

# НЕПЕРЕРВНА ПРОФЕСІЙНА ОСВІТА: ЗАРУБІЖНИЙ ДОСВІД

## CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION: FOREIGN EXPERIENCE

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### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONTINUING EDUCATION CONCEPT IN THE EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL AREA: REGULATORY PROVISION

*The article reveals the European context of the meaning of the «continuing education» concept, which is interpreted in the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning as a purposeful educational activity conducted on an ongoing basis to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of citizens and is a basic principle of the education system. Continuing education has become a key element in the European Union definition of strategies to build the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society. The analysis of international documents adopted by EU countries showed that the implementation of continuing education strategies in national systems is recognized as one of the priority areas and fundamental principles of educational system development in EU countries, which direct the national policy of their countries to implement the concept of lifelong learning and encourage higher education institutions increase access to education for different age groups. The system of continuing education is divided into three components. The first – additional professional education – contributes to the formation of the professional basis of human resources of the modern high-tech economy. The second component of the system of continuing education provides various groups with the opportunity to adapt to changing living conditions. The third component of the system of continuing education provides for the satisfaction of various individual educational needs of citizens. The implementation of the concept of continuing education is aimed at covering the educational programs of all people – from the youngest to the elderly. Attention is focused on finding ways to democratize access to education, increase the value of knowledge, increase investment in education and bring it closer to the consumer. The study and analysis of international documents on continuing education is necessary for the further development of the education system of Ukraine, which corresponds to the general trend of development of education systems in European and global space.*

**Key words:** adult education; concept; continuing education; education; European Union; lifelong learning.

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**Introduction.** The concept of lifelong learning was formed in response to the challenges posed by the transition of humanity from the industrial phase of development to a supra-industrial society. The main problems of this transition were: the aging of relevant human knowledge as a result of rapid technological change, daily work with a large amount of information, the need to be competitive in the labor market in the context of globalization. According to V. Ogneviuk (2016), special care for the training of well-educated workers who are able to perform complex tasks and adapt to the ever-changing environment and the growing needs of the production system is not a tribute to «fashion», it is the only way to progress. In this context, all components of lifelong learning are important: preschool, secondary, formal vocational training and in-service vocational training of workers, continuing training of employees. The quality of higher and postgraduate education is crucial for economies that want to move up through the introduction of high-tech production processes (p. 41).

Parliaments and governments in many European countries, as well as businesses, have dramatically increased investment in education, basic and applied research and development. For example, the European Social Fund also pays considerable attention to the development of various forms of continuing education. At its initiative, almost € 15 billion was allocated between 2014 and 2020 to support equal access for EU citizens to lifelong learning and to find ways to improve existing forms and methods of learning that meet the requirements of the labor market (EU policy in the field of vocational education and training).

Continuing education has become a key element in the European Union definition of strategies to build the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society. Given this situation, we consider it necessary to conduct a holistic, systematic analysis of European concepts of continuing education.

**The purpose of the article** is to analyze European regulations on the implementation of the Concept of continuing education for using positive European experience in the education system of Ukraine.

**Continuing education in EU countries.** The issue of continuing education, reflected in the Memorandum – a working document of the European Commission, under the «lifelong learning» slogan, has been the focus of international organizations for many years, whose activities are aimed at the development of education and the economy. The term «lifelong learning» has been used in UNESCO, OECD and Council of Europe reports since the 1960s. The concept of «continuing education» in the European scientific space today is considered as «adult education», «continuing education», «further education», «recurrent education», «permanent education», «lifelong learning». Common to all these concepts is the principle of lifelong incomplete education.

The concept of «continuing vocational education» in the Action programme in the field of lifelong learning (Decision of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2006) is interpreted as education that a person receives in the EU during their professional life. The term «continuing education» is interpreted in the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* as a purposeful educational activity conducted on an ongoing basis to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of citizens and is a basic principle of the education system (A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, 2000, p. 3).

Education turns from a means to purpose of human development, which makes it impossible to establish its central figure in education, the main purpose of which is the formation of skills necessary to perform various functions – self-expression, self-realization, development of social ties and ability to act (Lukyanova, 2015, p. 188). According to the goals set and implemented in the system of continuing education, S. Sysoieva, I. Sokolova (2016) propose to conditionally divide it into three components. The first – additional professional education – contributes to the formation of the professional basis of human resources of the modern high-tech economy. Consumers of services in this part of the continuing education system are the socially adapted part of the population, which receives education consistently at all levels. The second component of the system of continuing education provides various groups with the opportunity to adapt to changing living conditions. This subsystem provides education aimed at adapting and rehabilitating social and professional groups that are not able to adapt to the rapidly changing social environment. In addition, this subsystem involves citizens who do not have access to the formal system of vocational education. The third component of the system of continuing education provides for the satisfaction of various individual educational needs of citizens, for example, language training, acquisition of psychological, cultural and other knowledge, communication skills, special skills, etc. (p. 45–46).

The state of development of continuing education is constantly in the center of attention of various European institutions – the relevant statistical surveys are systematically conducted. Thus, in one of the latter, the target group for obtaining statistics on lifelong learning included people aged 25–64. In 2019, the percentage of people aged 25–64 involved in various forms of lifelong learning was 10.8% within the EU.

This is 0.7% higher than in 2014. Among women this percentage (11.9%) is higher than among men (9.8%). The highest percentage of citizens involved in various forms of lifelong learning is in Denmark, Sweden and Finland – from 25.3% to 34.3%. Estonia, the Netherlands, France and Luxembourg in 2019 attracted more than 15% of citizens to study. The lowest rates are in Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovakia and Greece – 4% or less (Adult learning statistics, 2019).

The percentage of all enterprises that have provided

training to their employees is 33.8% on average in the EU. Positive dynamics is observed in most countries that have joined the EU in recent years. Vocational training within enterprises is most developed in Bulgaria, Hungary and Serbia – more than 50% of enterprises (Adult learning statistics, 2019).

The importance of the development of continuing education in the EU countries is confirmed by normative and constituent documents, such as: *EU Resolution on Continuing Vocational Education* (1989), *Maastricht Treaty* (1992), *European Employment Strategy* (1997), *Conclusions of the EU Summit on Education throughout Life* (2000), *Memorandum of Continuing Education of the EU Commission* (2000), *European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning* (2008), *Education and Learning 2020* (2009), *Europe 2020 Strategy* (2010), *European Reference System of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning* (2006, 2018), framework documents for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. Legal regulation of continuing education is also based on the requirements of the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (*Luxembourg Process*).

*The European Summit in Lisbon* (2000) was a turning point in defining EU policy and practice on continuing education. At a special meeting of the European Council, it was concluded that the transition to a successful economy should be accompanied by a process of continuing education. The leading idea of the approach is that lifelong learning is no longer just one aspect of education and retraining. It becomes a fundamental principle of the educational system and the participation of the individual in it during the continuous process of its educational activities. With the help of a well-established system of continuing education, the population of European countries has the opportunity to receive equal opportunities to adapt to socio-economic changes. The priority of continuing education as a key component of the model of European society was emphasized (*Lisbon Strategy*, 2000).

*The Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (2000) launched a Europe-wide consultation process to identify strategies and practical ways to promote lifelong learning. According to this document, continuing education ceases to be only one aspect of education and retraining, and becomes a fundamental principle of the educational system. Six priority principles of continuing education have been identified: the first is new basic skills; the second is the growth of investment in education; the third – innovative pedagogy; the fourth – a new system of recognition of the value of knowledge, which aims to change approaches to understanding and recognition of educational activities, especially in the field of non-formal education; the fifth – mentoring, career guidance, counseling; the sixth principle is to bring education closer to those who study (*A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, 2000).

The main common areas of cooperation of EU member

states in the field of education were identified in the Training Work Program «Education and Training 2020» (2009). According to the program, the implementation of lifelong learning should be carried out taking into account the following conditions: development of the National Qualifications Framework on the basis of the European one; establishing more flexible learning pathways (openness to non-formal and informal learning, increasing transparency and recognition of learning outcomes); promoting adult learning, which involves improving career guidance, the introduction of innovative learning technologies; expanding the mobility of students, teachers and lecturers both in Europe and beyond (*Education and Training 2020*, 2009).

The EU document «Transforming the European Lifelong Learning Area into Reality» (2001) emphasizes that the formation of active citizens and the ability to get a job are equally important goals of lifelong learning through self-realization and overcoming social exclusion, giving preference to determining the value of knowledge, basic skills, innovative pedagogy; obtaining information, career guidance and consultation; direction of investment in education; bringing learning opportunities closer to learners through open and distance education.

The address of the Salamanca Conference of European Higher Education Institutions and Educational Organizations «The Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area» (2001) emphasizes that the European Higher Education Area should be based on European traditions of educational responsibility to society; wide and open access to both the first and second cycles of education; education for personal development; citizenship and short-term and long-term social expediency. Opportunity for employment, taking into account the prospects of lifelong learning, will be better achieved through the values inherent in quality education; through diversification of approaches and profiles of disciplines; due to the flexibility of programs that allow you to have many opportunities to enter and exit them; through the development of a variety of skills and abilities, such as communication and language; through the ability to mobilize knowledge, solve problems, work in a team and develop socially (*Salamanca Convention*, 2001).

Special attention is paid to continuing vocational education in the *Prague Communiqué of the Meeting of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education* (2001). Areas of activity are defined: lifelong learning; higher education institutions and students; work on a positive image of the European Higher Education Area. Lifelong learning is an integral part of the European Higher Education Area. In a future Europe where knowledge will form the basis of society and the economy, lifelong learning strategies are needed to stand the test of competitiveness and the application of new technologies and to strengthen social cohesion, equal opportunities and improve quality of life (*Prague Communiqué*, 2001).

Among the main tasks of the Detailed work

programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems in Europe (meeting of the European Education Council in February 14, 2002), which provided for improving the quality and efficiency of the education system, simplified access to education for everyone and creating an educational base for the outside world are: EU countries must have the highest education and training performance in the world; European education and training system must be interconnected to enable citizens to move freely and receive a better education; it is necessary to make it possible to apply education in any EU country, regardless of where it is obtained; Europeans of all ages must have access to long-term education.

The European Employment Strategy (2003) declared the guidelines for lifelong learning policy, which determine the need to increase investment in human resources, in particular through adult learning on the basis of enterprises. *The Lifelong Learning Program* is reflected in the *Berlin (2003) and London Communiqué (2007)*, which emphasizes the systematic development, creation and introduction of a wide range of flexible curricula and interactive technologies for adult learning.

In the *Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Higher Education «Realising the European Higher Education Area»* (Berlin, 2003), lifelong learning plays an important role in increasing the accessibility of higher education. Ministers called on higher education institutions and all stakeholders to increase opportunities for lifelong learning at higher education levels, including the recognition of prior learning. It is emphasized that such actions should be an integral part of higher educational activity. Ministers also called on those working on qualifications frameworks in the European Higher Education Area to cover a wide range of flexible learning pathways, opportunities and methods and the appropriate use of credit units.

The key issues of the *Conference of European Ministers of Education* (Bergen, 2005) were the three-tier education system, the quality assurance system, the recognition of levels and terms of study. Priority tasks have been identified: 1) strengthening the interaction between higher education and research; 2) universal access to quality higher education; 3) strengthening the mobility of students and teachers; 4) increasing the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area.

In 2007, the European Commission merged the various education and training initiatives into a single Lifelong Learning Program. *The communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers «Bologna Process 2020 – European Higher Education Area in the New Decade»* (Leuven, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2009) emphasizes the subordination of lifelong learning to the principles of: state responsibility, guaranteeing the availability and quality of education, recognition of the results of previous education, partnerships between higher education institutions, students, young professionals and employers. The importance of developing a national qualifications

framework and their practical implementation as a necessary condition for the implementation of lifelong learning is emphasized EU countries focuses their countries' national policies on making lifelong learning a reality and encourages higher education institutions to increase access to education for different age groups.

In the *Bucharest Communiqué «Making the most of our potential: consolidating the European Higher Education Area»* (2012) emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning as a determinant of labor market satisfaction and the central role of higher education institutions in the transfer of knowledge through the continuous development of competencies.

On 23 April 2008, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe adopted *Recommendations «On the establishment of a European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning»*. A strategy for the expansion and recognition of acquired knowledge, skills and competences of citizens, which is important for the development of personality, competitiveness, employment and social cohesion within the Community. Such expansion and recognition should promote the international mobility of workers and students, as well as meet the supply and demand needs of the European labor market. Access to participation in the lifelong learning process for all, including disadvantaged people, as well as the application of acquired qualifications, should be encouraged and improved at the level of States and the Community. Given the non-binding nature of the Recommendation, it is guided by the principle of subsidiarity, thus supporting and complementing the activities of Member States by promoting further cooperation between them in order to increase transparency and encourage continuing education and mobility of citizens throughout the EU. It must be carried out in accordance with national law and practice (Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union, 2008).

Following the adoption of the recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe on the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, almost all European countries participating in the Europe 2020 strategy have started working on the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework. In March 2010, the EU countries identified the main priorities in the development of their countries, set out in the document Strategy «Europe 2020», aimed at supporting European countries to overcome the crisis and economic recovery. Among the priorities of the Strategy are intellectual growth, which provides support to EU countries to increase the level of education and research (Europa 2020, 2010).

The «Europe 2020» Strategy emphasizes the importance of developing lifelong learning as one of the conditions for the competitiveness of professionals in the labor market. Thus, the document states that general secondary and higher education should be more accessible to citizens of European countries by improving

the quality, accessibility of education, increasing mobility opportunities for education and employment not only in their country but also abroad. The Strategy emphasizes that while 85% of children from European countries have access to pre-school education, only 78% of EU citizens have completed secondary education, the rest leave school earlier. 25% of secondary school students have a relatively low level of reading and writing skills, a significant number of young people receive education or training without obtaining the appropriate qualifications, less than a third of Europeans aged 25–34 have a degree in higher education (Europa 2020, 2010). At the same time, according to European standards, at least 85% of schoolchildren must have completed secondary education, and the percentage of children with low levels of reading and writing skills should decrease. To achieve this goal, schools should offer an individual approach to each student, and children who leave school earlier should have a «second chance» in professional growth.

One of the latest international documents defining the strategy for the development of lifelong learning in the EU is the Paris Communiqué (2018). The communiqué states that lifelong learning is becoming increasingly important for the societies and economies of the EU, as well as for the well-being of their citizens. An important role is given to higher education institutions. By providing students and other learners with opportunities for personal development throughout their lives, higher education improves their employment prospects and encourages them to be active citizens in

democratic societies. To this end, the development and full implementation of open education is proposed; the creation of educational programs that offer flexible learning can contribute to social mobility and continuous professional development of citizens, while giving access to higher education and completing it at any stage of one's life. Higher education faces the challenge of combining academic and work-based learning, using digital and blended education with appropriate quality assurance, to improve lifelong learning (Paris Communiqué, 2018, p. 5–7).

**Conclusions.** Thus, the implementation of the concept of continuing education is aimed at covering the educational programs of all people – from the youngest to the elderly. Attention is focused on finding ways to democratize access to education, increase the value of knowledge, increase investment in education and bring it closer to the consumer. The conducted analysis of international documents adopted by EU countries showed that the implementation of lifelong learning strategies in national systems is recognized as one of the priority areas and fundamental principles of development of EU education systems, which direct the national policy of their countries to implement lifelong learning and encourage higher education institutions to increase access to education for different age groups. The study and analysis of international documents on continuing education is necessary for the further development of the education system of Ukraine, which corresponds to the general trend of development of education systems in European and global space.

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## РЕАЛІЗАЦІЯ КОНЦЕПЦІЇ НЕПЕРЕРВНОЇ ОСВІТИ В ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОМУ ОСВІТНЬОМУ ПРОСТОРИ: НОРМАТИВНЕ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ

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У статті розкрито європейський контекст поняття «неперервна освіта», що трактується в Меморандумі про навчання протягом усього життя як цілеспрямована освітня діяльність, що проводиться на постійній основі для вдосконалення знань, умінь та навичок громадян і є базовим принципом системи освіти. Неперервна освіта є ключовим елементом визначеної Європейським Союзом стратегії побудови найбільш конкурентоспроможного та динамічного суспільства, заснованого на знаннях. Аналіз міжнародних документів, прийнятих країнами ЄС, показав, що реалізація стратегії неперервної освіти в національних системах визнана одним із пріоритетних напрямків і основних принципів розвитку освітньої системи в країнах ЄС, які спрямовують національну політику їх країн на реалізацію Концепції навчання протягом усього життя та заохочення закладів вищої освіти до розширення доступу до освіти для різних вікових груп. Система неперервної освіти поділяється на три компоненти. Перший – додаткова професійна освіта – сприяє формуванню професійної основи кадрового потенціалу сучасної високотехнологічної економіки. Другий компонент системи неперервної освіти надає різним групам можливість адаптуватися до мінливих умов життя. Третя складова системи неперервної освіти передбачає задоволення різних індивідуальних освітніх потреб громадян. Реалізація концепції неперервної освіти спрямована на охоплення освітніми програмами всіх людей – від наймолодших до людей похилого віку. Увага зосереджена на пошуку шляхів демократизації доступу до освіти, підвищення цінності знань, збільшення інвестицій в освіту та наблизення її до споживача. Вивчення та аналіз міжнародних документів про неперервну освіту необхідні для подальшого розвитку системи освіти України, що відповідає загальній тенденції розвитку систем освіти в європейському та глобальному просторі.

**Ключові слова:** Європейський Союз; концепція; неперервна освіта; освіта; освіта дорослих; освіта протягом всього життя.

## РЕАЛИЗАЦИЯ КОНЦЕПЦИИ НЕПРЕРЫВНОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В ЕВРОПЕЙСКОМ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОМ ПРОСТРАНСТВЕ: НОРМАТИВНОЕ ОБЕСПЕЧЕНИЕ

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*В статье раскрыт европейский контекст понятия «непрерывное образование», которое является ключевым элементом стратегии Европейского Союза, направленной на построение наиболее конкурентоспособного и динамичного общества, основанного на знаниях. Анализ международных документов, принятых странами ЕС, показал, что реализация стратегии непрерывного образования в национальных образовательных системах признана одним из приоритетных направлений и основным принципом их развития. Национальная политика стран ЕС направлена на реализацию Концепции обучения в течение всей жизни и поощрение высших учебных заведений к расширению доступа к образованию для различных возрастных групп. Реализация концепции непрерывного образования направлена на охват образовательными программами всех людей – от молодых до пожилых. Внимание сосредоточено на поиске путей демократизации доступа к образованию, повышение ценности знаний, увеличение инвестиций в образование и приближения ее к потребителю. Изучение и анализ международных документов о непрерывном образовании необходимы для дальнейшего развития системы образования Украины, что соответствует общей тенденции развития систем образования в европейском и глобальном пространстве.*

**Ключевые слова:** Европейский Союз; концепция; непрерывное образование; образование; образование взрослых; образование в течение всей жизни.

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