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## VALUE DIMENSION OF STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to determining the value dimension of students' involvement in the system of higher education. The paper calculates and analyzes the education indicators of the population of Ukraine and OECD countries which include personal and social values. The regions of Ukraine are grouped according to the specific weight of students in the population of different regions; leaders and outsiders among them are identified in terms of the involvement in higher education. It is proposed to use the rate of continuing education at the next level to assess changes in the flow of students in a gradual movement in the system of higher education.

### KEYWORDS

higher education, value, involvement in the system of higher education, applicants for higher education

### Introduction

At the present stage of economic and social development, the role of innovations is growing. They provide opportunities for technological breakthrough, economic growth, social promotion, and increase in national competitiveness based on the uniqueness and efficiency of resource use. Innovations are always associated with new challenges and conditions of uncertainty, so they become a threat to the existing way of life. Integrating technology and innovation into the DNA of the economy is challenging, but it is necessary to consider the possibility of these changes by investing in human capital to mitigate the unforeseen negative effects of technological progress on income distribution and social cohesion through a holistic approach [12].

Such demand relates to the knowledge-based economy in which the main content of economic activity is the process of creating, distributing and applying knowledge, and which largely depends on the quality of human capital in the country. Simon Kuznets noted that a country has to accumulate human capital for a scientific and technological breakthrough as well as transition to a new technological order [10]. According to OECD, human capital is the knowledge, qualifications, skills and other qualities that an individual possesses and that are important for economic activity [14].

Therefore, the reproduction and development of human capital implies a high quality and diverse education system. Consequently, the role of higher education is growing and it is becoming a source of scientific personnel, innovations, and discoveries in manufacturing and service industries owing to inventions, patents, know-how, startups, and so on.

Higher education research in various areas attracts considerable attention: trends in the development of the higher education system, mechanisms for financing higher education, quality management of higher education, the impact of the population's education level on the development of the country, ratings of higher education institutions and systems, etc. Usually, all researchers consider education as a value for a person, but there is still no definition of the value of higher education itself. After all, the value of higher education is a complex and multipolar concept and everyone defines and interprets it individually.

### **The key findings of the study**

Values are a philosophical category that characterizes the socio-historical significance of certain phenomena of reality for society and individuals. The successful application of the value approach in any applied field of knowledge primarily depends on "theoretical quality" that can be offered to science by modern philosophy.

From the point of view of axiology, the study of values, the concept of value is interpreted very ambiguously.

- According to the scientist P. Mentzer, value is what a person's feeling proposes to recognize as the most important thing, and what you can strive for, treat with respect and recognition.
- According to M. Golovaty, values are certain ideas and views with the help of which people satisfy their needs and interests [3].
- In turn, M. Rokich defines values as a stable belief that a certain way of behavior or the final goal of existence has potential meaning from a personal point of view, unlike the opposite or backward way of behavior or the final goal of existence [9].
- As noted by S. Wozniak and V. Kononenko, the concept of "value" is close to the concept of "significance". Value can be anything that an individual can value, that is significant and important for him/her. It is all about the role that an object or phenomenon can play in a human's life in terms of his/her needs, interests, and goals [15].

What can be a value for one person may have little significance for another one, or even be not a value at all, that means that the value is always subjective.

On the one hand, values are a property of a particular social object or phenomenon that satisfies needs, interests, and desires. In other words, these are socially significant ideas about the good, justice, patriotism, love, friendship, and the like. They are usually beyond question, but they may vary, they are the standard, the ideal for people. On the other hand, it is the subject's attitude to objects and phenomena of reality, which is expressed by value orientations, social attitudes, and personal qualities. Here they act as a certain personality structure. One aspect is social, the other is personal [1].

The complexity of formulating the value of higher education is emphasized by the fact that it affects not only the applicant for education, as the main subject, but also society, both at the national and local levels. The goals and values of higher education form

a value paradigm, which serves as a guideline in the training of highly qualified specialists who focus on leading the domestic economy so that it can occupy the main positions in the world.

The most traditional indicators of education of the country's population that consider personal and social values are the number of students per 10 thousand residents and the share of 17-27-year-old students. These indicators demonstrate the number of residents with higher education, the need and involvement of young people in the higher education environment.

The information base for research of higher education in Ukraine is the data of the state educational electronic register – the Unified state electronic database on education. The main purpose of the Unified state electronic database on education is to provide state authorities, local self-government bodies, individuals and legal entities with the following information on education: educational institutions, educational documents and scientific degrees, the results of External Independent Assessment, the entrance campaign to educational institutions, state-issued student cards, and other information in this field [13]. Such a wide database makes it possible to form differential indicators and conduct a systematic analysis of higher education in Ukraine.

To study the structure of higher education in the country, educational programs of higher education of the first Bachelor's and second Master's levels were selected, including applicants for higher education involved in them, in 24 regions of Ukraine and the city of Kyiv. The third and scientific levels are possible only on the basis of the Master's level and, as a rule, do not change the structure of the educational environment, but only deepen it, while a short training cycle is the initial level of higher education.

Ukraine trains applicants for higher education in 29 branches of knowledge, the list of which was approved in 2015. The work analyzes 28 branches of knowledge, excluding branch of knowledge "25 Military sciences, national security, state border security". The reason is that the information about the results of admission (selection) boards that supervise the entrance campaign to military higher education institutions and educational subdivisions of higher education institutions is not submitted to the unified state electronic database on education in order to prevent disclosure of information with limited access [4]. Today, training is still provided in specialties at the educational and qualification levels of Bachelor, Specialist and Master in branches of knowledge according to the lists of 2006, 2007, 2010. However, the number of higher education applicants involved in these programs according to the state educational electronic register is 12,186 people, which will not critically affect the overall picture of specialization and popularity of branches of knowledge among applicants, so these programs were not studied.

According to the World Bank, as of 2018, 82% of Ukrainians have higher education [5]. The level of education of the average Ukrainian resident exceeds that of citizens of other high-income economies, such as the United Kingdom and Germany. At the same time, in Ukraine, there is a gap between the levels of education and employment, when despite the high level of formal education, Ukrainians were focused on obtaining diplomas, and not the skills necessary for employment.

Today, the attitude to higher education in Ukraine is changing, and there is a shift in emphasis from attracting a bigger number of students to the quality of education

provided to them. This is evidenced by the reform of education and the introduction of various standards, recommendations and regulations to ensure the quality of educational activities and the quality of higher education in higher education institutions.

In 2020, there are 251 students of higher education institutions per 10 thousand residents in Ukraine. The distribution of students across the country is uneven. A certain difference in the list of leaders and outsiders is due to the different number of higher education institutions in the regions.

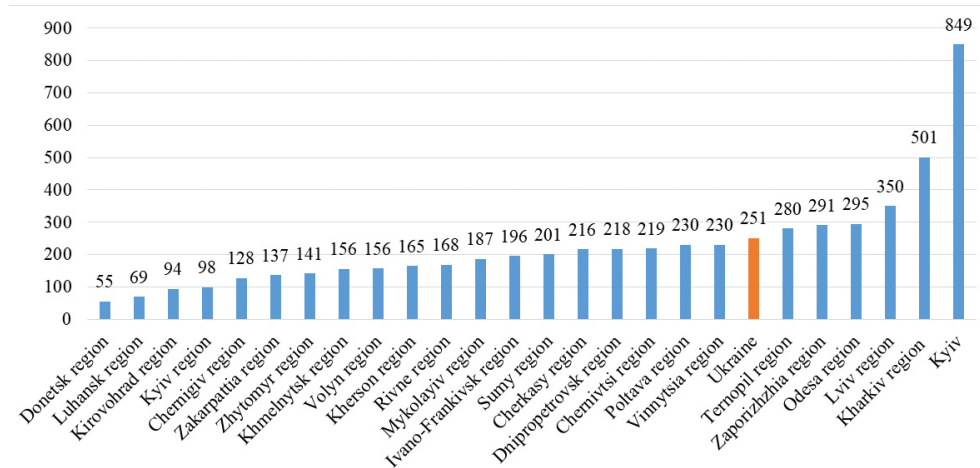


Fig.1 The number of students of higher education institutions per 10 thousand residents in 2020 [8].

The leading place in terms of the number of students of higher education institutions per 10 thousand residents is occupied by Kyiv, which is justified by the status of the capital, cultural, historical and investment center of the country.

There is a grouping with establishing the number of students of higher education institutions per 10 thousand residents (Table 1).

Table 1. The grouping of regions of Ukraine with the specific weight of students as parts of different regions

High level (289 +)		Medium level (213-289)		Low level (213 -)	
Kyiv	849	Ternopil region	280	Sumy region	201
Kharkiv region	501	Vinnitsia region	230	Ivano-Frankivsk region	196
Lviv region	350	Poltava region	230	Mykolayiv region	187
Odesa region	295	Chernivtsi region	219	Rivne region	168
Zaporizhzhia region	291	Dnipropetrovsk region	218	Kherson region	165
		Cherkasy region	216	Volyn region	156
				Khmelnytsk region	156
				Zhytomyr region	141
				Zakarpattia region	137
				Chernigiv region	128
				Kyiv region	98
				Kirovohrad region	94
				Luhansk region	69
				Donetsk region	55

The grouping was divided into three levels: high, medium, and low. The range of the average level of specific weight of students in the population of the region is defined in the following way: the average indicator in the country -  $(251 + - 15\%)$ . The high level includes all regions that have a higher indicator, and the low level includes those that have a lower indicator.

According to the above gradation, most regions of the country are characterized by a low level of specific weight of students in the region's population.

The group of high-level of specific weight of students in the region's population includes five regions.

The group of medium-level of specific weight of students in the region's population includes six regions

Among the OECD countries in 2018, the number of students of higher education institutions per 10 thousand residents varies from 93 in Luxembourg to 687 in Greece (Fig. 2). Ukraine has indicators close to such countries as: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, North Macedonia. Luxembourg and Liechtenstein are micro-states with a small number of higher education institutions, and most residents of these countries receive higher education in neighboring countries, so their rates are the lowest. According to the 2019 Human Development Index ranking, Switzerland, Ireland, Germany, Iceland, Sweden and the Netherlands are among the top ten countries among the OECD countries [6]. They have a fairly high level of specific weight of students in the population - from 327 to 494. Greece has the highest rates - 687 students per 10 thousand residents and Turkey - 581.

The difference in the number of students of higher education institutions per 10 thousand residents in 2013 and 2018 is inherent in almost all countries. A significant decrease in this indicator occurred in Ukraine, Slovakia, Estonia, and Lithuania. Greece and Turkey have the highest growth rates. In 2008, there were 511 students of higher education institutions of the III and IV accreditation levels per 10 thousand residents. Thus, in Ukraine, over the past decade, there has been an annual decline in demand for higher education. This situation is mainly affected by the unfavorable demographic situation, the growing trend towards educational emigration, the discrepancy between the training structure and the current and future needs of the labor market, and the discrepancy between the skills of graduates of higher education institutions and the needs of employers.

In terms of involving 17-27-year-old students in educational process, Ukraine is inferior to most OECD countries in 2018. The largest share of students in the population of this age group is Greece and it makes 0.6. The countries with the highest positions in the Human Development Index of 2019 have indicators between 0.29 and 0.36, which is a higher coverage of 17-27-year-old students than in Ukraine.

Compared to 2013, most OECD countries show an increase in young people's involvement in higher education institutions. The largest decline in the share of 17-27-year-old students occurred in Ukraine, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Estonia, Iceland and Lithuania. Contrary to the well-established opinion about the high level of higher education among Ukrainians, the coverage of higher education of the population is decreasing.

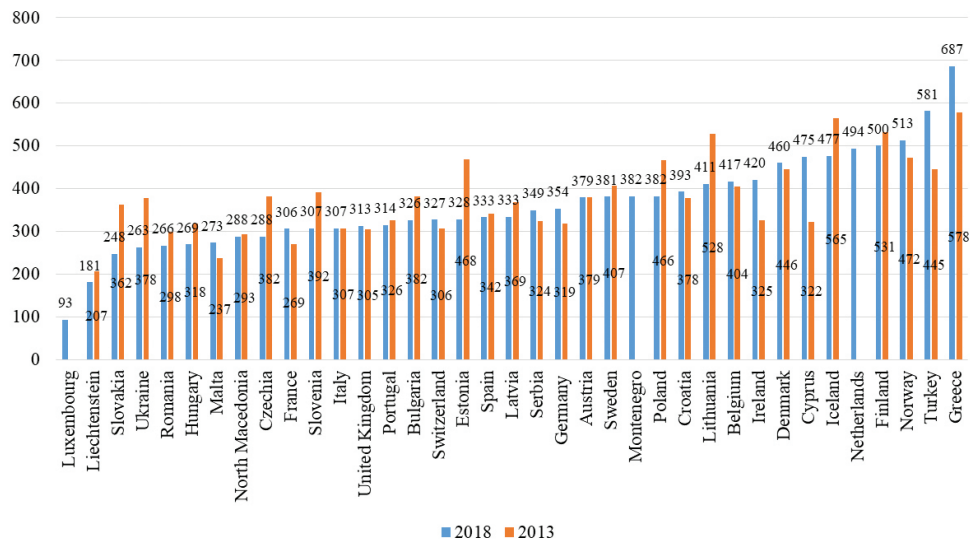


Fig.2 The number of students of higher education institutions per 10 thousand residents in 2018 [2, 8, 11]

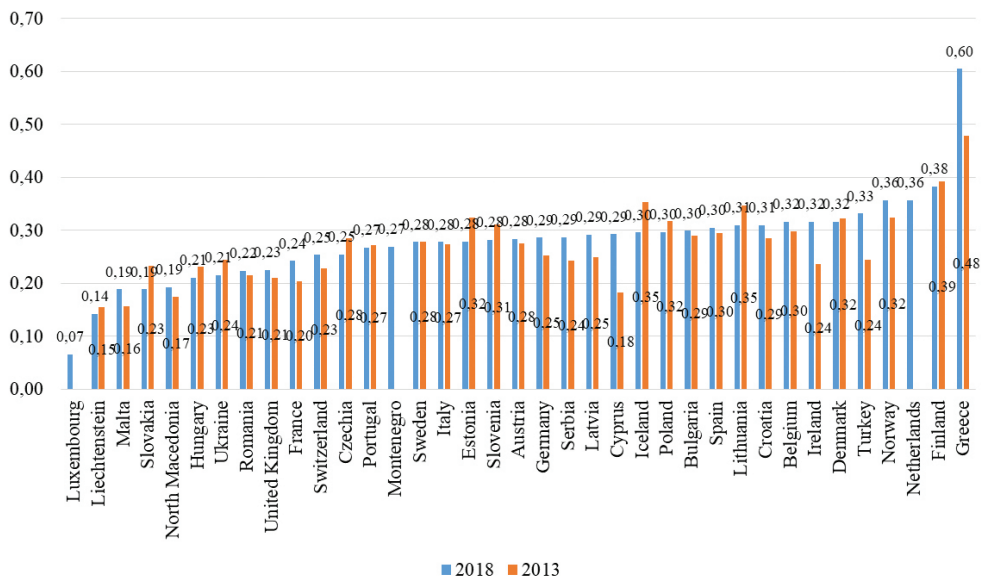


Fig.3 Percentage of students aged 17-27 in the population [2, 8, 11]

According to the QS higher education system strength rankings 2018, Ukraine ranked 44<sup>th</sup>, ahead of countries such as Greece, Estonia and Poland [7], which emphasizes the importance not only of the number of people involved in the educational process, but also of its quality. However, the OECD countries show a greater demand for higher education than Ukraine. Maintaining the current trend in the short run will reduce Ukraine's position in the world rankings, because the indicators of education of the population at the highest level of education are considered in almost all of them.

It is generally accepted that the main value in a person's life is time. It is unreasonable to measure the value of education by the amount of time that an individual has spent on training, because today the key to success is lifelong education. However, when forming their professional path, a person chooses one of the possible alternative ways, i.e. at

what stage to leave the education system and enter the labor market (Fig.4):

- 1) immediately after completing full general secondary education, go to work and immediately receive income;
- 2) continue to study and have a negative income due to training costs, and missed opportunities in the form of underpayment, because at this time the person could work. At the same time, at the end of training, have a higher competitiveness than at the end of the previous level of training.

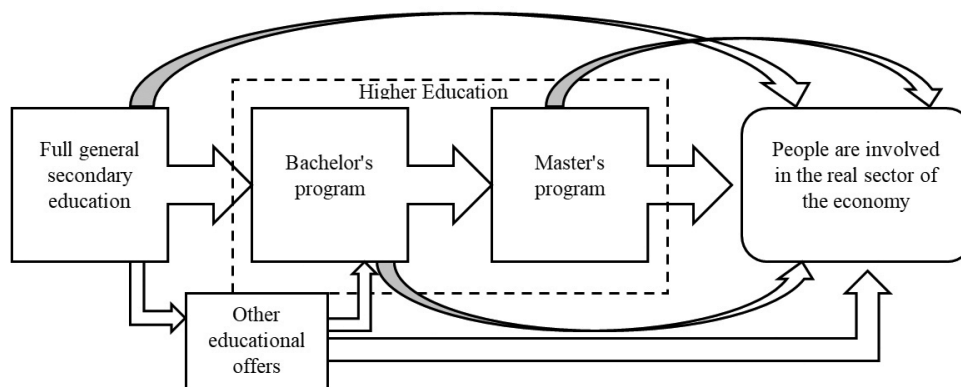


Fig. 4 Directions of flows of applicants for education

Applicants for education carry out a gradual movement in the education system through the levels of education. This process delays the population at the training stage thus avoiding unemployment and increasing the individual's competitive advantage in the labor market. Leaving the education system at each level is determined by the demand for certain competencies from the labor market, the standard of living and the force of pushing out of the education system, that is, the availability and condition of industries that need people [16].

With this approach, one of the criteria for the value of higher education is the rate of getting further training at the next level of education. It is calculated as the ratio of the number of people who completed a certain level of education to the number of people who entered the next level of education in the corresponding year. In 2019, in Ukraine, the rate of those continuing education after receiving a full general secondary education was 0.82, and the rate of those continuing education after receiving a Bachelor's degree was 0.64. After receiving full general secondary education, a part of people receives vocational training or a short cycle of higher education. That is why very few people pass from this segment of the level of education to the economically active population. After completing a Bachelor's degree, almost 40% of applicants for education do not enter the next level of higher education, but leave the education system.

In the regional context, the rate of those continuing education after receiving a Bachelor's degree is in the same range from 0.58 in Vinnytsia region to 0.79 in Luhansk region. The rate of those continuing education after receiving a full general secondary education varies greatly depending on the region. The most attractive of them are the city of Kyiv, Kharkiv and Lviv regions. The largest outflow of applicants for higher education, which makes more than 60%, occurs in Volyn, Zakarpattia, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Rivne and Chernihiv regions.

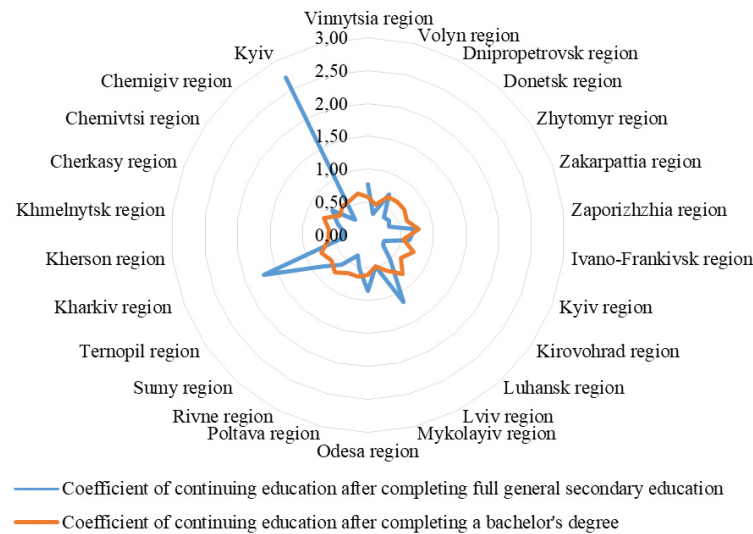


Fig. 5. Continuing education at the next level of education in the regions of Ukraine, 2019 [8, 11]

### Conclusions

Higher education is a very important component of the country's economy, especially now that current trends require well-educated people who can quickly adapt to rapidly changing technological conditions. The definition of the value of higher education is comprised of a lot of different layers. The paper suggests an approach to analyzing the value dimension of students' involvement in higher education and evaluates changes in the flow of people in a gradual movement in the higher education system.

The results of the assessment indicate that despite a fairly high rate of those continuing education after receiving a full general secondary education, which indicates a quite high value of higher education in the country, in terms of the number of students of a higher education establishment per 10 thousand residents and the share of 17-27-year-old students in the population, Ukraine is inferior to OECD countries. The results of these indicators reflect an aging population and a decrease in the proportion of young people.

Only 60% of Bachelor's degree graduates still want to proceed with the Master's program. This indicates the value choice of 40% of Bachelor's graduates to make a faster transition to economic activity. The largest centers of higher education in Ukraine are the city of Kyiv, Kharkiv and Lviv regions. The most depressed regions in terms of applicants' involvement in higher education are Volyn, Zakarpattia, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Rivne and Chernihiv regions.

An important step in the development of higher education in Ukraine is the formation of educational proposals that will meet the requirements of educational megatrends – globalization, digitalization, and population aging. Therefore, the priority for Ukraine is to form the appropriate content and quality of higher education for the current needs of society and the national economy, improve the quality of material support for higher education, improve the interaction between science with business, and strengthen the integration of higher education in Ukraine into the world and European educational and scientific space.



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## WARTOŚCIOWY WYMIAR ZAANGAŻOWANIA STUDENTÓW W SYSTEM SZKOLNICTWA WYŻSZEGO

### STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł poświęcony jest określeniu wymiaru wartościowego zaangażowania studentów w system szkolnictwa wyższego. W artykule obliczono i przeanalizowano wskaźniki wykształcenia ludności Ukrainy i krajów OECD, uwzględniające wartości osobiste i społeczne. Regiony Ukrainy są pogrupowane według wagi studentów w populacji różnych regionów; liderów i outsiderów wśród nich identyfikuje się pod względem zaangażowania w szkolnictwo wyższe. Proponuje się wykorzystanie wskaźnika kontynuacji nauki na kolejnym poziomie do oceny zmian przepływu studentów w stopniowym poruszaniu się w systemie szkolnictwa wyższego.

### SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

szkolnictwo wyższe, wartość, zaangażowanie w system szkolnictwa wyższego, kandydaci na studia wyższe