that the Ukrainian system of in-service pedagogic education is based on these competences development and enlargement.

Another important point of our research is to analyze the organizational structure of teachers continuous development in European environment based on the national level. The general feature of almost all the European Union is that teachers development programs are organized according to the period of retraining and they may be: 1) long-term; 2) medium-term; 3) short-term [7].

Long-term courses in the continuous development of European teachers last from 6 months to 1 year (depending on the country). Generally they are conducted by the Pedagogic universities or relevant university department. Such programs basically include practical training on core subjects, added by research work. The contingent of teachers participating in the program differs from the age to professional inclinations. Today traditional classes in the form of lectures, seminars are very often changed on innovative discussions, on-line round tables and webinars conducted by lecturers and university Professors. The result of such training may be: 1) the transition to the higher level of a long-term pedagogic education at the university, leading to the academic degree (Master's or PhD); 2) change the direction of the core subjects to be taught by a teacher at school; 3) teacher's accreditation.

Medium-term courses last 30 weeks and cover from 1 to 5 credits ECTS. Usually the training is organized in the form of the project work in colleges or pedagogic centers to enable teachers to continue their school-based activity. After passing mid-term programs of professional development a teacher can receive a certificate.

Short-term courses may be organized by a county's Ministry of Education in teachers centers or directly at schools in the form of conferences, seminars, consultations, on-line activities, collaborative work for the purpose of experience exchange. Short-term training is usually initiated by schools, and their programs are developed by methodologists or professional counselors from the

Teachers Associations. The purpose of such courses is to meet the needs of a school in the professional growth of its teachers.

Moreover the official European documents state that the right to the life-long education is the professional right of every teacher to choose his/her own personal way of competence development [1; 8]. In most of European educational systems attending a training course for a teacher is a purely personal matter so upgrading is not an obligation, but is a free choice for every teacher.

Conclusions. The study has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding of a democratic principles of teachers life-long training in European dimension interrelating all levels of professional development: individual, institutional and national one. As for educational environment of Ukraine this means essential changes not only in the in-service pedagogic education content but also in the principles of organization, flexibility, methods of teachers training, methodology of pedagogic development results evaluation, etc.

Our research brings new approach to the problem of formation of the national Ukrainian professional development model in the system of teacher education from the point of view of integration into European educational environment.

The importance of this problem determines the necessity of its continuous study. We think that special interest deserves the problem of methods and innovative technologies of teachers professional development in the European system of pedagogic education.

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Роляк А.О., Семенишина І.В.

Подільський державний аграрно-технічний університет

НЕПЕРЕРВНА ПЕДАГОГІЧНА ОСВІТА УКРАЇНИ У ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОМУ КОНТЕКСТІ

Анотація

Стаття присвячена проблемі модернізації неперервної педагогічної освіти України крізь призму європейського освітнього середовища. Через аналіз міжнародних та національних документів про професійну підготовку вчителів узагальнено міжнародний досвід. Розроблено модель підвищення кваліфікації педагогів в системі педагогічної освіти. Обґрунтовано необхідність використання нової європейської схеми перепідготовки вчителів в системі педагогічної освіти України. Встановлено, що проблема модернізації неперервної педагогічної освіти в європейському середовищі та у всьому світі є життєво важливою і заслуговує на майбутні дослідження.

Ключові слова: підвищення кваліфікації, неперервна педагогічна освіта, європейське освітнє середовище, модернізація.

Роляк А.А., Семенишина И.В.

Подольский государственный аграрно-технический университет

НЕПРЕРЫВНОЕ ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ УКРАИНЫ В ЕВРОПЕЙСКОМ КОНТЕКСТЕ

Аннотация

Статья посвящена проблеме модернизации непрерывного педагогического образования Украины сквозь призму европейской образовательной среды. Международный опыт обобщен через анализ международных и национальных документов о профессиональной подготовке учителей. Разработана модель повышения квалификации педагогов в системе педагогического образования. Обоснована необходимость использования новой европейской схемы переподготовки учителей в украинской системе педагогического образования. Установлено, что проблема модернизации непрерывного педагогического образования в европейской среде и во всем мире является жизненно важной и заслуживает на глубокое исследование.

Ключевые слова: повышение квалификации, непрерывное педагогическое образование, европейская образовательная среда, модернизация.