



## Comparative analysis of professional development systems in Ukraine and China

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**Abstract.** The relevance of this study stems from the dynamic changes taking place in the labour market, which have heightened the demand for professional development in both Ukraine and China. In light of this, the study aimed to identify the key characteristics of professional development systems in Ukraine and China and to classify them according to their alignment with contemporary requirements. To achieve this aim, methods of theoretical and documentary analysis, as well as comparative analysis, were employed. This article examined the functioning and development of professional development systems in Ukraine and China. Based on an analysis of policy frameworks supporting and regulating the labour market, alongside a review of the legal and regulatory provisions concerning professional development in both countries, it was found that the features of these systems differ significantly due to each country's distinct political and social context. The comparative approach enabled the identification of both shared features and unique elements shaped by the socio-economic, legal, and cultural conditions specific to each country. The mechanisms for organising professional training, the models and formats used for professional development, as well as the role of the state and educational institutions in this process, were analysed. Attention was also given to the practical aspects of implementing education policy and the extent to which training programmes meet the needs of the modern labour market. Based on the identified differences and similarities, recommendations were made for improving professional development systems, taking into account international experience. The practical value of this study lied in the potential for its findings, derived from the comparison of professional development systems in Ukraine and China, to expand the theoretical and methodological basis for enhancing the process of forming an effective human resource pool in the labour markets of these countries. This research may also play an important role in supporting the implementation of proposed initiatives aimed at incorporating the experience of China and Ukraine into professional development strategies in other countries

**Keywords:** lifelong learning; professional development of educators; education system; qualification requirements; international experience

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## Introduction

Professional development systems play a crucial role in enhancing occupational skills and maintaining the competitiveness of workers in an increasingly dynamic labour market. Across different countries, approaches to organising these systems can vary significantly, depending on economic conditions, legal frameworks, cultural traditions, and educational policies. A comparative analysis of professional development systems in Ukraine and China reveals both common trends and distinctive features shaped by the socio-economic and cultural contexts of each country. Contemporary developments in the education system emphasise the leading role of teacher professionalism, as this is directly linked to student success (Lyubarets *et al.*, 2020). However, there is currently no consistent system for organising knowledge on teaching practice or supporting educators in their professional growth. There is also limited consensus on which key components should be included in effective strategies for the professional development of educators (Shevchenko, 2024).

According to the analysis by O. Kefeli-lanovska & L. Lymar (2025), higher education institutions in Ukraine employ academic staff drawn from various professional backgrounds. These include former secondary school graduates, post-graduate and doctoral researchers following the defence of their theses, graduates of specialised pedagogical institutions, and other professionals who have received high academic recognition within the higher education sector. The main entry requirements for teaching in higher education include either a teaching qualification, a Candidate of Sciences degree (which typically involves the study of pedagogy as part of doctoral training), or a certificate of completion from a teacher training course. In Ukraine, such courses are generally provided through either formal or semi-formal education. Semi-formal courses are offered by private entrepreneurs engaged in the education business, independent platforms, or global MOOC platforms such as Coursera and Udemy, as well as their Ukrainian equivalents.

Formal courses are delivered by higher education institutions that specialise in training educators. Secondary school teachers with no prior teaching experience are required to complete an initial five-week course (150 academic hours, equivalent to 5 ECTS credits), followed by adherence to the principles of continuous professional development. This typically involves obtaining 1 ECTS credit (30 academic hours) per year. Other methods of professional development for higher education teaching staff include participating in academic conferences, presenting research internationally, engaging in peer exchange, producing educational materials, and applying for academic fellowships. All such activities are regulated and monitored by the relevant governing bodies and human resources departments within higher education institutions.

The study conducted by Z. Zhang *et al.* (2024), which contributes to the theoretical foundation of contemporary research on professional development, aimed to examine the influence of education, professional rank, work experience, and personal agency on the continuous professional development (CPD) of academic staff. The authors surveyed 620 university lecturers in China using a questionnaire-based approach. The results indicate significant differences in levels of professional training depending on educational qualifications, academic ranks, and years of experience, with professional training levels varying in accordance with these factors. Furthermore, it was found that teacher engagement has a strong positive impact on cognitive development, with higher levels of teacher activity correlating with more advanced cognitive outcomes. The findings also showed that teacher agency plays a significant and positive role in professional development, particularly in the areas of knowledge renewal, reflection, and collaboration.

The study by L. Loy (2024) explored the role of continuous professional development in further education (FE) through a small-scale investigation involving two general FE colleges and two

independent training providers (ITPs) in England. Focus groups were used to gather teachers' experiences of their ongoing professional development. This encouraged participants to reflect on both formal and informal learning, as well as the training opportunities they had taken up. Data analysis revealed that the aims of these developmental activities fell into two main categories: organisational and professional. Organisational training was designed to deliver knowledge aligned with externally defined institutional goals, while professional development focused on updating subject-specific expertise and enhancing classroom pedagogy.

The article by O. Myroshnichenko (2024) focused on the role of micro-credentialing in the professional development of educators, using the Open University (United Kingdom) as a case study. It was emphasised that the implementation of micro-credentials is a growing trend within the European Higher Education Area. The study found that the increasing number and influence of micro-credentialing initiatives in the United Kingdom, alongside the lack of a universally accepted definition, have prompted efforts to ensure quality assurance in this field. Micro-credentials were shown to be based on learning achieved at a "micro-level" – that is, independent, focused content smaller in scope than a full academic qualification. The Open University's experience in introducing micro-credentials for educator development was examined through the example of the Mentoring and Coaching in Professional Practice micro-credential. The University promotes a flexible, inclusive, adaptive, and accessible educational system that values learner autonomy and self-direction. Micro-credentials enable students to acquire practical skills aligned with their career goals and personal interests, without the need to complete a full academic degree.

The dilemma of continuous professional development and strategies for addressing it were analysed by researchers such as K. Zhang *et al.* (2024). They concluded that the constant production and dissemination of diverse information

in the digital age compels higher education institutions to innovate and integrate their knowledge more effectively. By conducting in-depth interviews with 28 administrators and lecturers from four north-western universities in China, the authors of this study employed qualitative methods to examine current challenges related to continuous professional development and educators' digital competencies. Based on these findings, they proposed improvement strategies that address the identified issues.

According to A. Friedman (2023), continuous professional development is an essential yet still largely undervalued component of lifelong learning (LLL). CPD encourages critical reflection on the educational level of higher education graduates from an early stage. It also highlights the role of certain organisations, professional associations, and regulatory bodies, which act not only as providers of educational services but also as facilitators of ongoing learning cycles – thus linking lifelong learning to professional identity. The study presents policy data on CPD from a large-scale survey conducted in the United Kingdom every three years between 2003 and 2018, supplemented by interviews, focus groups, and other staff surveys within these organisations in the United Kingdom, as well as in Australia, Canada, and Ireland. These findings have been reported across multiple publications.

Building on the theoretical contributions of the aforementioned authors, the evolution of CPD and the resulting transformations in both the continuous learning of professionals and the functioning of the organisations involved have been significant. In the case of Ukraine, due to its historical and political context, the country has been actively developing its system of professional education, adapting it to meet international standards and the requirements of European integration. China, in turn, has, over recent decades, transformed from a closed economy into a major global power with a dynamic and rapidly evolving education system aligned with the demands of the global labour market.

This study aimed to conduct a comparative analysis of the professional development systems in Ukraine and China, to identify the key factors influencing their development, and to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programme implementation in the context of each country's economic conditions and social needs. The research examined various models and tools used for professional development in both countries and considered the potential for mutual exchange of experience.

### Literature Review

The development of professional development systems is shaped by a combination of internal and external factors specific to each country. These include the level of economic development, political context, cultural traditions, educational characteristics, and labour market demands. Against this backdrop, particular interest lies in exploring the distinctive features of professional development systems in Ukraine and China – two countries with unique socio-economic and cultural profiles. Ukraine, with its transitional economy and specific challenges in the education sector, and China, with a rapidly developing economy and distinctive educational features, provide compelling case studies for analysing the influence of these factors on the development of professional development systems.

Professional development for teaching and academic staff is a vital component of the education system, promoting professionalism and supporting the ongoing improvement of teaching processes. According to Clause 2 of the Procedure for the Professional Development of Teaching and Academic Staff (Resolution..., 2019), educators are required to continuously refine their professional skills. This is seen as a crucial element in upholding the high quality of education in Ukraine.

Clause 1 of the same Procedure states that the professional development of teaching staff is to be provided by their founders or authorised bodies, as well as by the management of educational institutions within the scope of their

authority and following current legislation. This implies that the responsibility for organising and funding this process lies with the educational institution's leadership, which must operate within defined regulations and standards.

Furthermore, the internal quality assurance system established by law includes measures aimed at improving the qualifications of teaching staff (Clause 4 of the Procedure). This ensures alignment between the qualification requirements for educators and the broader objectives set for educational institutions. Teaching and academic staff in Ukraine are permitted to undertake professional development both domestically and abroad, provided that the country in which the training takes place is not designated as an aggressor or occupying state (Clause 5 of the Procedure). This is a crucial provision, as it ensures that educational programmes comply with national security requirements. Professional development may take a variety of forms and involve a combination of different learning methods, including institutional (full-time, part-time, distance, or network-based learning), dual education formats, as well as on-the-job or workplace-based training. This flexibility allows the professional development process to be adapted to the specific working conditions of teaching staff (Clause 6 of the Procedure).

Types of professional development include training through specialised programmes, participation in seminars, workshops, webinars, and masterclasses, as well as internships. Certain activities may also be recognised as valid forms of professional development, such as participation in academic mobility programmes, research internships, self-directed learning, and obtaining an academic degree or a higher education qualification (Clause 7 of the Procedure). These opportunities not only enhance professional expertise but also contribute to the broadening of academic and cultural competencies. The process for recognising such activities as professional development is determined by the academic councils of educational institutions (Clause 26 of the Procedure). Importantly, teaching and

academic staff have the right to choose the forms and types of professional development that best suit their individual needs and professional interests (Clause 7 of the Procedure). In addition, teaching staff at institutions of preschool, out-of-school, vocational, and specialised education are required to undergo professional development at least once every five years, per relevant legislation. Meanwhile, staff at general secondary and professional pre-tertiary education institutions must do so annually (Clause 14 of the Procedure).

The main areas of professional development include the enhancement of professional competencies in subjects such as knowledge of the curriculum, teaching methodologies, psychological and physiological characteristics of learners, and the use of modern information, communication, and digital technologies (Clause 15 of the Procedure). All these activities are aimed at improving the effectiveness of the teaching process and ensuring a safe and inclusive learning environment (Peculiarities..., 2023).

The professional development process often involves training at postgraduate education institutes through differentiated programmes, as well as internships for teaching staff at enterprises and research institutions. However, this process faces several challenges. Changes in enterprise ownership, reduced production volumes, outdated technical infrastructure, and a general lack of interest from enterprises in cooperating with educational institutions for the training of teaching personnel complicate the organisation of internships. In such cases, teachers are often left to organise their own internships, independently seek out relevant information, and acquire new knowledge and technologies.

Short-term internships are becoming increasingly popular, particularly among teachers of specialised subjects. These internships are typically initiated by the teachers themselves and, with the approval of their institution's management, allow them to explore new production or teaching technologies and modern equipment – either at industrial enterprises or universities. This form of

internship is flexible and does not require formal procedures. However, its effectiveness depends largely on the teacher's intuition, creative approach, and commitment to self-development. The content of professional development is updated in line with societal demands for educational quality, the latest scientific and practical advancements, and the individual needs of education professionals. This encourages greater interest among teaching staff in theoretical knowledge necessary for solving practical challenges in vocational education.

China's vocational education system has undergone significant transformation over recent decades, driven by the state's efforts to respond to the challenges of globalisation and internal reforms. The evolution of China's national policy in vocational education reached a milestone with the launch of the so-called Double High Plan in 2019 (Xiaomin, 2020). This plan aims to develop high-level vocational colleges and discipline clusters with Chinese characteristics, reflecting the PRC's intention to systematically modernise vocational education in the context of global pressures and domestic reform. A clear continuity can be traced: from national demonstration colleges (2006), through key institutions (2010), to the innovation plan of 2015-2018. The new stage represents not only a qualitative leap, but also an ideologically significant transformation, positioning China as a leader in shaping a global model of vocational education.

From an academic perspective, the reform reflects an institutional transformation based on strategic planning and centralised governance of the vocational education system. The Double High Plan exemplifies a socio-engineering approach, whereby the state is not merely adjusting the existing system but is instead constructing a new educational architecture focused on innovation, quality, and alignment with international standards. It also clearly emphasises the integration of education with the economy and labour market, with colleges positioned not simply as educational institutions but as hubs for training personnel in priority sectors. This aligns with the

concept of education as a resource for national development, which is characteristic of contemporary Chinese policy. A notable weakness, as identified in the Double High Plan and confirmed by the experience of other countries, is the limited agency of teaching staff, who are still largely regarded as implementers of reform rather than its co-creators. Without greater engagement and professional autonomy for educators, the success of such reforms may remain limited.

In the view of the author of this article, the Double High Plan represents a systematic and well-considered initiative by the Chinese state aimed at ensuring that vocational education occupies a respected place alongside academic education. However, the implementation of such an ambitious strategy requires more than funding and formal indicators – it also demands profound changes in staff management, enhanced motivation and qualifications among educators, and the development of their professional identity. While the modernisation of vocational education is a commendable goal, its success will ultimately depend on effective feedback mechanisms and sensitivity to regional contexts, institutional diversity, and the genuine needs of both learners and educators.

### Materials and Methods

For the purpose of conducting a comparative analysis of professional development systems in Ukraine and China, a range of research methods was employed, including theoretical analysis, comparative analysis, and empirical methods based on the examination of existing legal frameworks, educational standards, and professional development programmes in both countries. Theoretical analysis involved reviewing existing academic publications concerning professional development systems in Ukraine and China. This included exploring general approaches to the organisation of educational systems, legislative features, educational standards, and the influence of economic and cultural factors on the development of educational programmes. Comparative

analysis entailed the use of a comparative approach to identify similarities and differences in the structure and organisation of professional development systems in both countries. Particular attention was paid to methodological approaches, legislative norms, and how educational programmes are implemented in response to the economic and social needs of Ukraine and China. Document analysis consisted of examining regulatory documents governing professional development processes in both countries. This included the study of laws, government resolutions, and policy documents aimed at regulating and improving the vocational education system.

The methods employed in this study enabled a deeper understanding of the specific features and developmental prospects of professional development systems in both countries, as well as the formulation of recommendations for improving these systems in line with current realities and labour market demands.

The informational basis of the research included articles by Ukrainian, Chinese, and international scholars such as S. Pokazanyiova (2022), K. Zhang *et al.* (2023) and L. Loy (2024). Significant attention was devoted to analytical and empirical studies, particularly those by J. Ruth & Y. Xiao (2019), T. Scott *et al.* (2023) and A. Friedman (2023), which explore the influence of policy, institutional support, and motivation on the professional development of teaching staff. A key document used as a reference for analysing Ukraine's professional development system was the White Book of National Education of Ukraine (Foreign Intelligence..., 2021), while in China, the Ministry of Education's official website and the documents published there formed the primary source. Drawing on both regulatory and theoretical-methodological sources, the research produced systematised conclusions regarding the development of professional development systems. It also identified challenges stemming from the current conditions of uncertainty and insufficient regulation and proposed directions for mitigating the impact of these issues.

## Results and Discussion

### Specific features of the professional development systems in China and Ukraine

According to Foreign Intelligence... (2021), particular attention is paid to analysing the state of education in the context of globalisation and contemporary challenges. The key characteristics of modern education are its human-centred approach, democratisation, innovation, continuity, and informatisation. These principles have formed the foundation of the education development strategy in the information society, ensuring a high standard of educational quality (Pokazanyiova, 2022).

At the current stage of development of the Chinese education system, it is important to preserve traditional forms of professional development that have proven effective, while simultaneously advancing innovative methods. In China, teachers undergo professional development every five years, with an emphasis on training that aligns with current teaching requirements. Continued education for school principals is also considered a priority. The pedagogical system for teacher development includes professional centres based at 35 universities across the country (Website of..., n.d.). According to the classification by N. Kotelnikova (2012), forms of professional development for Chinese teachers can be divided into collective, group-based, and individual formats. Among the most popular are lectures, seminars, training sessions, creative groups, teacher associations, mentoring, and self-education.

With the advancement of information and communication technologies, distance learning has become a vital alternative to traditional formats. In the 1980s, China introduced a system of television and radio-based learning. With the emergence of the Internet, it has become possible to organise online courses, significantly improving access to training. Innovative formats such as online consultations, video lectures, and webinars enable teachers from various regions to exchange experience and enhance their professional skills without the need for travel. China, in particular, has been actively developing an online course system

that allows teachers not only to acquire theoretical knowledge but also to improve practical skills through collaborative work and co-authorship of academic papers. According to researchers, this approach fosters the development of critical thinking and enhances collaboration among educators (Undergraduate..., n.d.). Thus, innovative forms of professional development in China are increasingly incorporating advanced technologies, enabling educators to improve their professional competencies while also contributing to the quality of education and teachers' research activity (Shevchenko, 2016). Despite noticeable progress, the professional development system in China continues to face a number of significant challenges that hinder its effective operation. These issues can be categorised into several key areas, each of which requires a comprehensive approach to improvement (Xiaomin, 2020).

A primary concern is the underdeveloped structure of professional knowledge, which is particularly relevant in the context of transitioning to a labour-oriented education system. Unlike academic education, which mainly emphasises theoretical content, vocational education should focus on the development of practical skills and competencies. However, educators in vocational institutions often lack the necessary experience and expertise to achieve this aim. Lecturers are burdened with routine tasks and have limited opportunities for self-education, while existing professional development programmes often prove ineffective. This leads to a decline in the quality of the educational process and hinders teachers' professional growth.

Another significant issue is the low social status of vocational school teachers. These professionals are frequently perceived as less prestigious than their counterparts in higher education institutions. This perception also affects student motivation, which remains low in such settings, limiting both students' satisfaction and their overall development. Teachers, in turn, often view their roles in vocational schools as temporary positions, which reduces their commitment

to long-term career development in the sector. The low status of educators further undermines their professional identity, diminishing their motivation for continuous improvement. Traditional forms of professional development – such as lectures and theoretical instruction – do little to encourage teachers to meaningfully enhance their skills. According to feedback from educators themselves, the effectiveness of such programmes is extremely limited. Additionally, inadequate funding for vocational education at the local level restricts access to highquality training. As a result, many teachers lack exposure to modern educational technologies and teaching methods, which further constrains their professional development and impedes improvements in the quality of education.

The implementation of China's Education Modernisation Plan to 2035 reflects the government's strong commitment to improving the quality of education. The prioritisation of continuous professional development for teachers, as mandated by the Ministry of Education, has had a positive impact on talent cultivation and student achievement at the K-12 level. However, the effects of this reform on Chinese higher education remain insufficiently explored. This study examined the influence of academic optimism, institutional policy and support, and teacher self-efficacy on the professional competence of lecturers in Chinese higher education institutions. Data was collected from 456 Chinese higher education lecturers, using a structural equation model to analyse the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The findings indicate that both academic optimism and institutional policy and support exert a strong positive influence on teacher effectiveness ( $\beta = 0.645$  and  $0.2$ , respectively), whereas teacher self-efficacy has virtually no impact ( $\beta = -0.031$ ). Institutional policy and support also have a significant effect on academic optimism ( $\beta = 0.652$ ); however, their impact on teacher self-efficacy is minimal ( $\beta = 0.032$ ). The study concludes that institutional leadership plays a crucial role in fostering an

academic culture that encourages and supports ongoing professional development. Nonetheless, individual motivation to pursue CPD remains limited (Scott *et al.*, 2023).

China has long placed great importance on the practical training of teachers in higher vocational colleges. According to the Vocational Education Law, teachers are required to undergo practical training at enterprises or training bases for no less than one month each year (Education Law..., 2021). However, despite the strong emphasis on practical experience, significant challenges persist in the implementation of this initiative.

Firstly, business involvement in teacher training systems remains insufficient. Effective integration of education and industry demands active engagement from enterprises, yet, in practice, laws and regulations on vocational education primarily focus on the obligations of enterprises, while their interests are often overlooked. For instance, although companies are required to accept teachers for practical placements, there is a lack of clear regulation addressing their interests within the educational process. As a result, enterprise-based training often fails to align with business needs, increasing operational costs and reducing companies' willingness to host teacher placements.

Secondly, the absence of an effective motivation system within higher vocational colleges exacerbates the problem. Teachers are frequently overburdened with teaching responsibilities, making it difficult for them to participate in practical projects within enterprises. Poor organisation and a shortage of qualified staff further diminish the overall effectiveness of the educational process. Although some incentive mechanisms are in place to encourage teacher involvement in enterprise-based training, their implementation faces numerous obstacles, which further undermine the success of the programme.

Many educational institutions fail to give sufficient attention to career planning for teaching staff, resulting in a lack of intrinsic motivation and a weak sense of professional identity among educators. Comprehensive approaches must be

adopted to establish support systems that encourage teachers' professional growth and development. However, such initiatives remain insufficient in most higher vocational colleges, leading to a passive attitude towards professional advancement.

The professional development system in China thus faces a range of challenges, including underdeveloped knowledge structures, the low status of teachers, ineffective training formats, and limited engagement with industry. Addressing these issues requires an integrated approach encompassing improvements in the educational framework, enhanced teacher motivation, the development of practical training systems, and the active involvement of businesses in the educational process.

### **Recommendations for improving professional development systems based on the experiences of China and Ukraine**

An analysis of professional development systems for teaching staff in Ukraine and China highlights key differences in the approaches these countries adopt to support educators' professional growth. In Ukraine, the education system allows considerable flexibility in the forms and content of professional training, which is important for addressing local needs and conditions. Nevertheless, despite these advantages, the absence of a unified, standardised approach leads to inconsistencies in the quality of training programmes across the country.

This highlights the need for centralised coordination and the introduction of clearer standards for teacher professional development in order to ensure more equitable access to high-quality training programmes across all regions. However, excessive centralisation may restrict teachers' creative potential and reduce the level of innovation within the educational process. In the author's view, Ukraine should preserve flexibility while simultaneously introducing best practices in the standardisation of training courses to improve their quality.

In China, the professional development system for teaching staff is considerably more centralised and standardised, enabling a high degree of consistency and oversight of the training process. This is especially important in a vast and diverse country where maintaining a unified standard of educational quality is essential. However, such centralisation also presents drawbacks, particularly by limiting teachers' freedom to choose training programmes and formats that suit their individual needs. Teachers in China may find themselves unable to adapt training to their personal development goals or the specific context of their region. This poses a significant challenge to the long-term effectiveness of the model, as every teacher has the right to an individualised approach and to select development tools that align with their specific needs and objectives. A structured comparison is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Comparative characteristics of teacher professional development systems in Ukraine and China

Comparison criterion	Ukraine	China
Level of centralisation is predominated by decentralised model	Educational institutions and regions possess significant autonomy	High level of centralisation. The system is managed and regulated at the state level
Flexibility of format and content	High flexibility. Programmes can be individually designed to reflect local conditions and teachers' needs	Low flexibility. Content and formats are strictly regulated, with limited room for variation
Programme standardisation	The absence of unified standards results in variation in programme quality across regions	A high degree of standardisation ensures a consistent quality level nationwide

Table 1. Continued

Comparison criterion	Ukraine	China
Coordination and oversight	Insufficient coordination among system stakeholders. Greater centralised control is recommended, without compromising flexibility	Effective centralised coordination supports the implementation of unified training approaches
Individualised learning	Teachers are able to choose programmes tailored to their professional interests	Individualised approaches are limited. Programmes focus on standardisation rather than personalisation
Consideration of regional specifics	Regional differences are taken into account in the development and implementation of programmes	Regional characteristics are minimally considered. The primary focus is on adherence to a unified national standard
Innovative approaches	The flexible system encourages the integration of innovative teaching practices and methods	Centralisation reduces opportunities for innovation and experimental formats
Long-term effectiveness	Potentially high, provided elements of standardisation and coordination are introduced	Effective for short-term goals, but may be limited in terms of sustainable development
Main challenges	Lack of a unified quality assurance system. Uneven access to resources	Insufficient adaptability to teachers' individual and regional needs

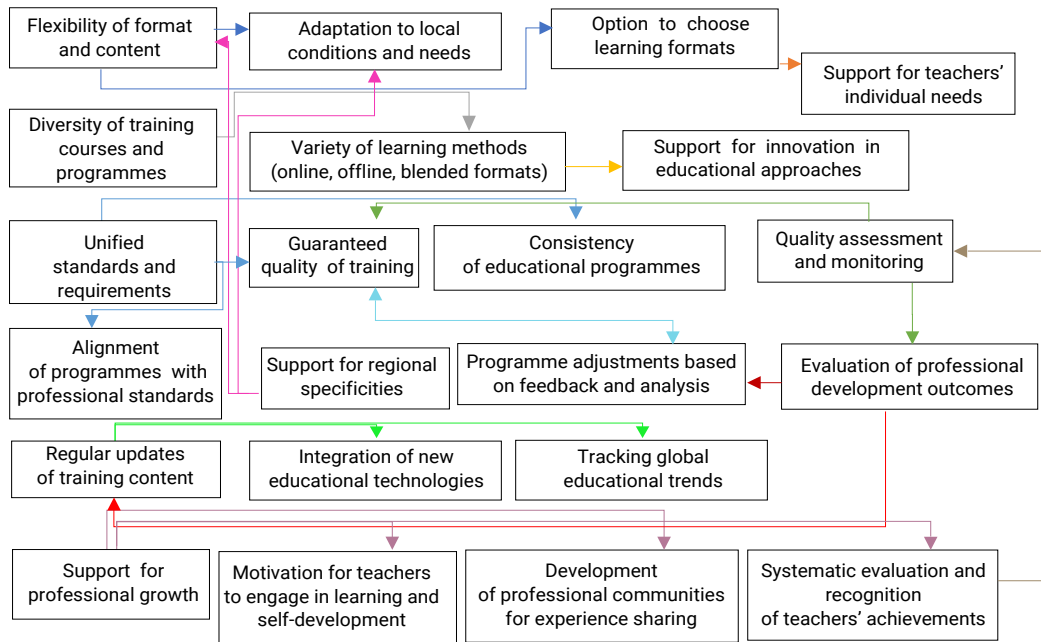
**Source:** developed by the author

By comparing the professional development systems of China and Ukraine, the author of this article concluded that the most effective model would be a hybrid one that combines the strengths of both approaches. It is recommended that Ukraine introduce a clear system of standards for teacher training while preserving the possibility for regional variation and individual choice, enabling teachers to tailor learning to local conditions. Such an approach would help optimise the quality of professional development, making it both accessible and relevant for teachers across the country. For China, it would be advisable to consider granting teachers greater freedom in selecting professional development courses. This would support innovation and motivate educators towards self-development and creative engagement in their work.

Overall, the study demonstrates that both Ukraine and China possess certain advantages within their respective systems of teacher professional development, but also face a number of challenges that require attention. In the author's view, the most effective approach should combine standardised and individualised methods, ensuring equal access to high-quality education

while allowing educators to adapt training to their specific needs. Drawing on China's experience could assist Ukraine in improving its teacher development system, while Ukraine's experience may offer China valuable insights into enhancing the flexibility of its educational programmes.

Based on the comparative analysis of teacher professional development systems in Ukraine and China, the introduction of a hybrid model has been proposed, combining the strengths of both countries (Fig. 1). The figure presents a comprehensive model of a professional development system for educators that balances flexibility with standardisation. The system allows for the adaptation of educational programmes to local conditions, incorporates a variety of learning formats and methods, and supports the individual and professional needs of teachers. At the same time, it places strong emphasis on quality assurance, alignment of programmes with standards, monitoring, and outcome analysis. The model particularly highlights the importance of continually updating content, integrating innovations, and fostering professional communities. As such, it represents a balanced approach that combines individualised learning with consistent educational quality.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual model of an effective teacher professional development system

Source: developed by the author

In Ukraine, it is important to develop a clear system of standards for professional development courses, while retaining the flexibility to adapt programmes to regional specificities. This is reflected in the study of S. Leu-Severynenko (2022), who highlights the need for the reconstruction and further development of vocational education and training, as presented by the Ukrainian government at both national and international levels. As a result, the author proposes potential directions for the development of vocational education and training that align with the ongoing reform processes in Ukraine. N. Kulalaieva & S. Leu (2019) also offer a perspective on professional development as a process that incorporates elements of duality – an approach regarded by the authors of this article as crucial for advancing interdisciplinarity and inclusivity.

China, in turn, should consider granting educators greater freedom in selecting educational programmes, which would foster innovation and enhance motivation for self-improvement. J. Ruth & Y. Xiao (2019) draw attention to the trend of

Chinese authorities transforming universities into instruments of ideological control, agreeing that this poses a challenge to educational development. In this context, the argument advanced in this article for expanding academic freedom gains scientific relevance. Such an approach would contribute to improving the quality of education and enhancing the effectiveness of professional development for educators in both countries.

## Conclusions

A comparative analysis of professional development systems in Ukraine and China has revealed significant differences in approaches to the organisation of vocational training, largely influenced by historical, cultural and socio-economic factors. Ukraine is actively integrating international standards, aligning itself with the European education system, while China is undergoing extensive reforms, notably through the Double High Plan, reflecting the country's ambition to become a global leader in vocational education and training.

Particular attention was paid to examining the methodological approaches employed in professional development systems, differences in legislative frameworks and the implementation of educational standards, as well as the impact of cultural and economic factors on the organisation of training and vocational preparation in each country. As a result of this analysis, conclusions were drawn that not only deepen the understanding of existing differences and common trends in professional development, but also offer possible directions for improving vocational training systems in both countries.

The models of professional development in Ukraine and China possess distinctive features shaped by their respective cultural and economic traditions. In Ukraine, flexibility in training formats and alignment with both national and international standards is of key importance, while in China, significant emphasis is placed on integrating education with economic and market demands. The role of educators in professional development systems is critically important. In Ukraine, the system of professional development requires mandatory improvement of teachers' skills through various forms of training that ensure compliance with current educational demands. In China, despite notable progress in the

modernisation of vocational education, there remains a need to enhance the professional autonomy of educators. Future research should focus on evaluating the effectiveness of educational programme implementation in both countries and on fostering exchange of experience, particularly in the context of teacher professional development. Success in this field requires attention not only to material aspects, but also to the cultural and institutional differences that shape the organisation of training. Recommendations for improving professional development systems in Ukraine and China include encouraging greater educator involvement in reform processes, integrating advanced technologies into curricula, and promoting academic and educational partnerships. These measures would help ensure high-quality education and enhance the international competitiveness of the workforce.

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### Conflict of Interest

None.

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## Порівняльний аналіз систем підвищення кваліфікації в Україні та Китаї

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**Анотація.** Актуальність роботи обумовлена динамічними змінами, які відбуваються на ринку праці, і які підвищують потребу у зростанні підвищення кваліфікації в Україні та Китаї. Враховуючи це, метою дослідження було виявлення характерних рис систем підвищення кваліфікації в Україні та Китаї та структурування їх за ступенем відповідності сучасним вимогам. Для досягнення поставленої мети дослідження було використано методи теоретичного та документального аналізу, а також порівняння. У даній роботі було досліджено особливості функціонування та розвитку систем підвищення кваліфікації в Україні та Китаї. На базі аналізу документальної бази підтримки та регуляції ринку праці, а також ознайомлення з нормативно-правовими аспектами підвищення кваліфікації в Україні та Китаї було відзначено, що особливості країн відрізняються в рамках їх політичного та соціального становлення. Порівняльний підхід дозволив виявити як загальні риси, так і унікальні аспекти, зумовлені соціально-економічними, правовими та культурними умовами в кожній з країн. Було проаналізовано механізми організації професійного навчання, використовувані моделі та формати підвищення кваліфікації, а також роль держави та освітніх установ у цьому процесі. Також було приділено увагу практичним аспектам реалізації освітньої політики та відповідності програм потребам сучасного ринку праці. На основі виявлених відмінностей і подібностей було запропоновано напрямки вдосконалення систем підвищення кваліфікації з урахуванням міжнародного досвіду. Практична цінність роботи полягала у можливості використання результатів проведеного порівняння систем підвищення кваліфікації в Україні та Китаї для розширення теоретико-методологічної бази удосконалення процесу формування ефективного кадрового потенціалу ринку праці наведених країн. Важливу роль дане дослідження може мати для реалізації запропонованої програми врахування досвіду Китаю та України для підвищення кваліфікації у інших країнах

**Ключові слова:** безперервна освіта; професійний розвиток педагогів; освітня система; кваліфікаційні вимоги; міжнародний досвід