

## **ГУМАНІТАРНІ СТУДІЇ: ПЕДАГОГІКА, ПСИХОЛОГІЯ, ФІЛОСОФІЯ**

**Засновник та видавець:**

Національний університет біоресурсів і природокористування України

**Рік заснування: 2013**

Виходить 4 рази на рік

*Рекомендовано до друку та поширення  
через мережу Інтернет Вченою радою*

*Національного університету біоресурсів і природокористування України  
(протокол № 2 від 23 вересня 2025 р.)*

**Рішення Національної Ради України з питань телебачення і радіомовлення № 1795,  
протокол № 31 від 21.12.2023 р.**

**Ідентифікатор медіа – R30-02291.**

**Журнал входить до переліку  
наукових фахових видань України**

Категорія «Б». Галузь знань: 053 – психологія; 033 – філософія;  
011 – освітні, педагогічні науки; 015 – професійна освіта  
(наказ МОН України № 1188 від 24 вересня 2020 року;  
№ 1290 від 30 листопада 2021 року).

**Журнал представлено у міжнародних наукометричних базах даних,  
репозитаріях та пошукових системах:** Google Scholar, Національна бібліотека України  
імені В. І. Вернадського, BASE, Ulrichsweb Global Serials Directory, WorldCat, Dimensions,  
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## **HUMANITIES STUDIOS: PEDAGOGY, PSYCHOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY**

**Founder and Publisher:**

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

**Year of foundation: 2013**

Published 4 times a year

*Recommended for printing and distribution  
via the Internet by the Academic Council  
of National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine  
(Minutes No. 2 of September 23, 2025)*

**Decision of the National Council of Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine No. 1795,**  
Minutes No. 31, dated 21.12.2023.

**Media identifier** – R30-02291.

**The journal is included in the list  
of Professional Scientific Publications of Ukraine**

Category “B”. Field of knowledge: 0313 – Psychology; 0223 – Philosophy and ethics;  
0111 – Education science; 0114 – Teacher training with subject specialisation  
(Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 1188 of September 24, 2020;  
№ 1290 of November 30, 2021).

**The journal is presented in international scientometric databases, repositories  
and scientific systems:** Google Scholar, Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine,  
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## Fostering a culture of academic integrity among higher education students

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**Abstract.** This article focused on the problem of fostering a culture of academic integrity among students in higher education institutions. The aim of the article was to analyse scientific approaches to revealing the essence of academic integrity as an effective tool for improving the quality of higher education. General scientific and special methods were used for the research: scientific abstraction, comparative analysis, induction and deduction, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, observation, and logical generalisation. It was substantiated that the fundamental component of the educational process was the culture of academic integrity of students, which contributes to fostering responsibility and honesty. The stages of fostering a culture of academic integrity among students were analysed: informing, training, integration into the educational process, control and assessment, support and motivation. An analysis of favourable conditions for fostering a culture of academic integrity among students was presented: educational environment, policies and rules, student motivation, the role of teachers, monitoring and evaluation, communication and cooperation. The role of scientific and pedagogical workers, educational institution administration and students in ensuring compliance with academic ethics standards, methods and technologies that promoted the development of academic integrity, including the integration of relevant standards into curricula, the introduction of codes of honour, the organisation of training and seminars for students, and the use of modern digital tools to detect cases of plagiarism. Recommendations were made for improving the educational environment aimed at supporting a culture of academic integrity among students. The study expanded the scientific knowledge about academic integrity as an effective tool for improving the quality of higher education. The results of the study can be used in scientific theoretical research on improving academic integrity policies at the institutional and individual levels

**Keywords:** culture of integrity; ethical values; honesty in learning; plagiarism; educational process; learning motivation

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Received 13.05.2025 Revised 31.08.2025 Accepted 23.09.2025

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### **Suggested Citation:**

Shynkaruk, O. (2025). Fostering a culture of academic integrity among higher education students. *Humanities Studios: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 13(3), 9-22. doi: 10.31548/hspedagog/3.2025.9.

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## Introduction

Academic integrity is the foundation of quality education and trust in higher education institutions. Violations of academic integrity, such as plagiarism or data fabrication, diminish the value of knowledge and scientific results. In the digital age, it is particularly important to foster a culture of responsibility and honesty, which is why studying this topic was relevant for ensuring an effective and ethical educational process.

T. Bretag (2020) described the challenges faced by renowned scientists in relation to academic integrity; specific cultural contexts were considered, as well as how to identify serious violations of academic integrity and promote a culture of integrity. The researchers' works emphasise the need to create effective policies, ethical training programmes and technological tools to prevent plagiarism and other violations, and also pay considerable attention to the experience of universities in different countries that are developing their own approaches to fostering academic integrity. In particular, C. De Maio & K. Dixon (2022) analysed integrity research in Australia with a focus on policies and strategies in educational institutions and recommended a combination of strategies to promote and support a culture of academic integrity in higher education now and in the future. D. Waryold & J. Lancaster (2023) developed a code of conduct for students, described ethics and decision-making, and summarised the latest thinking on the culture of academic integrity. S. Eaton (2021) justified academic integrity from the perspective of teaching and learning and offered a comprehensive understanding of various aspects of plagiarism with a special focus on higher education to benefit the entire university community, as well as practical advice on combating plagiarism in higher education institutions. J. Wahle *et al.* (2022) investigated the use of paraphrasing tools to conceal plagiarism, which is a serious threat to academic integrity, and demonstrated that automated classification eliminates the shortcomings of widely used text comparison

systems, such as I. Glendinning (2022), Based on own research and that of other scholars, approaches are proposed that may be useful in different contexts to successfully develop and implement academic integrity policies.

Despite the significant contribution of scholars to the study of academic integrity, some aspects remain under-researched, in particular the cross-cultural aspects of academic integrity. Although there is a certain amount of research on the influence of cultural factors on attitudes towards integrity, there is a need for a deeper examination of how national traditions, values, and educational systems affect the observance of ethical standards in different countries. The growing use of technology and online education creates new challenges related to integrity, so phenomena such as the use of artificial intelligence to create academic works and the development of effective digital tools to prevent violations require further study. The psychological factors that influence the choice of students and academic staff to adhere to or violate the principles of integrity have not been sufficiently studied.

The contribution of scientists to the study of academic integrity was notable. Ukrainian scientists contribute to the dissemination of knowledge and best practices in the study of integrity at the international level. In particular, O. Poliak & T. Tsvirkun (2022) researched the concept of "academic integrity" in Ukraine and Germany, compared the basic principles of academic integrity in these countries, and proved that Ukraine can rely on Germany's experience in developing academic integrity.

Kyiv Regional Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (2021) presented the findings of scientists on various aspects of academic integrity, in particular, the causes and consequences of academic dishonesty; the effectiveness of educational and institutional mechanisms for preventing violations; fostering a culture of integrity among students, teachers and researchers; the role of digital tools and technologies in detecting

plagiarism and monitoring integrity; the impact of academic integrity on the quality of education, science and society. Research by Ukrainian scientists is aimed at improving policies and practices to ensure transparency and trust in the academic environment. N. Partyko *et al.* (2024) examined the academic integrity of students in the context of the use of artificial intelligence tools and discussed ways to ensure academic integrity. L. Filipenko *et al.* (2023) outline the main aspects of academic integrity compliance by teaching and research staff in educational institutions and analyse the main provisions of Ukrainian legislation regulating the process of ensuring academic integrity in Ukraine.

However, the problem of fostering a culture of academic integrity among higher education students remains insufficiently studied. Therefore, the aim of this study was to analyse contemporary scientific approaches to the concept of “academic integrity”, identify the key factors in its fostering during the professional training of students, and offer practical recommendations for improving the educational environment that promotes the development of ethical behaviour.

## Materials and Methods

The following methods were used for the study: the method of scientific abstraction to substantiate the basic conceptual framework of academic integrity; comparative analysis to study the evolution of approaches to defining the essence of the concept of academic integrity; induction and deduction to establish the prerequisites for forming an effective tool for improving the quality of higher education; the method of analogy to compare existing scholarly approaches; and the method of logical generalisation to formulate conclusions based on the research results.

The survey was conducted between October and December 2023. 628 third and fourth-year students from the Humanities and Pedagogical Faculty of the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine (NULES) participated in the survey, representing various specialisms (“International Relations”, “Journalism”,

“Social Work”, “Psychology”, “Professional Education”). This selection was made given that the academic discipline “Fundamentals of Academic Integrity” is studied by students on different programmes from the first to the second year. The average age of the respondents was 19-22 years. The surveys were both individual, conducted using Google Forms and interviews, and group-based, conducted using the method of focus groups, case studies, observation, experiments, sociological surveys, project work, and so on.

In total, there were 26 experts from among the academic staff of the Humanities and Pedagogical Faculty, specialists from the educational and research departments, and the NULES library. Each expert had at least 10 years of experience working in a higher education institution. Regarding the ethics of the study, the composition of the survey participants and the conditions of its conduct were pre-approved by the ethics committee. All participants were informed in advance of their right to refuse to participate without any negative consequences for their status. All participants, however, gave their consent to participate in the study (ICC/ESOMAR International Code, 2016). The first stage of the study began with the development and conduct of a questionnaire with open and closed questions for the survey of higher education students. This allowed for the collection of data on the level of awareness, attitudes, and practices of academic integrity among students and to determine their level of knowledge about the principles of academic integrity and their attitudes towards violations (plagiarism, cheating, falsification of results, etc.).

The next method used was the focus group method, which allowed for a deeper understanding of students’ attitudes, opinions, and behaviour regarding academic integrity. Focus groups (6-12 people) were used to gather detailed information about students’ experiences, their perception of academic integrity rules, their attitudes towards violations (plagiarism, cheating, data fabrication, etc.), and the factors that influence their behaviour in the academic environment. Participants

were voluntary students from the Humanities and Pedagogical Faculty of NULES. The focus group method provided multi-faceted information on students' attitudes towards academic integrity, which became the basis for developing effective strategies to enhance integrity in the learning process.

The in-depth interview method for studying the culture of academic integrity of students consisted of conducting detailed personal conversations with respondents. This allowed for the collection of qualitative data on their beliefs, motives, behaviour, and perception of the principles of academic integrity. This method provided a deep analysis of students' attitudes towards ethical norms in learning; an understanding of the context, including the influence of the social environment, lecturers, and fellow students; and the identification of barriers and motivations for adhering to academic integrity. The in-depth interviews were conducted in an informal atmosphere with open-ended questions, which facilitated a trusting conversation. The results helped to develop recommendations for improving the culture of integrity in the academic environment.

The observation method for studying the culture of academic integrity of students helped to systematically track student behaviour in the educational process. The researcher recorded instances of adherence to or violation of integrity principles, such as honesty when completing assignments, avoiding plagiarism, and an ethical attitude towards assessment. The observation was open (students knew about the study). Data was collected by analysing interactions, learning materials, and situations (exams). This method provided a real picture of behaviour.

The experimental method for studying the culture of academic integrity of students involved the creation of controlled conditions to evaluate the impact of certain factors or measures on students' attitudes and behaviour in the context of academic ethics. The main stages were: hypothesis formulation – defining the expected impact of certain actions (for example, the introduction of courses on academic integrity) on students;

sample selection: forming a group of participants (a control group and an experimental group); conducting the experiment: introducing changes only in the experimental group, for example, conducting training sessions or lectures related to the principles of integrity; data collection: surveys, tests, or behavioural analysis of students before and after the experiment; and analysis of the results: comparing the changes in the control and experimental groups to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. This method allowed for the evaluation of the cause-and-effect relationships between the intervention and the changes in the culture of academic integrity.

## Results and Discussion

The culture of academic integrity among students as a component of the modern education system. In the modern world, education is a key factor that shapes the future of society; however, its quality depends on adherence to the principles of academic integrity. The Academic Explanatory Dictionary (1971) defines academic integrity as “high moral purity and honesty”. The Law of Ukraine “On Education” (2017) defines it as “a set of ethical principles and legally defined rules by which participants in the educational process must be guided during learning, teaching, and carrying out scientific (creative) activities to ensure trust in the results of learning and/or scientific (creative) achievements”.

The development of a culture of academic integrity in higher education students, in addition to understanding the essence of ethical behaviour, involves students mastering certain knowledge and skills. V. Vizniuk (2021) includes the following among the academic integrity competencies of higher education students: “the ability to act in professional and educational situations from a position of academic integrity and professional ethics; to complete academic assignments independently; to adhere to citation rules; to be aware of the significance of academic integrity norms; and to give a moral evaluation of one's own actions”. It is substantiated that students'

mastering of the knowledge and skills for adhering to the principles of academic integrity involves the formation of an “integrity policy” at the higher education institution. This policy includes the following components: “normative documents establishing integrity rules and regulating reactions to manifestations of dishonesty; information and advisory measures on academic integrity topics; professional development for academic staff; re-orientation of academic discipline syllabi towards more practical assignments for students that would preclude the possibility of academic dishonesty; and the introduction of technical checks of written work using text comparison software”. The foundation of quality education is academic integrity, which includes the following values: honesty, responsibility, and respect. Honesty ensures adherence to the rules when writing assignments, sitting exams, and preparing research projects; responsibility is the understanding of the consequences of academic fraud for personal development; and respect is the recognition of the work of others and correct referencing of sources.

The culture of academic integrity is an important component of the modern education system, and therefore, its observance contributes to the development of honest, responsible, and professionally competent specialists who are capable of contributing to the development of society. According to O. Guzhva (2017), it is substantiated that “the development of a culture of honest learning is important for the development of all education, but it is equally important for every participant in the academic process: a school student, a university student, or a lecturer, as it directly affects the level and quality of the knowledge they receive and the kind of specialists they will become in the future”.

The culture of academic integrity of students precisely contributes to the development of responsibility, honesty, and critical thinking. Therefore, its main aspects are respect for authorship, independence in learning, honesty in interaction, responsibility, respect for rules, fairness, collective ethics, and knowledge of rights and obligations (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Key aspects of academic integrity culture among students

Category	Description	Examples of behaviour
Respect for authorship	Recognising the ideas and work of others.	Referencing sources, citing correctly, avoiding plagiarism.
Independence in learning	Completing assignments independently, without dishonest methods.	Taking exams without using cheat sheets, completing one's own projects and assignments.
Honesty in interaction	Open and truthful communication with students, teachers and administration.	Providing accurate information about the reasons for missing classes or commitments.
Responsibility	Taking responsibility for one's actions and their consequences.	Completing assignments on time, meeting deadlines, fulfilling obligations.
Respect for rules	Adhering to academic standards and rules established by the educational institution.	Familiarity with academic integrity policies, compliance with requirements for writing papers.
Fairness	Ensuring equal conditions for all students.	Refusal of assistance during exams or attempts to influence grades.
Collective ethics	Interacting on the basis of integrity, helping others without compromising honesty.	Sharing knowledge during group projects, avoiding encouraging others to break the rules.
Knowledge of rights and obligations	Awareness of one's rights and obligations in the context of academic integrity.	Knowledge of the possibility of appealing grades, compliance with rules for publishing research results.

**Source:** compiled by the author based on O. Guzhva (2017)

Academic integrity includes the obligation of students to adhere to the rules of honest assessment, independent completion of assignments, and correct citation of sources in their work. Such an approach contributes to the creation of a healthy educational environment. Higher education institutions and academic staff play an important role in popularising the values of academic integrity by implementing a first-year academic discipline “Fundamentals of Academic Integrity” and by conducting training sessions and seminars for students. From students themselves, an awareness is expected that academic integrity is not just a tool for achieving short-term goals, such as sitting exams, but also a foundation for building a long-term professional career.

A. Kyfenko & D. Sopova (2023) noted that “in the European higher education and research space, a comprehensive concept of academic integrity exists that involves high-quality knowledge and skills, protection of the student and their achievements, recognition and trust in the results of scholarly research, as well as the protection of intellectual property rights”. The development of a culture of academic integrity is an important aspect of the educational process; however, this process is accompanied by a number of challenges. Based on the results of observations of student behaviour and surveys, the following key challenges were identified: (1) low awareness of the principles of academic integrity. Analysis shows that many students are not sufficiently familiar with the concept of academic integrity, its principles, and its importance, which may be a consequence of insufficient attention to this issue in schools and universities; (2) social pressure and stereotypes. Students often form the opinion that academic success is more important than adherence to ethical norms, and such beliefs are reinforced by real-life examples where cheating or plagiarism are perceived as acceptable ways to achieve results; (3) lack of effective control mechanisms. If anti-plagiarism software is not implemented in universities, it contributes to the spread of dishonest practices among students; (4) insufficient support from

lecturers. Academic staff play a key role in cultivating integrity, but sometimes they themselves do not adhere to these principles or do not know how to effectively influence students in this aspect; (5) motivational problems among students. Low motivation for personal development often forces students to resort to dishonest practices, such as cheating or buying ready-made work; (6) the use of new technologies for fraud. Technologies create new challenges for ensuring integrity. For example, students can use smartphones or other devices for cheating, and also order work through specialised platforms; (7) insufficient support from the institution’s administration. Without a clear academic integrity policy and support from university leadership, measures for its development may be insufficiently effective.

To overcome these challenges, it is necessary to implement comprehensive measures, namely: active student information campaigns about academic integrity through lectures, training sessions, and courses; the implementation of a clear system of rules and consequences for violations; involving academic staff as examples of ethical behaviour; the use of modern technologies for checking work and monitoring academic integrity; and the creation of motivational programmes that encourage honest learning. Overcoming the challenges in fostering a culture of academic integrity is possible with a holistic approach from all participants in the educational process.

The fostering of a culture of academic integrity in students is an important process that affects professional training, and therefore, the main aspect of this process is the creation of favourable conditions (Table 2). Violations of the principles of academic integrity by participants in the educational process are a significant problem in Ukrainian higher education institutions. The results of the conducted surveys showed a significant difference between students of different specialisms regarding all forms of academic dishonesty. In particular, a significantly higher number of surveyed students from the “Psychology” specialism admitted to dishonest behaviour, including plagiarism.

**Table 2.** Key areas for creating favourable conditions for fostering a culture of academic integrity among students

Area	Activity	Expected outcome
Educational environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensuring access to high-quality information resources and materials.</li> <li>2. Organising seminars and training sessions on academic integrity.</li> </ol>	<p>Improving students' knowledge and understanding of the principles of integrity.</p> <p>Fostering awareness of the importance of adhering to ethical standards in educational activities.</p>
Policies and rules	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing and implementing clear rules on plagiarism, cheating and other forms of violations.</li> <li>2. Determining the consequences for violating the rules of academic integrity.</li> </ol>	<p>Formulating transparent requirements that are adhered to by all participants in the educational process.</p> <p>Ensuring fairness and discipline.</p>
Student motivation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encouraging students to work independently by promoting creative and research-based approaches.</li> <li>2. Recognising and rewarding achievements in academic integrity.</li> </ol>	<p>Increasing interest in learning and developing critical thinking.</p> <p>Enhancing the prestige of honest academic behaviour.</p>
Role of teachers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrating ethical behaviour and academic integrity by teachers.</li> <li>2. Providing individual feedback to students on their work.</li> </ol>	<p>Teachers becoming role models for students.</p> <p>Supporting the development of self-control and responsibility skills.</p>
Monitoring and evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regular review of academic integrity policies.</li> <li>2. Use of technology to check texts for plagiarism.</li> </ol>	<p>Updating rules in line with new challenges.</p> <p>Reducing cases of academic dishonesty.</p>
Communication and cooperation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishment of open dialogue between students, teachers and administration.</li> <li>2. Conducting information campaigns to promote the principles of academic integrity.</li> </ol>	<p>Fostering trusting relationships and a shared vision of integrity.</p> <p>Raising awareness among all participants in the educational process.</p>

**Source:** compiled by the author based on T. Bretag (2020), S. Eaton (2021), O. Martyniuk (2021), C. De Maio, & K. Dixon (2022), L. Filipenko et al. (2023)

A comparison of the prevalence of academic integrity violations among students indicates that the highest level of plagiarism was recorded among students of the "Psychology" specialism (25%), while the lowest was in "International Relations" (7%) (Table 3). Overall, the most

widespread form of academic dishonesty is data fabrication, especially in Journalism (23%). At the same time, incorrect citation is most characteristic of International Relations students (30%), which may indicate the difficulty of working with foreign language sources.

**Table 3.** Comparison of the prevalence of cases of academic integrity violations among students

Forms of academic dishonesty	Percentage of students from different specialties who committed academic dishonesty, %					
	Psychology	Philology	Journalism	Social work	Professional education	International relations
Plagiarism	25	20	20	15	12	7
Fabrication of data	16	16	23	18	15	11
Copying	10	20	20	12	28	9
Improper use of outside help	12	21	18	24	13	10
Inaccurate citation	10	21	15	10	12	30

**Source:** compiled by the author

In fostering a culture of academic integrity among students, educational programmes and training sessions play a key role, as they are an effective tool for forming ethical principles and creating an integrity-based academic community. They contribute to students' awareness of the importance of an honest approach to learning and the responsible use of information sources. They also influence the enhancement of students' knowledge of academic integrity, the consequences of its violation, and teach students how to correctly reference sources and use ethical research methods. Conducting training sessions and discussions helps to form a culture of academic integrity at the community level, which allows students to support one another in adhering to ethical principles (Alieksieieva, 2024).

I. Todorova (2019) identified internal and external pedagogical conditions for organising educational activities in higher education institutions based on the principles of academic integrity. The external (organisational and pedagogical) conditions combine circumstances and situations, while the internal pedagogical conditions are determined by the individual-psychological personal qualities of students and lecturers in a specific higher education institution. The development of skills plays an important role in fostering a culture of academic integrity among students, as practical abilities help to implement the principles of honesty, responsibility, and ethics in learning. The development of creative thinking skills helps students create unique work and ideas that meet academic integrity standards, correctly reference sources, work with electronic resources, verify information for authenticity, and use software to check text originality. The purposeful development of skills not only contributes to the formation of academic integrity but also creates a foundation for students' future professional success.

I. Varava (2020) identified preparing students for scholarly research based on the principles of academic integrity as one of the important components of the educational process. The scholar developed a pedagogical technology "for forming

the readiness of higher education students for scholarly research based on academic integrity", which involves the interaction of lecturers at the higher education institution "aimed at the formation and development of the student's personality as a future scholar and/or specialist who is guided by integrity principles in their work".

Communication and partnership are also important elements in fostering a culture of academic integrity among students. Communication provides open information for students about academic integrity through lectures, seminars, informational materials, and discussions, while partnership ensures collaboration between academic staff, administration, and students, which may include joint development of honour codes and involving students in the creation of integrity policies. Together, these elements contribute to motivation for honest learning and the creation of trust and mutual respect. The scholar D. Sopova (2020) described ways to motivate honest learning at university, namely: creating problem-based situations in seminars or practical classes that make dishonest behaviour impossible and stimulate students to find creative solutions; a culture of communication between lecturers and students based on respect and interaction; teaching material in a poly-dialogue format with lively discussion of situations and specific materials; and unusual, interactive forms of conducting classes.

The foundation for the development of academic integrity in students is the recognition of integrity, which means adherence to honesty, fairness, and responsibility in the educational process. This contributes to the development of moral qualities, critical thinking, and professional ethics in students, ensuring quality education and trust in the academic community. Higher education institutions should practise rewarding students for success in learning and scholarly research that is completed honestly, as public recognition of integrity is the foundation of professional success. According to the National Agency for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (2025), a stimulus for

higher education students to adhere to academic integrity is the formation of an integrity-based educational and scientific environment at higher education institutions, which includes: “training for all participants in the educational process; the application of effective tools and procedures for checking academic works for signs of academic integrity violations; timely response to reports of academic integrity violations; and the application of effective procedures for decision-making on issues of ensuring academic integrity”. Stages of fostering

a culture of academic integrity in students. The development of a culture of academic integrity in students occurs gradually through informing them about academic integrity, teaching academic writing and critical thinking skills, creating a supportive environment, practical application of integrity norms, implementing assessment and monitoring systems, and continuous improvement of approaches based on feedback, which ensures the development of responsibility, mutual respect, and a conscious attitude towards learning (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Stages of forming a culture of academic integrity of students

Stage	Objective	Methods and tools	Expected results
Information	Raising students' awareness of the principles of academic integrity.	Lectures, training sessions, seminars, informational materials (booklets, videos, presentations).	Understanding the basic principles of academic integrity and their importance for education and professional activity.
Training	Fostering practical skills for maintaining academic integrity.	Practical classes, situation modelling, case studies, essay writing.	Ability to identify violations of integrity and avoid them in one's own educational activities.
Integration into the educational process	Incorporating the principles of academic integrity into all aspects of learning.	Policy development, evaluation systems, plagiarism checks, involving students in project work.	Systematic adherence to the principles of academic integrity in learning and evaluation.
Monitoring and evaluation	Ensuring monitoring of integrity compliance.	Use of anti-plagiarism software, independent evaluation, work of ethics committees.	Minimising cases of academic dishonesty, increasing trust in the education system.
Support and motivation	Creating conditions for maintaining academic integrity.	Encouraging students, awards for academic achievement.	Fostering positive motivation for ethical behaviour.

**Source:** compiled by the author based on P. Brennecke (2010), O. Martyniuk (2021), N. Antonyuk & N. Pushkar (2022), Yu. Boychuk (2022)

The information stage is key to fostering a culture of academic integrity, as it provides students with the necessary knowledge about ethical standards and rules of conduct in the academic environment. At this stage, students are introduced to the concepts of plagiarism, correct citation, academic responsibility, and the consequences of violating integrity principles. O. Martyniuk (2021) developed a course on academic writing for this purpose, which aims “to form an academic culture in higher education students, to introduce them to the basics of academic writing, and to the rules for formatting scholarly work in compliance with academic integrity”. The learning

stage is an important component in the process of fostering a culture of academic integrity in students, as it is at this stage that the foundations of behaviour, values, and skills are laid that define ethical standards in the educational environment. Therefore, the course developed for first-year students is a key tool in cultivating academic integrity from the first days of study at the higher education institution, providing not only knowledge and skills but also shaping values that will accompany students throughout their lives.

The integration into the educational process stage is fundamental for fostering a culture of academic integrity in students, as it involves

the implementation of integrity principles in all aspects of learning. This includes the development of curricula with the inclusion of modules dedicated to academic integrity, as well as the integration of these principles into the content of other disciplines. P. Brennecke (2010) wrote a special textbook for students on academic integrity and the types of its violations. The integration of academic integrity principles into the educational process helps to create an environment where students not only adhere to ethical norms but also understand their importance in their studies and future professional activities.

The control and evaluation stage is important in the process of fostering a culture of academic integrity in students, as it allows not only for verifying compliance with integrity norms but also for assessing the effectiveness of educational measures in this area. N. Antonyuk & N. Pushkar (2022) substantiated that “lecturers’ use of active and creative methods of teaching and control make plagiarism and other forms of academic integrity violations impossible; they also include the development of individual assignments for each student, their practical and research focus, informational support for independent work, and the possibility of providing consultations and adjusting assignments remotely”. The control and evaluation stage is an integral part of fostering a culture of academic integrity, as it allows for the identification of gaps, provides feedback, and contributes to the development of a holistic system that supports academic ethics.

The development of a culture of academic integrity among students is a multifaceted process. One of the stages of this process is the support and motivation of students to adhere to the principles of academic integrity. Support includes providing students with the necessary knowledge, resources, and psychological assistance, while motivation stimulates students to adhere to the principles of academic integrity. A wise and instructive example of supporting and motivating students is provided by Yu. Boychuk (2022), which presents an essay collection

by students and postgraduates reflecting on integrity as a unique quality of a modern person who is progressive, socially active, and responsible. Such motivational measures are part of numerous educational and scientific activities for students, which are conducted with the aim of not only a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of academic integrity as an indicator of the corporate ethics of an educational institution, but also the formation of integrity as a stable personal virtue. V. Romakin (2010) researched the differences in motivations, beliefs, and behaviours related to violations of academic culture norms by American and Ukrainian students. The support and motivation stage is critically important for ensuring the sustainable development of a culture of academic integrity, as a combination of information, mentorship, and creating conditions for honest learning helps to consolidate the relevant values and norms in the student community.

The conducted questionnaires and surveys allowed for the collection of valuable information about students’ level of awareness and attitudes towards academic integrity. The results of the study helped to identify the key problems that students face, particularly regarding adherence to the principles of honesty and responsibility in the learning process, which made it possible to evaluate the effectiveness of existing measures for fostering a culture of integrity and to develop recommendations for further improvement of the educational environment aimed at supporting a culture of academic integrity among students (Table 5). Thus, fostering a culture of academic integrity requires a systematic, consistent approach that encompasses not only the implementation of regulatory documents, but also practical training in ethical behaviour, regular informing of students and teachers about the principles of integrity, and effective monitoring of their compliance. In this process, the active participation of all parties involved in the educational process – students, teachers, administration – was important, contributing

to the creation of a supportive environment in which honesty, respect for intellectual work, and personal responsibility became not only requirements but also consciously accepted values.

**Table 5.** Recommendations for further improvement of the educational environment aimed at supporting a culture of academic integrity among students

For scientific and teaching staff	For students
1. Ensure clear communication of academic integrity rules and the consequences of violating them.	1. Be familiar with the academic integrity policy of the higher education institution.
2. Develop academic disciplines and introduce interactive classes on academic integrity.	2. Adhere to integrity rules when completing assignments, particularly by avoiding plagiarism.
3. Introduce various forms of evaluation that make cheating more difficult.	3. Complete all assignments independently and take exams honestly.
4. Use anti-plagiarism software to check student work.	4. Learn how to correctly reference sources of information in assignments.
5. Encourage students to participate in discussions of ethical dilemmas related to learning.	5. Take an active part in events dedicated to academic integrity.
6. Maintain open communication with students and create an atmosphere of trust.	6. Maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect and honesty in the student environment.
7. Set an example of honest behaviour by demonstrating high standards.	7. Encourage classmates to adhere to ethical standards and set an example.
8. Organise training sessions and seminars on developing critical thinking and independence in learning.	8. Develop critical thinking and independence skills in the educational process.

**Source:** compiled by the author based on an in-depth interview

## Conclusions

The study makes the following conclusions. Fostering a culture of academic integrity among students is an important factor in ensuring the quality of education and the development of a responsible society, but this process is accompanied by a number of challenges, namely low student awareness of the principles of academic integrity, social pressure and stereotypes lack of effective control mechanisms; insufficient support from scientific and pedagogical staff; motivational problems among students; use of new technologies for dishonesty; insufficient support from the administration of the institution. Effective implementation of the principles of integrity requires a systematic approach that encompasses the educational process, organisational culture and legal mechanisms in educational institutions. The results of the surveys show that students of different specialties resort to violations of academic integrity in different ways, with the most common being inaccurate citation (30% of students majoring in “International

Relations”), cheating (28% of students majoring in “Professional Education”), and plagiarism (25% of students majoring in “Psychology”).

Academic and teaching staff play a key role in fostering ethical behaviour by acting as role models and creating conditions to prevent plagiarism, cheating and other violations. The key areas for creating favourable conditions for fostering a culture of academic integrity among students are the educational environment, policies and rules, student motivation, the role of teachers, monitoring and evaluation, communication and cooperation. At the same time, it is important to foster students' awareness of ethical responsibility for their actions and motivation to adhere to academic standards. Therefore, the tools in this process include teaching citation rules, using technologies to verify the authenticity of works, creating conditions for the development of critical thinking, and promoting open communication between all participants in the educational process.

A culture of academic integrity among students fosters responsibility, honesty and critical

thinking, so its main aspects are respect for authorship, independence in learning, honesty in interaction, responsibility, respect for rules, fairness, collective ethics, and knowledge of rights and obligations. Understanding the importance of academic integrity helps students not only achieve their personal educational goals, but also contributes to their successful professional development in the future. Thus, the development of a culture of academic integrity is a necessary prerequisite for fostering quality education. This study does not claim to be an exhaustive analysis of fostering a culture of academic integrity among students. Future

research should focus on analysing the moral and ethical principles of scientific and educational activities and improving policies to ensure academic integrity at the institutional and individual levels.

### Acknowledgements

None.

### Funding

None.

### Conflict of Interest

None.

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## Формування культури академічної доброчесності здобувачів вищої освіти

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**Анотація.** Статтю присвячено дослідженню проблеми формування культури академічної доброчесності серед студентів закладів вищої освіти. Метою статті було проаналізувати наукові підходи до розкриття сутності академічної доброчесності як дієвого інструменту посилення якості вищої освіти. Для дослідження використано загальнонаукові та спеціальні методи: наукової абстракції, компаративного аналізу, метод індукції та дедукції, опитування, анкетування, інтерв'ю, спостереження та логічного узагальнення. Обґрунтовано, що фундаментальною складовою освітнього процесу була саме культура академічної доброчесності студентів, яка сприяла формуванню відповідальності і чесності. Проаналізовано етапи формування культури академічної доброчесності студентів: інформування, навчання, інтеграція в освітній процес, контроль та оцінка, підтримка та мотивація. Представлено аналіз сприятливих умов для формування культури академічної доброчесності студентів: освітнє середовище, політика та правила, мотивація студентів, роль викладачів, моніторинг і оцінка, комунікація та співпраця. Розглянуто роль науково-педагогічних працівників, адміністрації закладів освіти та студентів у забезпеченні дотримання норм академічної етики, методи і технології, що сприяють розвитку академічної доброчесності, включаючи інтеграцію відповідних норм у навчальні програми, впровадження кодексів честі, організацію тренінгів і семінарів для студентів, а також застосування сучасних цифрових інструментів для виявлення випадків плагіату. Запропоновано рекомендації для вдосконалення освітнього середовища, спрямованого на підтримку культури академічної доброчесності студентів. Проведене дослідження розширило наукові доробки про академічну доброчесність як дієвий інструмент посилення якості вищої освіти. Результати дослідження можуть бути використані у наукових теоретичних розвідках щодо удосконалення політики забезпечення академічної доброчесності на інституційному та індивідуальному рівнях

**Ключові слова:** культура доброчесності; етичні цінності; чесність у навчанні; плагіат; освітній процес; мотивація до навчання



## Ways to overcome educational losses in higher technological education

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**Abstract.** The article analysed the challenges associated with overcoming educational losses in higher technological education in Ukraine during the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing war. In this research, particular attention was given to defining the concept of “educational losses”, identifying their causes and consequences, and outlining strategic approaches to minimising their negative impact. The research aimed to identify effective strategies for addressing educational losses and enhancing the quality of higher technological education under crisis conditions. Key factors contributing to reduced learning efficiency are examined, including the transition to distance learning, deterioration in the psychological state of participants, a reduction in the student body, and the destruction of educational infrastructure. To address these challenges, the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine has implemented innovative measures such as expanding

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Received 05.06.2025 Revised 26.08.2025 Accepted 23.09.2025

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### **Suggested Citation:**

Klikh, L., Zazymko, O., Nazarenko, V., & Rudyk, Ya. (2025). Ways to overcome educational losses in higher technological education. *Humanities Studios: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 13(3), 23-37. doi: 10.31548/hspedagog/3.2025.23.

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access to electronic courses via the MOODLE platform, launching a digital transformation programme, organising remedial courses for first-year students, and creating a supportive learning environment. Within the scope of the presented research, emphasis was placed on the advantages of a blended learning format that integrates theoretical and practical components more effectively. Significant attention was also given to psychological support for students and faculty, enhancing motivation and ensuring safety. The University has developed flexible learning algorithms that support parity between different educational formats, facilitating student integration into the learning process. The article concluded with recommendations for monitoring educational losses and improving curricula to maintain educational quality and adaptability in the face of modern challenges. The practical value of the study lies in offering a replicable model for educational institutions to respond effectively to crises, ensuring the continuity and resilience of higher education

**Keywords:** organisation of the educational process; electronic course platform; engineering education; educational policies

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### Introduction

The COVID pandemic, followed by the full-scale war, has posed an extraordinary challenge for higher education and caused problems in providing education and training for all sectors of Ukraine's labour market (Lokshina *et al.*, 2022). However, in this challenging period, Ukraine, more than ever, needs qualified technological personnel to prevent a food crisis and rebuild the country. Technological education has become a strategically important component in the training of qualified personnel, and the problem of educational losses in higher education institutions has become highly relevant, necessitating the study of their causes and the search for appropriate solutions.

The COVID-19 pandemic and global crises have profoundly impacted education systems, causing widespread learning losses and exacerbating inequalities (Nestulya & Shara, 2023). E. Hanushek & L. Woessmann (2020) explore the long-term economic implications of these learning losses, emphasising how reduced skill acquisition negatively affects labour market productivity and economic growth. They argue that these losses could reduce global GDP substantially over the coming decades, urging policymakers to prioritise remedial measures to mitigate the damage. Similarly, T. Kasradze

& N. Zarnadze (2021) highlight the detrimental effect of pandemic-induced learning gaps on economic development. They note that the prolonged absence of effective learning environments, particularly in developing countries, has widened educational disparities, potentially limiting upward social mobility and intensifying socioeconomic inequality. Z. Blaskó *et al.* (2022) contribute to this discourse by mapping the educational inequalities in Europe that arose during the COVID-19 crisis. They identify specific demographic groups disproportionately affected by learning losses, such as students from low-income households, and advocate targeted interventions to bridge these gaps. Together, these studies underscore the critical intersection of education, economic development, and equity in addressing the challenges posed by global crises.

Beyond the pandemic, broader systemic disruptions, such as war and institutional transformations, have also reshaped the landscape of higher education. V. Antoniuk (2023) examines the war in Ukraine as a factor driving upheaval and transformation in the higher education sector, highlighting the resilience and adaptability of institutions under extreme conditions. The author underscores the importance of fostering

international collaboration and flexible policies to maintain academic continuity. Leadership values and trust emerge as crucial elements in managing uncertainty, as explored by B. Liu *et al.* (2022), who analyse how higher education leaders in the United States uphold core values and ethical principles during crises, emphasising the role of trust and transparent decision-making in sustaining institutional integrity. These studies collectively illustrate the multifaceted impacts of crises on education, ranging from immediate disruptions in learning to long-term structural transformations, while highlighting the role of leadership and innovation in fostering resilience.

O. Kulyk (2023) investigates how digital transformation is reshaping higher education. The author discusses the need for universities to adopt new technological models, highlighting flexibility, personalisation, and digital competence as crucial for future educational success. M. Neumann *et al.* (2023) explore the potential impacts of AI tools like ChatGPT on higher education. They stress the urgent need for open discussions about integrating AI into education while addressing opportunities and ethical challenges. R. Kelchen *et al.* (2021) examine the long-term financial repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on higher education institutions. They reveal that many colleges and universities, particularly smaller ones, face fiscal instability due to declining enrolments and changing funding structures. B. George & O. Wooden (2023) explore how artificial intelligence could strategically transform higher education management. They propose AI-driven solutions for improving decision-making, enhancing institutional resilience, and fostering more responsive educational environments. R. Sabates *et al.* (2021) use data from Complementary Basic Education programmes in Ghana to estimate learning losses resulting from COVID-19 school closures. They highlight that marginalised learners experienced significant setbacks, underscoring the need for remedial and transition programmes to mitigate long-term impacts. J. Casanova *et al.* (2023) examine the reasons behind

first-year STEM student dropout rates, suggesting that factors beyond academic performance – such as motivation, social integration, and self-regulation skills – are critical. They advocate for more holistic student support systems to improve retention rates.

A significant danger of educational losses is that their consequences may become evident gradually, affecting the quality of life of individual citizens and the development of society as a whole. The hypothesis of the present study posited that the use of blended learning, adaptive educational technologies, and an individualised approach will help reduce educational losses among applicants for higher education in technological fields. Despite numerous studies on educational losses, the issue of overcoming these losses in higher technological education remains insufficiently explored. The available academic literature and the approaches it presents are mainly focused on general educational strategies. At the same time, the specifics of technological education require tailored methods to meet the needs of students in technical disciplines. This study proposed a comprehensive approach to minimising educational losses based on the use of adaptive learning technologies and individualised development trajectories, which distinguishes it from previous publications in this field. The study aimed to identify the main strategies for overcoming educational losses in higher technological education.

## Materials and Methods

The methodological basis of the study relied on scientific methods such as analysis, synthesis, justification, generalisation, and systematisation of the results obtained. The statistical data presented in the research were compiled and analysed by the authors based on institutional documentation, including the official report Educational Activities of the University: Achievements and Results of 2024, and aggregated data from electronic reports submitted by the deaneries and directorates of the National University of Life

and Environmental Sciences (NULES) of Ukraine for reporting to the university's rectorate. These sources provided a reliable empirical basis for evaluating key indicators such as student enrolment dynamics, dropout rates, outcomes of intermediate certification, engagement in levelling and preparatory courses, and the level of digital course integration across technological faculties and educational institutes. The study of ways to overcome educational losses was carried out at the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine.

To conduct this comprehensive analysis, the authors employed a multifaceted methodological approach that extended beyond the compilation of institutional data. Document analysis was utilised to scrutinise official university reports, strategic plans for digitalisation, and regulatory documents concerning educational processes and safety protocols. This allowed for a thorough understanding of the implemented measures and their intended objectives. Comparative analysis was applied to examine the changes in key educational indicators (e.g. enrolment, dropout rates, certification results) over the period of study (2022-2024) and in comparison to pre-crisis data, enabling an assessment of the impact of implemented strategies. Furthermore, descriptive statistics were used to summarise and present the quantitative data in a clear and accessible manner, facilitating the identification of trends and patterns. Qualitative analysis of the implemented initiatives, such as the digital transformation programme and psychological support services, was conducted through the examination of programme descriptions and implementation reports. Finally, inductive reasoning was employed to derive overarching conclusions and recommendations based on the synthesis of the analysed data and observations regarding the effectiveness of the implemented strategies in mitigating educational losses within the specific context of the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine.

## Results and Discussion

### Defining and understanding educational losses in higher education

In addressing the issue of educational losses, it is necessary to begin by interpreting this concept and its main aspects both generally and in the specific context of the educational process within higher education institutions. In recent years, several related terms have emerged in both the media and academic literature, including "learning losses", "educational gaps", and "learning gaps" (Bychko & Tereshchenko, 2023). Educational losses are adverse consequences that arise within the higher education system and institutions as a result of natural disasters, global or regional pandemics, armed conflict, or other events that disrupt the organisation of the educational process, day-to-day learning, and the overall development of higher education. Such losses may include: interruption of the educational process due to natural disasters, pandemics, air raids, or other threats to the health or lives of participants in the educational process, thereby reducing its effectiveness; damage to or destruction of educational buildings, dormitories, or laboratory equipment; evacuation and relocation of staff and students; loss of access to educational resources due to server failures, power outages, or lack of communication; and a decline in the quality of practical learning resulting from the delivery of education in a remote format (Nazarenko, 2022).

The concept under study also encompasses the loss of opportunities to obtain a quality education. These losses may result from lack of access to quality education due to epidemics, natural disasters, social circumstances, inadequate infrastructure, financial constraints, and other such factors. That is, educational losses constitute a complex of issues that significantly affect the functioning of higher education institutions by reducing accessibility, causing interruptions in the educational process, and inflicting material damage on infrastructure. These effects may also include social consequences, psychological stress, and other forms of pressure (Bychko & Tereshchenko, 2023).

The State Service for Education Quality of Ukraine, with the support of the project Support for Government Reforms in Ukraine (SURGe), conducted a study on the quality of educational organisation during the 2022/2023 academic year to identify both educational losses and gains (State Service of Education Quality of Ukraine, 2023). According to the study, losses in the educational process may be recognised as changes in the mode of instruction, including the transition from fulltime to distance or blended learning, as well as unstable conditions for organising the educational process.

Thus, the distance and blended learning formats – first introduced in response to the

COVID19 pandemic and still in use at some institutions – significantly limit the development of practical skills. This is particularly problematic in technological programmes, where the practical component is markedly more important than in the humanities. Moreover, these formats do not contribute to improved academic performance or increased motivation to study within the university community, as evidenced by the data in Table 1, which details the number of students expelled from technological programmes at NULES of Ukraine between 2022 and 2024. In 2024 alone, 1,173 students were expelled from technological programmes for various reasons, a figure that significantly exceeds prewar levels.

**Table 1.** Number of expelled students in technological specialities at NULES of Ukraine, 2022-2024

Faculties/Institutes	2022	2023	2024
Plant Protection, Biotechnology and Ecology	44	64	96
Information Technologies	72	124	7
Education and Research Institute of Energetics, Automation and Energy Efficiency	54	90	105
Food Technology and Quality Control of Agricultural Products	25	44	109
Design and Engineering	31	43	104
Land Management	35	37	51
Agrobiological	57	136	168
Livestock Raising and Water Bioresources	56	87	110
Education and Research Institute of Forestry and Landscape-Park Management	98	153	111
Mechanical and Technological	40	88	124
Veterinary Medicine	76	145	188

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the report *Educational Activities of the University: Achievements and Results of 2024*

At the same time, under conditions of instability, many students prefer to study at European universities, which can lead to a decrease in domestic student numbers and negatively affect the financial stability and overall efficiency of the university. A significant challenge has been ensuring the safety of students, academic staff, and other university personnel, particularly due to the limited number of shelters, the need to develop and implement security measures, install warning and evacuation systems, and provide training on emergency response procedures. Limited

resources, power supply interruptions, and poor internet connectivity continue to create barriers to distance learning and hinder access to essential educational materials and resources.

Several key factors have been identified as contributing to increased educational losses, including: restricted access to the educational environment; the psychological state of participants in the educational process; a reduction in the number of applicants to higher education; safety concerns for students, researchers, and academic staff; technological challenges (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Key challenges faced by the university under martial law

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the report of the NULES Rector, presented at the meeting of the university workforce in December 2024

At the same time, traditional challenges in higher technological education remain relevant. These include issues of accessibility and inclusiveness; flexibility of the educational process for specific categories of low-income students; the implementation of individualised learning trajectories; and the introduction of dual education or its elements. Additional challenges complicating the implementation of educational activities at NULES of Ukraine include: demographic shifts due to the outflow of students and academic staff abroad; an oversupply of educational services in Ukraine, coupled with the increasing availability of higher education abroad; a significant decline in demand among today's youth for complex professions in engineering and natural sciences; decreasing motivation among teaching staff to actively enhance the quality of educational programmes.

#### **Key strategies for overcoming educational losses in technological higher education**

Having analysed the experience gained in improving the educational process over the past few years at NULES of Ukraine, it is possible to

identify key areas for addressing educational losses in higher technological education. A high level of digitalisation and the availability of a range of modern digital services for students and academic staff play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of the educational process. As part of the university's digital transformation programme, significant progress has been made in a short period across several areas, including the modernisation of the educational process, resource management, and enhancement of information security. Notable achievements include the following: development of a system for publishing class schedules; introduction of a student portal providing access to class timetables, academic performance, individual curricula, university surveys, and the option to select courses within the individual study plan; implementation of a cybersecurity policy aimed at protecting data belonging to the university, students, staff, and other stakeholders in the educational process; improvement of the infrastructure's reliability and energy independence through backup power systems and an emergency data recovery solution;

initiation of the automation of document management through the creation of a unified digital environment for managing human resources, finances, and material assets; connection to the Eduroam global network, enabling all participants in the educational process to access the Internet via a secure, standardised platform. Thanks to these initiatives, the university has made substantial progress in implementing modern digital

technologies, thereby improving both educational quality and administrative efficiency. Another important measure to reduce educational losses has been the assessment of first-year bachelor's students' baseline knowledge, followed by the provision of free bridging courses in science, mathematics, and the humanities. These courses have significantly helped close knowledge gaps among first-year students (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Participation of first-year students in free bridging courses in science, mathematics, and the humanities, 2022-2025

Course	2022-2023 AY, students	2023-2024 AY, students	2024-2025 AY, students
Mathematics	784	905	1,197
Chemistry	172	168	176
Physics	203	231	239
Biology	67	84	98
Foreign language	131	145	105
Total	1,357	1,533	1,815

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the report *Educational Activities of the University: Achievements and Results of 2024*

First-year students enrolled in technological programmes at the following educational institutes and faculties participated in the free bridging courses in science, mathematics, and the humanities: the Education and Research Institutes of Energetics, Automation and Energy Efficiency, and Forestry and Landscape-Park Management; and the Faculties of Livestock Raising and Water Bioresources; Mechanical and Technological; Design and Engineering; Plant Protection, Biotechnology and Ecology; Land Management; Information Technologies; Food Technology and Quality Control of Agricultural Products; Veterinary Medicine; Agrobiological, and others.

Mid-semester interim certification of higher education applicants plays an important role in

enhancing motivation for academic engagement. This procedure was introduced at the university more than 15 years ago and has been shown to encourage students to improve their level of knowledge. The results of certification for students enrolled in technological educational programmes are presented in Table 3. The use of an adaptive blended learning format – integrating digital services, the Electronic Educational Environment (EEE), and a system for diagnosing initial knowledge – has made it possible to reduce the certification failure rate among higher education applicants to an average of 6.5% (Table 3). This outcome supports the effectiveness of the university's strategy for addressing educational losses under martial law conditions.

**Table 3.** Summary of certification results for applicants to technological educational programmes in the first semester of the 2024-2025 academic year

Faculties/Institutes	Number of students	Passed interim certification	Failed interim certification
Education and research institute of Energetics, Automation and Energy Efficiency	604	558	46
Education and Research Institute of Forestry and Landscape-Park Management	560	426	134

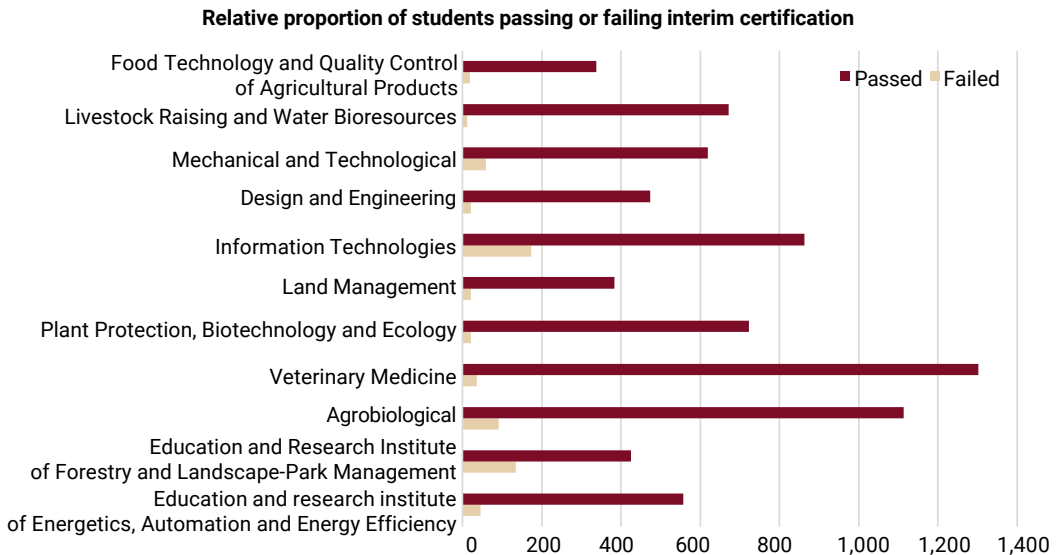
Table 3. Continued

Faculties/Institutes	Number of students	Passed interim certification	Failed interim certification
Agrobiological	1,204	1,113	91
Veterinary Medicine	1,338	1,302	36
Plant Protection, Biotechnology and Ecology	744	723	21
Land Management	404	383	21
Information Technologies	1,036	863	173
Design and Engineering	495	474	21
Mechanical and Technological	678	619	59
Livestock Raising and Water Bioresources	684	672	12
Food Technology and Quality Control of Agricultural Products	357	338	19

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the report *Educational Activities of the University: Achievements and Results of 2024*

The following chart illustrates the proportion of students who passed the interim certification, highlighting distinctly divergent outcomes across faculties (Fig. 2). The highest success rates are observed in the veterinary medicine and agrobiology programmes. In contrast, a comparatively larger number of students failed to pass certification in certain areas of engineering and information technology. This disparity can be attributed to

the practice-oriented nature of laboratory-based learning. Additionally, engineering and IT programmes demand a higher level of proficiency in computational tasks – skills that students may not be immediately prepared to demonstrate in a blended learning environment. Nevertheless, in most educational programmes, the number of students who passed the certification substantially exceeded those who did not.



**Figure 2.** Relative proportion of students passing or failing interim certification

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on data from electronic reports of university faculties and institutes for submission to the rectorate

A significant contribution to mitigating educational losses is made by the university's preparatory courses. These offer school leavers planning to enrol at NULES of Ukraine the

opportunity to strengthen their knowledge in science, mathematics, and the humanities. The quantitative data on participation in these courses are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Participation trends in ongoing consulting and preparatory courses

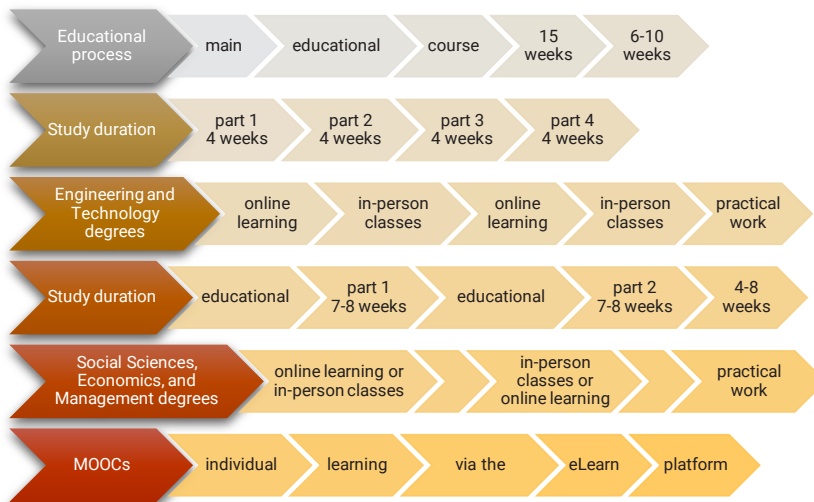
Academic year	Total number of active students
2019-2020	257
2020-2021	233
2021-2022	285
2022-2023	211
2023-2024	252

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on data from electronic reports of university faculties and institutes for submission to the rectorate

An important component was also the support of the psychological well-being of participants in the educational process. This included the expansion of services offered by psychological support centres, the provision of varied opportunities for organised recreation, such as sports competitions, cultural events, and seminars for non-academic staff aimed at enhancing emotional and psychological resilience. Over the past three and a half years, the organisation of the educational process at the University has undergone significant changes in response to the challenges faced by the higher education system – including the military aggression by the Russian Federation, quarantine restrictions, and other external threats.

The University extensively utilises the potential of a blended learning format, which yields fundamentally improved educational outcomes for students compared to fully online learning. At NULES of Ukraine, the blended format involves a flexible combination of remote lectures, consultations, selected practical sessions, and in-person contact between lecturers and students in laboratory work, practical and seminar classes, placements, examination sessions, and thesis defences – depending on the programme and faculty. NULES of Ukraine offers

two distinct scheduling algorithms for the delivery of full-time education during each semester, according to the European Student Identifier (ESI) (Fig. 3). For students pursuing higher education at all academic levels in technological disciplines – including engineering, veterinary medicine, and agrobiolgy – frequent rotation between in-person and remote learning formats throughout the semester is advisable. This is due to the significant number of laboratory and hands-on sessions embedded in the curricula, for which the University provides a strong material and technical infrastructure, including state-of-the-art equipment and facilities. For students in economics, management, humanities, and teacher training programmes, a scheduling model involving a single mid-semester rotation between in-person and online formats is typically used. This algorithm was developed and successfully implemented by the University. Both scheduling models ensure parity between full-time and remote learning formats, helping to narrow the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Their use has led to increased student attendance, improved integration into university life, and the development of a supportive socio-psychological environment within academic groups.



**Figure 3.** Algorithms for organising student learning at NULES of Ukraine

**Source:** compiled by the authors

The University pays special attention to the training of first-year bachelor's and first-year master's students in full-time study. During the organisation of the educational process for these categories of students, faculties and ESI are recommended to conduct classes in person throughout the academic year to prevent educational losses among individuals who have only recently begun their studies at the University. The primary reason for switching to distance learning is the deterioration of the security situation or adverse weather conditions during the cold season.

An important point was the expansion of access to the educational environment for higher education students, implemented through the development and use of modern e-learning courses, which are accessible from any location and supported by the resources of the National Centre for Education (NCE). To this end, since 2003, the University has used the MOODLE platform (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) as the central digital learning management system. MOODLE enables the creation, delivery, and management of structured online academic content, including interactive modules, video lectures, reading materials, quizzes, and assignments.

The platform ensures asynchronous access to educational materials, allowing students to study independently and revisit content as necessary.

Each EEE developed within MOODLE is designed according to instructional design principles and curricular requirements, with content regularly reviewed and updated by course instructors and faculty coordinators. These courses include theoretical materials – such as digital lecture notes, scholarly readings, and explanatory videos – and practical components such as case studies, simulations, problem-solving tasks, and laboratory work instructions. Knowledge control tools integrated into the system include automated quizzes, formative and summative assessments, peerreviewed tasks, and plagiarism detection functionalities. Additionally, MOODLE's analytics tools allow instructors and administrators to monitor student progress, participation, and performance in real time, supporting data-driven decisions for instructional improvement.

The University's methodological approach emphasises the integration of blended learning, where EEE materials complement in-person sessions, supporting a more flexible and resilient

educational model. As shown in Table 5, the number of developed and implemented electronic courses increases with each academic year,

reflecting the growing demand for digital access and the institutional commitment to quality assurance in remote and hybrid education formats.

**Table 5.** Provision of electronic learning courses for academic disciplines at technological faculties and educational institutes

Faculties/Institutes	Total number of courses	Courses with digital versions	Provision, %
Plant Protection, Biotechnology and Ecology	168	168	100
Information Technologies	111	111	100
Education and research institute of Energetics, Automation and Energy Efficiency	123	123	100
Food Technology and Quality Control of Agricultural Products	109	109	100
Design and Engineering	77	77	100
Land Management	153	144	94
Agrobiological	157	139	89
Livestock Raising and Water Bioresources	186	144	77
Education and Research Institute of Forestry and Landscape-Park Management	228	172	75
Mechanical and Technological	89	61	69
Veterinary Medicine	115	76	66

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on the report *Educational Activities of the University: Achievements and Results of 2024*

The findings of this study, which demonstrate the effectiveness of adaptive learning technologies, digital course integration via MOODLE, and individualised educational trajectories in overcoming educational losses in higher technological education, are broadly consistent with – and in some respects expand upon – the findings of recent international research.

For instance, M. Akour & M. Alenezi (2022) argue that digital transformation is crucial for the future of higher education, particularly in ensuring continuous access and engagement during crises. Their emphasis on flexible, student-centred learning aligns with the initiatives implemented at NULES of Ukraine, notably the introduction of a blended format that integrates digital and in-person elements. However, while M. Akour & M. Alenezi (2022) focus primarily on the broader pedagogical potential of digital platforms, the present study offers a more practical implementation model. Similarly, the research of P. Lara-Navarra *et al.* (2024) stresses the need for educational systems to innovate in the face

of rapid and unpredictable change. Their advocacy for dynamic, creative institutional adaptation mirrors the NULES strategy of deploying multiple educational algorithms, adaptive scheduling, and modular learning. Both studies highlight the necessity of flexibility, yet the Ukrainian case uniquely demonstrates this through wartime adaptations such as security-based scheduling and energy-independent infrastructure. In contrast, studies such as that by S. Stein (2019) adopt a more critical perspective on global higher education, questioning whether current frameworks can adequately respond to profound uncertainties. While S. Stein (2019) recommends a shift towards ethical and relational responses to global complexity, the current study remains within a pragmatic domain. Nevertheless, both share an underlying recognition of uncertainty and the call for systemic transformation.

In relation to the development of technological competencies and employment readiness, V. Goulart *et al.* (2021) underscore the importance of balancing technical and soft skills within

digital education. A key contrast arises in comparison with the empirical analysis conducted by P. Engzell *et al.* (2021), who document substantial learning losses during school closures, particularly among vulnerable groups. While their study indicates a general academic decline, the present research demonstrates that institutional measures such as early diagnostics, structured certification, and hybrid teaching can partially mitigate this trend. Moreover, despite wartime conditions, the 6.5% average failure rate among technological students at NULES suggests that educational recovery is achievable through targeted interventions. This position is supported by the findings of H. Patrinos *et al.* (2023), who stress the need for data-driven educational strategies in response to Europe-wide learning losses. The comprehensive use of analytics within MOODLE at NULES, coupled with the centralised diagnostic testing of first-year students, reflects precisely this kind of informed, adaptive educational planning. While H. Patrinos *et al.* (2023) focus on policy recommendations, the present study provides a functional institutional case study that validates those recommendations.

In the context of dropout prevention, P. Bahr *et al.* (2023) emphasise the importance of addressing non-academic factors in retaining STEM students. The current study's integration of psychological support services, campus life activities, and individualised student trajectories directly addresses these concerns, offering a complementary perspective to the institutional recommendations of P. Bahr *et al.* (2023). Finally, the analysis by L. Moscoviz & D. Evans (2022) underscores a persisting global issue: learning loss and student attrition remain acute even two years after school closures. While their review highlights the scale of the crisis, the present study offers an optimistic counterpoint by demonstrating measurable improvements through structured, blended learning strategies. Taken together, this comparative analysis shows that although the challenges of educational losses are widely recognised in global research, practical solutions require context-specific implementation.

The Ukrainian experience, particularly at NULES, contributes to the literature a model of resilience grounded in technological innovation, individualised education, and organisational adaptability under crisis conditions. It supports the broader scholarly consensus that blended learning formats and institutional agility are both desirable and necessary in safeguarding educational quality during systemic disruptions.

## Conclusions

The main approaches to addressing educational losses in higher technological education are identified in the research process. The mechanism presented for implementing the university's educational activities enables it to mitigate educational losses effectively, ensure the continuous provision of high-quality educational services, and respond flexibly to current challenges. The statistical analysis results presented in the study demonstrate that the most vulnerable to educational losses are students enrolled in programmes with a significant practical component, particularly future veterinarians, agronomists, and agricultural engineers. The high number of student withdrawals (over 1,100 in 2024) indicates the systemic nature of the problem and underscores the need for structural changes in the organisation of the educational process. The study utilises data derived from a single university, highlighting the need for further inter-university comparative analysis to identify universal mechanisms for addressing educational losses in technological education.

To overcome these losses, it is necessary to ensure continuous annual monitoring of programme learning outcomes among higher education students in accordance with the Higher Education Standards of Ukraine for each speciality, using modern computer equipment, software, and diagnostic tools. It is also essential to undertake adaptive, flexible planning of the educational process, incorporating a flexible timetable, redistribution of study time across academic disciplines and topics within the developed curricula,

and adjusting educational content to reflect identified learning gaps. Further efforts should be directed towards developing a methodological system to support the individual educational trajectory of each student, including individualised instruction and independent study in accordance with the curriculum or learner needs; consultations to eliminate knowledge gaps in specific subjects; and tailored tasks of varying levels of complexity. Additionally, the support system for academic and teaching staff should be enhanced, particularly regarding opportunities for continuing professional development, internships, and industry placements. The findings of this study highlight the need for future research focused

on developing predictive models for educational loss using machine learning, and on evaluating the impact of blended learning formats on the development of professional competencies among students in technical disciplines compared to traditional educational models.

### Acknowledgements

None.

### Funding

None.

### Conflict of Interest

None.

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## Шляхи подолання освітніх втрат у вищій технологічній освіті

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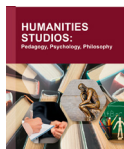
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**Анотація.** У статті проаналізовано виклики, пов'язані з подоланням освітніх втрат у вищій технологічній освіті України під час пандемії COVID-19 та війни, що триває. Особливу увагу приділено визначенню поняття «освітні втрати», виявленню їх причин та наслідків, а також окресленню стратегічних підходів до мінімізації їх негативного впливу. Метою роботи було визначення ефективних стратегій мінімізації освітніх втрат та підвищення якості вищої технологічної освіти у кризових умовах. Були розглянуті ключові фактори, що сприяли зниженню ефективності навчання, серед яких перехід на дистанційну форму навчання, погіршення психологічного стану учасників, скорочення студентського контингенту, руйнування освітньої інфраструктури. Для вирішення цих проблем Національний університет біоресурсів і природокористування України впровадив інноваційні заходи, такі як розширення доступу до електронних курсів через платформу MOODLE, запуск програми цифрової трансформації, організація корекційних курсів для студентів-першокурсників та створення сприятливого навчального середовища. В рамках представленого дослідження було зроблено акцент на перевагах формату змішаного навчання, який ефективно інтегрує теоретичні та практичні компоненти. Значну увагу також було приділено психологічній підтримці студентів та викладачів, підвищенню їхньої мотивації та забезпеченню безпеки. Університет розробив гнучкі алгоритми навчання, які підтримують паритет між різними освітніми форматами, полегшуючи інтеграцію студентів у навчальний процес. Стаття завершується рекомендаціями щодо моніторингу освітніх втрат та вдосконалення навчальних програм для підтримки якості освіти та адаптивності в умовах сучасних викликів. Практична цінність роботи полягає в тому, що вона пропонує тиражовану модель для навчальних закладів для ефективного реагування на кризові ситуації, забезпечення безперервності та стійкості вищої освіти

**Ключові слова:** організація освітнього процесу; платформа електронних курсів; інженерна освіта; освітня політика



## Intellectual property as a component of training future lawyers in higher education

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**Abstract.** The relevance of the topic was determined by the need to provide future legal professionals with in-depth knowledge in the field of intellectual property as an integral part of their professional competence in the context of the modernisation of higher education in the context of European integration processes. The aim of the study was to theoretically substantiate and determine the pedagogical conditions for the effective integration of intellectual property knowledge into the training system for future legal professionals. The use of historical, comparative, analytical and generalisation methods made it possible to establish the need for a more substantive study of the methodological, methodical and technological support for the professional training of future lawyers in this field. Significant shortcomings were identified in the regulatory framework, in particular the absence of specialised intellectual property competencies in state standards of higher education and the standard of the specialty “Law”, the limited scope of disciplines, the absence of specialised specialisations and interdisciplinary courses, which significantly affects the quality of training of applicants at both bachelor’s and master’s levels. The need to reform educational programmes, taking into account the principles of practical orientation, systematicity and interdisciplinarity, has been established. The principle of systematicity involved the inclusion of intellectual property modules in basic and specialised academic disciplines. The practice-oriented approach focused on the analysis of real cases, participation in simulation processes and the use of other interactive methods. The interdisciplinary approach involves the integration of knowledge from the fields of law, economics

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Received 10.06.2025 Revised 28.08.2025 Accepted 23.09.2025

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### **Suggested Citation:**

Pei, D., & Miroshnichenko, V. (2025). Intellectual property as a component of training future lawyers in higher education. *Humanities Studios: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 13(3), 38-49. doi: 10.31548/hspedagog/3.2025.38.

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and IT, which is particularly relevant in the modern market, where intellectual property is a component of technological and commercial aspects. Key areas for improving the training of specialists have been identified: the introduction of internships in European patent offices, the development of joint projects with foreign universities, and the use of international online courses. It was emphasised that the results obtained can be used to update the content of educational programmes and introduce effective pedagogical approaches to developing the competencies of future lawyers in the field of legal protection of creative activity, intangible assets and innovations, which will ensure their professional success in the context of globalisation, changes in legislation and the successful integration of the Ukrainian intellectual property protection system into the European legal space

**Keywords:** students; professional training; interdisciplinarity; professional competencies by specialisation; higher education reform

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### Introduction

In the context of globalisation and digital transformation, when knowledge, innovation and creative products are becoming increasingly important, the issue of high-quality training of legal professionals capable of working effectively in the intellectual property (IP) system is becoming increasingly relevant. As noted by A. Buhun *et al.* (2024), in the context of a modern constitutional state striving for integration with the European educational space, the formation of a legal culture is of particular importance. Ukraine's integration into the European and global legal space requires future lawyers to have knowledge of international standards in the field of IP, and the intensive development of innovative entrepreneurship in the world makes it one of the key assets of business. This, in turn, creates a demand for specialists capable of providing high-quality services for the registration, protection and commercialisation of IP rights. There is a significant imbalance between the needs of the labour market, which is changing dynamically under the influence of technological innovations, and the existing system of training future lawyers (Boshytskyi, 2020). The growing demand for specialists who are able to work effectively with such new phenomena as NFTs (unique digital certificates confirming ownership of a digital or real object), artificial intelligence or metaverses (digital platforms) contradicts the traditionally theoretical focus of legal education.

An analysis of the curricula of leading higher education institutions, in particular, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy, Sumy State University, and the National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" has revealed a number of unresolved issues regarding the methodological, methodological, and technological aspects of professional training for specialists in this field. A. Kodynets (2024) talks about not paying enough attention to the practical aspects of IP, not teaching subjects in this area to students of different specialities and fields at higher education institutions, and getting rid of the separate specialty "Intellectual Property". This situation is exacerbated by a shortage of practicing teachers and limited access to international experience, which generally reduces the competitiveness of Ukrainian graduates in the European labour market. Y. Chernenko (2020) sees a partial solution to the shortage of personnel in the organisation of advanced training courses, which can be implemented using blended and dual forms, interactive methods and learning tools.

Of particular importance is the issue of adapting the Ukrainian system of professional training of future legal specialists to the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, when traditional approaches to IP protection need to be radically

revised. In this context, the experience of EU countries (Germany, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland) is useful, where the training of specialists in this field is based on close interaction with the business environment, active use of case methods and computer simulations, and practice-oriented learning. At the same time, the Ukrainian reality demonstrates an urgent need to create mechanisms for institutional cooperation between universities, patent offices and IT companies, which will ensure that educational programmes meet the current market demands. In the long term, this will contribute to improving the quality of professional training of future legal specialists who are able to work effectively in the face of global challenges.

An analysis of scientific literature in the context of the above-mentioned issues has shown that the formation of knowledge among future specialists regarding the content and protection of intellectual property rights is of considerable interest among domestic scientists. Thus, topical issues of professional training of specialists in the context of integration into the European educational space and in the context of intellectual property as their professional competence are presented in the study by the authors S. Vitvytska *et al.* (2019). The monograph highlights and summarises national and international experience in organising the training of specialists in the higher education system. The implementation of international commitments, in particular the signing of the Memorandum on the establishment of the National Training Centre for Intellectual Property (2019) and Ukraine's participation in international educational projects such as IP for Children, is the subject of a study by O. Kulinich (2021). State measures to recruit specialists in technology transfer, innovation and intellectual property in higher education institutions and scientific institutions were also studied by S. Fyl & O. Yurchyshyn (2021). M. Savyt'skyi *et al.* (2021) is devoted to compliance with the principles of academic integrity in the educational sphere as a factor in the creation and legitimate use of intellectual property objects. They emphasise the mutual influence of academic integrity

and IP and stress that adherence to these principles in the professional training system will help to form a culture of intellectual property. A study by O. Popadych *et al.* (2023) is devoted to the study of intellectual property as a condition for preparing master's students for professional activity.

At the same time, the problem of forming the necessary competencies in the field of studying and protecting intellectual property by future legal specialists requires further scientific research. The authors of the article agree with the opinion that existing textbooks, such as L. Popova *et al.* (2021), N. Bilousova *et al.* (2021), as well as intellectual property manuals for higher education students, such as Y. Danylenko & O. Yurchyshyn (2023), do not adequately meet the demand for the formation of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the field of IP. For this reason the aim of this study was to identify and substantiate the peculiarities of training future legal specialists in the field of intellectual property in the higher education system, taking into account modern digital challenges and European integration processes.

## Materials and Methods

To achieve the set goal, the following methods were used in the study: analysis of approaches, generalisation, comparison, historical analysis, and others. Thus, the generalisation method made it possible to analyse scientific data and the specifics of Ukrainian legislation in the field of intellectual property protection.

The methodology was based on regulatory and legal analysis, which made it possible to identify the stages of transformation of approaches to teaching intellectual property in Ukraine: from the mandatory presence of this discipline in all higher education institutions (according to the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of 2004) to its actual exclusion from the list of mandatory components of professional training for lawyers in 2015. The analysis was carried out using a chronological approach and comparison, which made it possible to systematise changes in state regulation of the education sector and trace the impact

of these changes on actual educational practices in Ukrainian universities. The study also examined the compliance of educational programmes with higher education standards using a comparison method, in particular analysing educational standards for specialty 081 “Law” and related fields, such as management and entrepreneurship.

The empirical component of the methodology is based on an analysis of the results of a survey of law students at Sumy State University, conducted in October-November 2024. The use of empirical data made it possible to gain an understanding of the real educational needs of students, their vision of the content and structure of the discipline “Intellectual Property”, their level of satisfaction with the courses, and to identify key topics that students consider appropriate to include in the curricula. It should be noted that the empirical survey was qualitative in nature and was used primarily to confirm or refine previously formulated theoretical propositions.

In addition, the methodology actively used comparative analysis of educational approaches used in the European Union, the United States, Japan, and China. This approach made it possible to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of foreign practices of integrating intellectual property into the system of training lawyers and economists, as well as to evaluate the feasibility of their adaptation to Ukrainian conditions. The study of foreign experience was carried out through the analysis of publications by international experts, reports by educational organisations, as well as programmes of the WIPO Academy, Horizon Europe and other initiatives aimed at developing human capital in the field of IP.

## Results and Discussion

### **State policy in the field of intellectual property**

First of all, it should be noted that the fundamental role of intellectual property in the innovation policy of any state is recognised both at the level of international institutions and at the level of national policies, as evidenced by analytical reports of the World Intellectual Property Organisation, which

record the role of IP in national innovation systems (Annual Report, 2022). Ukraine is not standing aside from these processes. One of the main aspects of its state policy in the field of education is to promote the sustainable development of society by training competitive human capital. This is discussed in the Strategy of Sustainable Development “Ukraine – 2020” (2015), which defines the main vectors and priorities for the implementation of European standards of living and Ukraine’s rise to a leading position in the world. The document recognises that a high intellectual level of human potential should ensure the country’s competitiveness in the future. Among the goals of Ukraine’s sustainable development for the period up to 2030, defined by the Decree of the President of Ukraine (On Sustainable Development, 2019), are: ensuring comprehensive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all; promoting progressive, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; creating sustainable infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and innovation (Orliuk, 2019).

Intellectual property is an integral part of Ukraine’s future development, as the implementation of new technologies and, accordingly, the establishment of production facilities in the country requires adequate protection of intellectual assets. That is why the post-war reconstruction of the country depends on the development of the innovation sector and the labour market being filled with specialists in various fields who have knowledge of intellectual property. In this context, the system of training qualified specialists in this field at the bachelor’s and master’s levels is of crucial importance and should be aimed at providing future specialists in various fields with comprehensive knowledge of modern technologies for the legal regulation of intellectual property. The educational process in this field involves: in-depth study of specialised disciplines in the legal protection of IP objects; mastering practical skills in the field of patent auditing; developing competencies in the field of intellectual

property management; developing professional qualities taking into account the specifics of future activities. At the same time, special attention should be paid to developing the skills of future specialists to apply the knowledge they have acquired in practical activities.

At the same time, an analysis of the educational practices of Ukrainian universities has revealed significant gaps in the teaching of intellectual property disciplines to higher education students of various specialities (Konstantynova, 2021). Most Ukrainian higher education institutions do not have specialised IP courses adapted to the needs of specific fields of knowledge, which significantly limits the opportunities for developing relevant competencies not only at the master's level but also at the bachelor's level.

Since 2004, Ukraine has had Order No. 811 (2004) of the Ministry of Science of Ukraine, which required all higher education institutions to teach the subject of intellectual property. According to unofficial estimates, 120,000 students at Ukrainian universities took this course (Papirnyk *et al.*, 2020). In 2015, this order was cancelled, which led to the effective cessation of systematic teaching of IP as a separate discipline. Currently, knowledge in this field is partially integrated into other courses, in particular in the form of elective disciplines or

separate modules within a number of courses. The same principle was applied to the abolition of the specialty "Intellectual Property" (introduced in accordance with Resolution No. 507 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 1997), and in 2010, master's degree programmes in this speciality were launched (Resolution No. 787 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2010). Since 2015, by order of the Ministry of Education and Science "On the specifics of introducing a list of fields of knowledge and specialities for which higher education is provided" dated 06.11.2015 No. 115, a new list of fields of knowledge and specialities has been introduced, from which specific categories have been excluded. According to the correspondence table, the specialty "Intellectual Property" is classified under specialty D8 "Law".

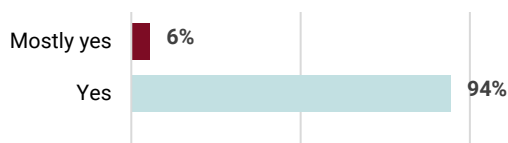
Thus, until 2016, almost all higher education institutions in Ukraine that trained specialists in the field of "Intellectual Property" awarded the qualification "Intellectual Property Professional". The elimination of this field has caused some chaos in the training of specialists in the field of intellectual property. According to the new list of specialities, this speciality is absent and may be reflected in other fields of knowledge (Kuznetsov, 2021). The evolution of training specialists in the field of intellectual property is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Features of training specialists in the field of intellectual property

Period	Regulatory documents	Directions of specialist training
1997	Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 24.05.1997 No. 507 (1997)	Training of specialists in the specialism 7.000002 "Intellectual Property" (specific categories)
2010	Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 27.08.2010 No. 787 (2010)	Training of Master's students in "Intellectual Property" (specific categories) – 16 HEIs of Ukraine
2016	Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 29.04.2015 No. 266 (2015)	The training of intellectual property specialists was removed from specific categories; it was decided to transfer it to the field of knowledge "Management and Administration" (07), specialty – Management (073); specialty – Entrepreneurship, Trade, and Exchange Activities (076); and to the field of knowledge Law (08), Law specialty(081)
2022	Higher Education Standard of the second (Master's) level in the field of knowledge 08 Law dated 20.07.2022 No. 643 (2022)	Training of Master's students in intellectual property under 081 Law specialty, 073 Management and Administration within 7 HEIs of Ukraine

**Source:** compiled by the authors

Professional training in the field of IP within the modern Ukrainian educational space is provided by a small number of universities: in the specialty 081 “Law” – this is Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Department of Intellectual Property and Information Law); Cherkasy National University named after Bohdan Khmelnytsky; Sumy State University; National Technical University of Ukraine “Kyiv Polytechnic Institute named after I. Sikorsky”, Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, Sumy State University. This, in turn, determines the need to review approaches to teaching intellectual property in Ukrainian higher education institutions, taking into account modern requirements for training specialists in this field. Thus, the results of a survey of students of the Educational and Scientific Institute of Law of Sumy State University, conducted in October–November 2024 (Department of Criminal Law, 2024), showed that the vast majority believe that the discipline of “Intellectual Property” provides the formation of general competencies and is important for their personal development (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Respondents' satisfaction with the components of the educational and professional programme “Intellectual Property”

**Source:** Department of Criminal Law (2024)

As noted by R. Drapushko *et al.* (2022), studying the discipline of “Intellectual Property” contributes to the formation of necessary and extremely important competencies, such as: the ability to generate new ideas (creativity), the ability to identify, pose, solve problems and make informed decisions, the ability to adapt and act in new situations, etc. An analysis of the content of the Ministry of Education and Science Standard in the specialty 081 “Law” (Order of the Ministry No. 307, 2023) demonstrated the absence of knowledge, skills, and abilities related to intellectual property among general and professional

competencies. For example, The Standards of Higher Education of Ukraine for Economic Specialities, approved by the Ministry of Education and Science in accordance with the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education”, define the integral competence for applicants for higher economic education as “the ability to solve complex tasks and problems that involve conducting research and/or implementing innovations under conditions and requirements of uncertainty”. Among the general competencies that should be developed in future specialists is “the ability to generate new ideas (creativity)” (Babenko, 2019).

The authors of the current study consider it appropriate to include such competencies in the list of professional competencies for the 081 Law specialty. The authors consider the formation of skills and abilities to resolve issues of legal regulation of IP in situations of protection, transfer and acquisition of rights to its objects to be the substantive aspects of the integral competence of future lawyers.

### Proposals for optimising the training of specialists in the field of IP

The professional training of future lawyers in higher education institutions in Ukraine requires significant transformation, as for them, understanding intellectual property is not only about knowing the regulatory framework, but also about being able to apply it in practice, particularly in the areas of rights protection, licensing and technology transfer. Therefore, the introduction of IP principles into the professional education system should be based on the principles of: systematicity (the inclusion of intellectual property modules in basic and specialised disciplines, which will ensure consistent study of the subject), practical orientation (the use of case methods, simulation processes that enable students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-life situations) and interdisciplinarity (integration of knowledge from law, economics, and IT, which is particularly relevant in modern conditions, when intellectual property often intersects with technological and commercial aspects).

The primary task is to update the content of academic disciplines to reflect contemporary challenges, such as the regulation of artificial intelligence, blockchain technologies and digital assets. Curricula should include not only traditional aspects of copyright and patent law, but also special modules devoted to cyber law, data protection, and the commercialisation of intellectual

property. An important step in this direction is the harmonisation of national educational standards with European ones, in particular with EU directives on copyright in the digital single market. Figure 2 shows the topics that respondents to a survey conducted by the Department of Criminal Law (2024) consider to be fundamental to the discipline of IP.



**Figure 2.** Basic topics of the IP course according to respondents

**Source:** Department of Criminal Law (2024)

One of the main problems in training lawyers is the rapid obsolescence of information. Legislation in the field of IP is constantly changing due to international agreements and the rapid development of technologies, in particular artificial intelligence and blockchain. Traditional teaching methods based on passive assimilation of lecture material are becoming ineffective in such conditions.

A key element in the training of future lawyers should be to strengthen the practical component of education, which involves organising internships in patent offices, IT companies and law firms specialising in IP. It would be appropriate to use interactive technologies in the classroom, such as modelling court proceedings involving copyright infringement cases, which would allow students to immerse themselves in real-life situations and learn to make decisions

in conditions that are as close as possible to practice. Working with patent applications, including analysing protection conditions and drafting documents, will help students develop the skills they need for their future careers. The development of their own projects by future lawyers, such as brand protection strategies, will contribute to the development of their creative thinking and teamwork skills. The use of digital platforms, such as online simulators (e.g., IP Panorama), will allow students to work through real-life scenarios and acquire practice-oriented skills in a convenient format. This is confirmed by the results of a survey of applicants for the “Intellectual Property” programme (Department of Criminal Law, 2024), who are interested in contemporary topics related to digitalisation, international law and industry-specific features of IP (Fig. 3).



**Figure 3.** Updating the content of the IP course according to respondents

**Source:** Department of Criminal Law (2024)

In addition, an effective tool is the use of distance learning courses from international organisations such as the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO, n.d.) or the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO, n.d.), which offer modern and relevant materials for study. An equally important area for improving the training of legal professionals is the development of interdisciplinary links between legal and technical specialties. This involves the introduction of joint educational programmes with IT specialists, engineers and designers, which will enable future lawyers to better understand the technical aspects of IP objects.

Of particular importance is the systematic improvement of the qualifications of teachers in the field of IP, who must possess not only theoretical knowledge but also practical experience in the field of IP. To this end, it is advisable to involve patent attorneys, corporate lawyers and representatives of the State Intellectual Property Service in teaching. An important tool for improving the qualifications of teachers is their participation in international training courses and internships organised by WIPO or the European Patent Office.

As noted by N. Fesenko & N. Ruban (2019), most European countries face the problem of a shortage of highly qualified teachers. This is primarily due to the fact that intellectual property is constantly evolving, new types of rights to IP objects are emerging (e.g., intellectual property on the Internet), and this requires the development and implementation of updated courses and interactive teaching methods. Secondly, every intellectual property specialist needs to understand the legal regimes in force in different countries and be familiar with the system of intergovernmental legislative norms, such as those of the European Union, its regulations and directives.

An analysis of international experience in the professional training of applicants in the higher education system shows that the countries of the European Union and the United States actively use intellectual property programmes aimed at training qualified specialists. For example, in Germany,

there are compulsory intellectual property courses for lawyers, which provide basic knowledge in this field. Programmes such as Horizon Europe (a European research and innovation project) provide grant support for research in the field of intellectual property, which stimulates the development of this industry. In Ukraine, there is potential for expanding cooperation with the “Ukrainian National Office for Intellectual Property and Innovation”, which has been operating since 2022 on the basis of Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 943-r (Some Issues of the National Intellectual Property, 2022), which can provide practical materials and assist in the development of training programmes. The inclusion of practical modules modelled on the WIPO Academy (a centre for professional education, training and advanced training in the field of intellectual property) in the curricula will enable higher education institution students to acquire the relevant knowledge and skills necessary for working in the field of IP.

The integration of intellectual property principles into the training system for future legal professionals is a necessity dictated by current challenges in the labour market and globalisation processes. Optimising professional training requires updating teaching methods, activating practical components and international cooperation. Overcoming existing challenges will ensure the formation of specialists capable of protecting intellectual assets in the context of digitalisation. The use of interactive methods, project-based learning and digital platforms, as well as the active involvement of international practices, will contribute to improving the quality of higher education and the training of highly qualified specialists.

## Conclusions

Intellectual property is a fundamental component of the professional competence of future specialists. Taking into account modern digital challenges and European integration processes, comprehensive, interdisciplinary and practice-oriented approaches have been identified as specific features of their training in the higher education system.

During the review of regulatory documents, the Standards of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and educational programmes, it was found that since 2016, the number of higher education institutions training specialists in the field of “Intellectual Property” has significantly decreased. Most higher education institutions do not have specialised courses on IP adapted to the needs of specific fields of knowledge, which significantly limits the opportunities for developing relevant competencies not only at the master’s level but also at the bachelor’s level.

An analysis of the pedagogical aspects of training future specialists in the field of IP reveals ways to optimise curricula, teaching methods and practical training: the application of a comprehensive approach that combines theoretical knowledge with practical skills; integration of interdisciplinary knowledge (curricula should include elements of related disciplines, which will allow future lawyers to better understand the context in which IP operates); the need to constantly update knowledge in connection with the dynamic development of legislation and practice in the field of IP; the use of international experience in

training IP specialists; the development of soft skills in future specialists (communication skills, creative thinking, ability to work in a team); the use of opportunities offered by grant projects and state programmes in the field of IP.

Prospects for further research include studying the latest digital tools, platforms and simulations that allow modelling situations of law enforcement in the field of IP, studying foreign experience, in particular in the EU, USA, Japan and China, in training specialists in this field, with a view to adapting best educational practices. A separate area of research could be the development of criteria and indicators for the evaluation of professional competencies by specialisation, analysis and the role of dual education, the introduction of certification programmes and post-graduate education.

None.

None.

None.

## Acknowledgements

## Funding

## Conflict of Interest

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## Інтелектуальна власність як складова підготовки майбутніх фахівців з права в системі вищої освіти

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**Анотація.** Актуальність теми зумовлена необхідністю формування у майбутніх фахівців з права ґрунтовних знань у сфері інтелектуальної власності як невід'ємної складової їх професійної компетентності в умовах модернізації вищої освіти в контексті євроінтеграційних процесів. Мета дослідження полягала в теоретичному обґрунтуванні та визначенні педагогічних умов ефективної інтеграції знань з інтелектуальної власності в систему підготовки майбутніх фахівців з права. Застосування історичного, порівняльного, аналітичного методів та методу узагальнення дозволило встановити необхідність більш змістовного дослідження методологічного, методичного та технологічного забезпечення професійної підготовки майбутніх юристів у цій царині. Було виявлено суттєві недоліки в нормативній базі, зокрема відсутність спеціалізованих компетенцій з інтелектуальної власності у державних стандартах вищої освіти та стандарті спеціальності «Право», обмежений обсяг дисциплін, відсутність профільних спеціалізацій та міждисциплінарних курсів, що суттєво впливає на якість підготовки здобувачів як на бакалаврському, так і на магістерському рівнях. Встановлено необхідність реформування навчальних програм, з урахуванням принципів практико-орієнтованості, системності та міждисциплінарності. Принцип системності передбачає включення модулів з інтелектуальної власності до базових та спеціалізованих навчальних дисциплін. Практико-орієнтований підхід акцентував увагу на аналізі реальних кейсів, участі в імітаційних процесах та використанні інших інтерактивних методів. Міждисциплінарний підхід передбачив інтеграцію знань з права, економіки та ІТ-сфери, що особливо актуально в умовах сучасного ринку, де інтелектуальна власність є складовою технологічних та комерційних аспектів. Окреслено ключові напрями вдосконалення підготовки фахівців: впровадження стажувань у європейських патентних відомствах, розвиток спільних з іноземними університетами проєктів, використання міжнародних онлайн-курсів. Підкреслено, що отриманні результати можуть бути використані для оновлення змісту освітніх програм та впровадження ефективних педагогічних підходів щодо формування у майбутніх фахівців з права компетентностей у сфері правового захисту результатів творчої діяльності, нематеріальних активів та інновацій, що забезпечить їх професійний успіх в умовах глобалізації, змін у законодавстві та успішну інтеграцію української системи захисту інтелектуальної власності в європейський правовий простір

**Ключові слова:** здобувачі освіти; професійна підготовка; міждисциплінарність; професійні компетентності за спеціалізацією; реформа вищої освіти



## 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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Received 26.05.2025 Revised 25.08.2025 Accepted 23.09.2025

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### Suggested Citation:

Chao, S. (2025). Comparative analysis of professional development systems in Ukraine and China. *Humanities Studios: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 13(3), 50-63. doi: 10.31548/hspedagog/3.2025.50.

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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 high-quality 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

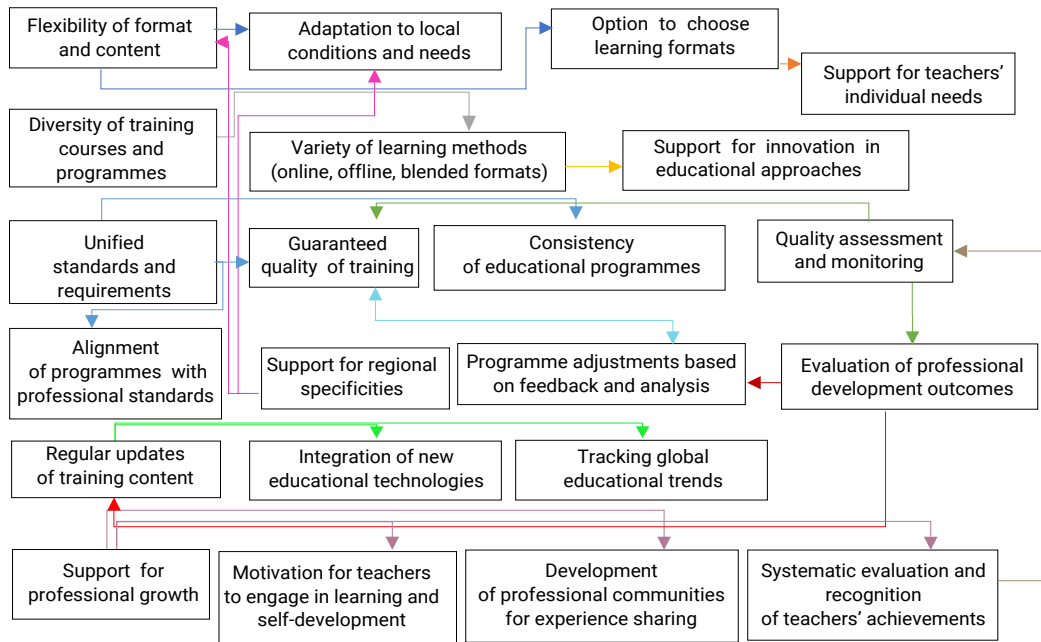
**Source:** developed by the author

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.

### Acknowledgements

None.

### Funding

None.

### 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



## The impact of individual coaching on the subjective and objective success of gifted youth

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**Abstract.** This paper examined the impact of coaching on the subjective and objective success of gifted youth in Ukraine. Individual coaching is becoming an effective tool for developing the individual potential of young people and contributes to self-realisation and the successful achievement of set goals. The study focused on evaluating how individual coaching contributes to both personal and performance outcomes among gifted youth across diverse professional domains. Individual coaching helps in achieving specific goals and outcomes, improves skills, boosts self-esteem, and develops personal qualities that foster self-determination and positive personality development, as well as professional self-realisation. The study defined the specific goals of coaching for gifted youth. Through the development of self-regulation and motivation, gifted young individuals are better able to control their emotions and increase their level of intrinsic motivation, which supports effective goal achievement. In addition, the ability to set both personal and professional goals and identify paths for their realisation contributes to the process of achieving success. The development of critical thinking and decision-making skills enhances the capacity to reflect on complex situations and find appropriate solutions. Increasing self-confidence and self-esteem is essential for overcoming challenges and realising personal and professional potential. The study also identified the role of leadership qualities and teamwork in the development of collaboration and leadership skills. Motivation for self-development and learning can foster a life orientation toward continuous self-improvement. The necessity of providing psychological support during training and development was highlighted, as it helps to overcome stress and anxiety related to giftedness. The results of the study indicated the importance of applying individual coaching to enhance the success of gifted youth in such fields as socionomic, economic, technical, and creative professions – an issue that is particularly relevant in the context of the current challenges of war

**Keywords:** psychological support; overcoming challenges; professional self-realisation; personal self-realisation; achievement motivation

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Received 30.04.2025 Revised 27.08.2025 Accepted 23.09.2025

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### **Suggested Citation:**

Zelenin, V. (2025). The impact of individual coaching on the subjective and objective success of gifted youth. *Humanities Studios: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 13(3), 64-75. doi: 10.31548/hspedagog/3.2025.64.

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## Introduction

In the contemporary education system and youth development processes, the issue of identifying, shaping, and realising the individual potential of gifted individuals is becoming increasingly relevant. This enables the full disclosure of their abilities, promotes personal and professional growth, and enhances the overall effectiveness of talent realisation. The success of gifted youth is influenced by many factors, among which personal development and support from professionals play an important role. This is especially relevant for gifted youth in fields such as the socio-economic, economic, technical, and creative sectors, as each has its own characteristics and requirements.

O. Akimova *et al.* (2023), K. Raof *et al.* (2024) note that one of the main aspects is the development of such objective qualities in young people as self-regulation skills and the ability to maintain a harmonious personality that can effectively self-actualise in crisis situations. Gifted young people who have faith in their own abilities are more likely to take on new challenging tasks, overcome difficulties more persistently, and succeed. M. Neihart (2021) found that intrinsic motivation affects the level of self-efficacy. According to A. Alexopoulou *et al.* (2019), M. Seliverst & R. Turenko (2024), for gifted youth facing special social and emotional challenges, resilience is essential to maintain well-being and achieve long-term success. In addition, V. Lozovetska (2024) emphasises that psychological and social factors are equally critical for supporting gifted individuals, as they shape the foundation for inner balance, adaptability, and successful self-actualisation in the face of challenges.

In the face of present-day challenges – particularly war, socio-economic instability, and the growing complexity of the global information environment – providing support and creating favourable conditions for the development of gifted Ukrainian youth is becoming increasingly important. Young professionals in the socio-economic, economic, IT, and creative fields possess innovative potential, critical thinking, and an active social

stance, all of which are key to the processes of recovery and strategic development of the country in the post-conflict period. However, external factors such as information instability, insufficient resources, and psychological exhaustion, and internal barriers like uncertainty, lost motivation, and anxiety about the future, significantly hinder the effective self-realisation of gifted youth.

The studies by K. Roth *et al.* (2020), Y. Kozlovskiy *et al.* (2022) point to the need for self-development, self-esteem, and self-improvement. M. Armour (2018), M. Hryshchenko & V. Zelenin (2025) note that one of these approaches is coaching, which contributes to the education of an acme-centric mature personality capable of self-reflection, self-organisation, self-development and self-realisation. In this context, individual coaching serves as an important tool for supporting the development of personal and professional competencies that help young people to overcome challenges and enhance their inner resources. Nevertheless, despite the growing popularity and dissemination of this practice, there remains a need for further systematisation and in-depth research into its impact specifically on gifted youth. The purpose of the study was to assess the specific influence of individual coaching on the subjective and objective success of gifted youth.

To analyse the literature on the current state of the issue, the following databases were used: Scopus, Medscape, Web of Science, PubMed, and Google Scholar, covering the period from 2018 to 2025. The search was conducted using the following keywords: “professional self-realisation”, “personal self-realisation”, “psychological support”, “overcoming challenges”. During the study, methods such as analysis, synthesis, and theoretical generalisation of the obtained results were applied.

### Subjective and objective success of gifted youth

The success of a young individual, especially in the early stages of career development, is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon.

It encompasses not only objective indicators of achievement in the fields of education, professional activity, and social realisation but also the subjective sense of life satisfaction, self-realisation, and the pursuit of deeper meaning in existence. Success in the professional sphere is not only a subjective feeling of satisfaction, but also a system of objective signs that reflect the level of personal fulfilment in the relevant field (Raouf *et al.*, 2024).

Objective signs of success in life are manifested through the assessment of a person's achievements by society or a relevant social group, and his or her life according to criteria that are important for a particular social environment or society as a whole. For an objective assessment of success, society's values and external signs, such as career growth, material well-being, appearance, family, etc. are important (Schork *et al.*, 2022; Akimova *et al.*, 2023). Identifying the factors that support the development of gifted youth under conditions of uncertainty and crisis remains a relevant and important task for contemporary psychology.

Contemporary research focuses on the importance of characteristics such as adaptability, self-regulation, resilience, motivation, and the ability to self-actualise, which contribute to success in both professional and personal spheres. These qualities help young people not only to navigate challenges and difficulties effectively but also to change and adapt in accordance with new life realities. Among these qualities are motivation for success, perseverance, communication skills, physical endurance, the ability to anticipate future events, and flexibility in response. These traits foster high achievement and strengthen self-confidence. However, the path to professional growth may be obstructed by various barriers – external or internal – and by psychological factors (Lozovetska, 2024).

Under the conditions of military aggression and restrictions, the ability of an individual to engage in self-development and self-realisation becomes especially significant. Choosing the right direction for growth and the means to achieve it are key factors for the successful adaptation of young people, enabling them to make effective use

of available resources for the development of personal and professional skills (Anglim *et al.*, 2020). One important aspect is the ability to interact constructively with others, including individuals of different social statuses, and to avoid and resolve conflicts effectively – this forms the basis of social competence. It enables comfortable collaboration, the establishment of relationships with diverse groups, and active participation in socially significant projects (Sharov, 2020).

Education plays a vital role in this process by providing methods for support and development of self-realisation. A self-realisation strategy grounded in personal awareness and activation mechanisms is a key element of personal and professional growth. It facilitates the development, adjustment, and transformation of life strategies, helping individuals respond effectively to the challenges of the contemporary world (Filonenko *et al.*, 2022). When developing life goals, individuals rely on the “aspiration” component (interests and desires). When assessing their capabilities, they draw on the “I can” component (self-awareness, self-attitude, self-esteem). At the decision-making stage, the “I must” component is activated, involving self-regulation and societal expectations. All of these elements are tied to decision-making, motivation, and life and value orientations (King *et al.*, 2023).

Overall, the success of a young individual in times of uncertainty is determined by the dynamic interaction between internal resources and external circumstances. While objective achievements remain important, personal fulfilment, resilience, adaptability, and value-driven life strategies increasingly shape long-term success. Supporting gifted youth in developing these multidimensional competencies is essential for fostering their effective self-realisation, particularly amid social instability and global challenges.

### Coaching for gifted youth during the war

Under socio-economic conditions and in the context of war, it is necessary to develop strategies for the support and development of gifted youth – the

future professional, intellectual, and creative elite of the country. One effective tool for supporting professional development is individual coaching, which contributes to both the achievement of objective results and the formation of a subjective sense of success and life satisfaction. Coaching is an individual training process aimed at activating inner potential, developing necessary professional abilities, and mastering strategies to achieve results. It is based on the prior life and professional experience of the young person and helps them in finding their own professional solutions. A specialist's personal approach to professional activity may require adjustment, one that relies on their internal potential.

With the help of coaching, a variety of skills can be developed that are essential for personal growth and the achievement of success by gifted youth. These skills include self-reflection – the ability to analyse own thoughts, emotions, and behaviour; holistic thinking – the ability to view a situation from different perspectives; self-motivation – the capacity to maintain interest and a sense of purpose; communication – skills in active listening and expressing one's own ideas; problem-solving – creativity and the ability to find effective solutions; strategic planning – the ability to set clear goals and determine ways to achieve them; tolerance of failure – psychological resilience and adaptability; emotional regulation – a vital aspect of self-regulation, involving the ability to identify, understand, and manage own emotional states so that they do not hinder the achievement of set goals (Lozovetska, 2024).

Coaching as a tool for potential development. In this study, coaching is viewed as a structured partnership process that helps to develop an individual's inner potential. It is based on the assumption of an individual's capacity for self-awareness, self-determination, and self-realisation. Coaching is particularly effective for young people with high intellectual and creative potential, who often face existential dilemmas, a lack of supportive roles, goal frustration, and socio-psychological instability.

Coaching and personal growth. Coaching as a tool for personal growth is considered a means for unlocking potential, developing self-awareness, inner motivation, and goal-setting (Trofaïla, 2025). According to D. Stober & A. Grant (2006) and S. Greif (2007), coaching positively influences self-reflection, decision-making, and adaptability. A. Grant & M. Hartley (2013) notes that in times of external change and turbulence, coaching support helps to maintain stability and fosters inner autonomy in behaviour.

Coaching and professional development. The effectiveness of coaching in the development of leadership qualities, strategic thinking, time management skills, and emotional regulation is supported by numerous meta-analyses (Jones *et al.*, 2016; Cannon-Bowers *et al.*, 2023). Coaching is regarded as a practice that enables individuals to adapt to complex challenges and build confidence in their soft skills (Baron & Morin, 2010).

Subjective well-being as a marker of success. The concept of subjective well-being integrates a cognitive component – life satisfaction – with emotional components, such as a sense of meaning, positive experiences, and psychological resources (Ryff, 1989; Diener *et al.*, 2010). This approach is especially relevant for studying young professionals during periods of forming their professional identity, increasing workloads, and adapting to the realities of a country in a state of war. In the studies by E. Diener *et al.* (2018) and E. Kim *et al.* (2020), subjective success is defined as a comprehensive characteristic of life satisfaction, inner harmony, and personal integrity. J. Anglim *et al.* (2020) summarise the role of personal factors in shaping psychological well-being, which is relevant to working with young people at the start of their professional journey. A. Gilfillan & C. Ehrnstrom (2023) highlight the importance of coaching in supporting the mental health of young adults, especially in the context of post-stress social changes.

Coaching provides vital emotional support and helps overcome difficulties, particularly in challenging life and social situations (Hryshchenko

& Zelenin, 2025). Based on a model of social competence development, coaching stimulates personal growth, encourages self-reflection, and helps in the development of key skills for effective interaction with others. It enables individuals to become aware of their social roles, improve communication skills, empathy, emotional regulation, and conflict resolution. This approach fosters social confidence, self-realisation within community activities, and enhances the quality of social interaction (Calderón-Mafud *et al.*, 2018; Wan *et al.*, 2021). Educational coaching supports the development of gifted youth (van Nieuwerburgh & Barr, 2016; Passmore *et al.*, 2018). The study by O. Chaika (2021) emphasises the necessity of an individualised approach in coaching sessions, considering gender characteristics, personal and career goals, and individual preferences. In addition, M. Armour (2018) highlights the need for supervision and structured support for coaches to ensure a high-quality impact.

Self-realisation, motivation, and a sense of personal efficacy are essential components in forming professional self-realisation. Personal efficacy is a motivational mechanism that regulates an individual's actions according to expected success (Zimmerman, 2000; Lee *et al.*, 2018). L. Golovey *et al.* (2019) states that it is a process of consistent integration of internal resources and social context, which promotes the active and productive participation of gifted youth in professional activities. The importance of self-motivation is also established, as it includes emotional stability and goal-directed behaviour. These components interact with the existential search for meaning, perspectives, and life guidance in dynamic conditions (Yanovskaya, 2019). A connection has been established between coaching, internal motivation, and the development of self-awareness (Boyatzis *et al.*, 2015; Wan *et al.*, 2021). R. Boyatzis *et al.* (2015) present the concept of the Positive Emotional Attractor (PEA), which explains how coaching activates deep internal resources by shaping a vision and image of the future. Integration models by

J. Zenger *et al.* (2009) describe a deep awareness of one's personal mission as the key to increasing motivation and sustainable leadership potential.

Characteristics of gifted youth in the context of sociocultural crisis. Gifted youth constitute a socially vulnerable group that, simultaneously, holds great potential for societal development. In the current context of war, an unstable labour market, and the transformation of the education system, members of this group are facing high psychological pressure, emotional burnout, and the loss of target goals. Coaching during wartime becomes especially significant, as it helps gifted youth to maintain psychological balance, rethink life goals, and adapt to new realities. Researchers M. Hryshchenko & V. Zelenin (2025) have demonstrated that coaching can be an effective tool for support in difficult circumstances and contemporary challenges. K. Roth *et al.* (2020), Y. Kozlovskiy *et al.* (2022) emphasise the importance of developing inclusive and multicultural spaces, where coaching serves as a means of dialogue and support.

During the coaching process, the following goals are achieved with gifted youth: development of critical thinking skills and decision-making abilities, which help to enhance the capacity to reflect on complex situations; increase in self-esteem and confidence, which are crucial for overcoming challenges and successfully realising own potential; development of leadership qualities and the ability to work in a team; provision of psychological support during education and development, which helps to manage stress and anxiety associated with giftedness; motivation for continuous self-development and learning, which contributes to the development of life orientation and ensures ongoing self-improvement; enhancement of personal growth, development of self-awareness, increased confidence and motivation; fostering of the ability to achieve goals and succeed in education or career; development of communication skills – the ability to lead others and collaborate effectively in teams; development of time management skills, the ability to plan time effectively and prioritise tasks

correctly; development of self-regulation – the process of managing own actions, emotions, and thoughts to achieve set goals. This includes the ability to manage reactions to external influences and adapt effectively to change. A successful career requires not only professional knowledge but also the ability to manage time, energy, and emotions effectively; development of psychological resilience; support in defining and realising life values and goals (Lozovetska, 2024).

In times of war and socio-economic uncertainty, coaching emerges as a vital and flexible tool for supporting gifted youth in their personal, emotional, and professional development. It enables young individuals to unlock their inner potential, navigate psychological challenges, strengthen soft skills, and maintain motivation and resilience. By fostering self-awareness, emotional regulation, and strategic goal-setting, coaching contributes not only to career readiness but also to holistic well-being, offering a structured yet personalised approach to growth in a complex and changing world.

### Coaching and areas of its application in gifted youth

These goals contribute not only to academic success but also to the development of a well-rounded and harmonious personality in gifted youth. Moreover, it is important to consider that for young people in different fields of specialisation (socio-economic, economic, technical, and creative), coaching goals may be adapted and directed towards the development of specific competencies. Accordingly, concrete goals can be identified for each group: socio-economic fields – enhancement of communication skills and emotional intelligence; development of the ability to manage conflict situations and interpersonal relationships; fostering civic engagement and leadership; economic fields – development of entrepreneurial or managerial skills; acquisition of strategic thinking and decision-making abilities; advancement of financial literacy and planning skills; technical fields (IT specialists) – improvement of technical skills and innovative thinking;

development of project management and teamwork abilities; ability to create personal projects and start-ups; creative fields (musicians, actors) – development of creativity and artistic self-expression; mastery of public speaking and performance skills; enhancement of teamwork abilities and promotion of creative ideas.

For IT specialists, there is a direct link between personal traits and professional success. Thus, communicativeness, assertiveness, enthusiasm, readiness for collaboration, and empathy contribute to career achievement. The importance of traits such as organisation, diligence, and reliability in attaining career goals is also highlighted. Additionally, creativity and openness to new experiences are valuable in the IT industry, although they are not the primary factors of career success (Chayka & Zelenin, 2024).

Labour market conditions require companies and their managers to be able to effectively adapt to new environments, develop strategic plans, and consider ways to improve organisational performance and employee productivity. In contemporary society, successful leadership is associated with the ability to influence a team and organise its work effectively to achieve shared goals. A manager's role involves decision-making, taking responsibility for mistakes, and using them as opportunities for personal growth (Seliverst & Turenko, 2024). According to O. Kredentser (2021), the key psychological factors that correlate with professional self-efficacy include, at the personal level: emotional intelligence, quality leadership, innovativeness, drive for change, self-esteem, and mental health; and at the organisational level: organisational commitment, career advancement, motivation, job satisfaction, work engagement, and the psychological characteristics of the task performed. Experience in managerial positions increases confidence in one's own capabilities and the ability to fulfil responsibilities effectively. In their study, R. Chayka & V. Zelenin (2024) highlight the significant potential for developing managerial and leadership qualities in business organisation managers through the use of varied coaching

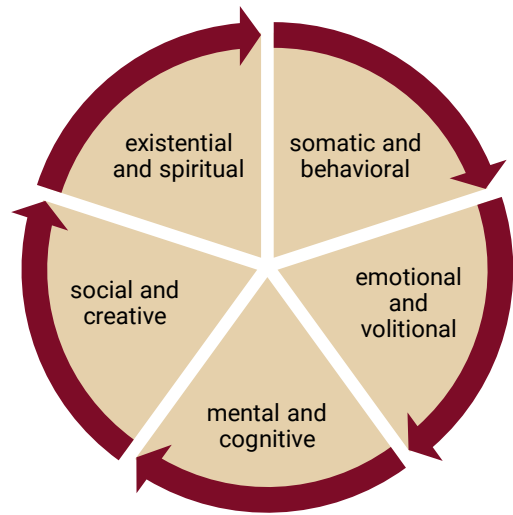
models. Objective success is interpreted through achievements in the professional sphere, participation in public events, career advancement, and involvement in educational and leadership programmes. In this context, the Human Capital Theory model is relevant, as it views investment in the development of skills and competencies as the foundation for professional mobility (Becker, 1993). Coaching helps to increase the self-confidence of gifted youth, enabling them to recognise their strengths, improve internal self-esteem, and become more aware of their capabilities. Through the use of visualisation techniques, gifted young individuals imagine themselves in successful roles, which in turn stimulates intrinsic motivation and reinforces their self-belief.

The structure of the coaching programme includes the following four stages:

- diagnostic stage – identifying the current needs and development areas of participants from four professional groups (socioeconomic, economic, IT, and creative specialisations) through interviews and observation;
- clustering of needs – grouping individual requests according to five key domains: somatic and behavioural, emotional and volitional, mental and cognitive, social and creative, and existential and spiritual (Fig. 1). This summarises the needs of young people during times of transformation and allows for the targeted design of individual and group programmes;

- coaching support, conducted in group or individual coaching sessions, with the use of adapted interventions determined by the participants' needs;

- effectiveness assessment – measuring changes through subjective indicators (surveys, SWLS, Ryff's scale) (Table 1) and objective indicators (professional progress, external achievements, mentor evaluations) (Table 2).



**Figure 1.** The main areas of coaching needs among gifted youth in socioeconomic professions, economic specialisations, IT specialists, and representatives of creative professions

**Source:** compiled by the author

**Table 1.** Criteria for changes in the subjective success of gifted young people

Sphere	Criterion	Example wording
Somatic and behavioural	Level of fatigue, habit of resting	"How often do you feel energetic during the day?"
Emotional and volitional	Emotional regulation, motivation	"Is it easier for you to focus on your goals in stressful situations?"
Mental and cognitive	Goal setting, strategic thinking	"Has your career path planning become clearer?"
Social and creative	Initiative, leadership	"Do you take responsibility for group decisions more often?"
Existential and spiritual	Meaning of life/work, awareness	"Do you have a clearer understanding of your life and professional direction?"

**Source:** compiled by the author

**Table 2.** Criteria for changes in the objective success of gifted young people

Category	Indicators	Source
Career progress	Promotion/change of role, new projects	HR feedback, self-reports
Activity in professional communities	Presentations, participation in events, mentoring	CVs, LinkedIn, social cases
Learning/educational dynamics	Participation in programmes, certificates	Certificates, courses, internal training
Leadership behaviour	Initiative, influence on the team	Coach reports, 360° feedback

**Source:** compiled by the author

Ukrainian researchers point to the effectiveness of coaching in the development of professional identity and emotional self-regulation among young specialists (Lasson *et al.*, 2016; Burkalo, 2019; Trofaiła, 2025). Coaching serves as a tool for personal support and plays an important role in the development of a human resource pool, and in the successful adaptation of Ukrainian youth during the war and in the post-war recovery period.

### Conclusions

The literature presented forms an advanced, multifactorial theoretical framework for analysing coaching as a tool for developing both the subjective and objective success of young people. Self-actualisation is achieved through continuous self-improvement, stress and emotion management, intrinsic motivation, and the development of tolerance and resilience. It is important to maintain a balance between internal values and external factors that contribute to success and personal growth. It allows for the substantiation of the choice of goals, tools, and evaluation criteria for a coaching programme. It has been shown that individual coaching has a positive impact on both the subjective and objective success of gifted youth, regardless of their field of study. It has been found that in socio-economic, economic, technical, and creative spheres, coaching contributes to the development of self-awareness, motivation, the desire for self-development,

and the acquisition of new professional competencies, which directly influences self-realisation and enhances personal and professional achievements. However, the specifics of the application of methods and approaches depend on the particular field of activity. For gifted youth in socio-economic professions, coaching effectively helps to develop communication, empathy, and social adaptation. In the economic professional sphere, coaching fosters the development of leadership qualities, managerial skills, and strategic thinking. Coaching enhances the level of analytical abilities, the capacity to learn quickly, and problem-solving skills among young professionals in technical fields (e.g., IT specialists). In creative spheres (musicians, actors), coaching leads to increased confidence in creativity, overcoming fear of failure, and the ability to present own ideas. Individual coaching can be recommended as an effective means of developing talented youth, promoting their successful integration into contemporary society and professional environments. Promising avenues for further research include exploring gender-specific aspects of coaching among gifted youth.

### Acknowledgements

None.

### Funding

None.

### Conflict of Interest

None.

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## Вплив індивідуального коучингу на суб'єктивну та об'єктивну успішність обдарованої молоді

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**Анотація.** В статті розглядалось питання щодо впливу коучингу на суб'єктивну та об'єктивну успішність обдарованої молоді України. Індивідуальний коучинг стає ефективним інструментом для розвитку індивідуального потенціалу молодих людей та сприяє самореалізації та успішному досягненню поставлених цілей. Дослідження було зосереджене на оцінці того, як індивідуальний коучинг сприяє як особистісним, так і професійним результатам обдарованої молоді в різних професійних сферах. Індивідуальний коучинг допомагає в досягненні конкретних цілей та результатів, покращує навички, підвищує рівень самооцінки та розвивати індивідуальні якості, які сприяють самодетермінації та позитивному розвитку особистості, її професійній самореалізації. В ході роботи було визначено конкретні цілі коучингу для обдарованої молоді. Завдяки розвитку саморегуляції та мотивації обдаровані молоді люди можуть краще контролювати свої емоції, підвищити рівень внутрішньої мотивації, що сприяє ефективному досягненню цілей. Крім того, вміння встановлювати як особистісні, так і професійні цілі, визначення шляхів їх для їх реалізації допомагає в процесі досягнення успіху. Тоді як розвиток навичок критичного мислення та прийняття рішень сприяє покращити здатність обдумувати складні ситуації та знаходити правильні рішення. Підвищення рівня самовпевненості та самооцінки є необхідним для подолання викликів та реалізації особистісного та професійного потенціалу. В роботі було визначено роль лідерських якостей та командної роботи при формуванні навичок співпраці та лідерства. Мотивація до саморозвитку та навчання може сприяти формуванню життєвої орієнтації на безперервне самовдосконалення. Показана необхідність забезпечення психологічної підтримки під час навчання і розвитку, що допомагає подолати стреси та тривоги, пов'язані з обдарованістю. Результати роботи вказали на необхідність застосування індивідуального коучингу для підвищення рівня успішності обдарованої молоді таких сфер діяльності, як соціономічних, економічних, технічних та творчих, що особливо актуально у контексті сучасних викликів війни

**Ключові слова:** психологічна підтримка; подолання викликів; професійна самореалізація; особистісна самореалізація; мотивація досягнення



## The autonomy of science in a globalised world

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**Abstract.** The aim of the study was to identify the characteristics of scientific autonomy in a globalised society using various models of scientific management as examples. The methodology included the use of abstraction, analysis, synthesis and formalisation methods to compare systems for ensuring the autonomy of science in the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, India, Indonesia, South Africa, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. The study found that in countries with developed science (the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom), scientific autonomy was achieved through the legally enshrined institutional independence of scientific organisations, stable funding, and self-regulation mechanisms through scientific councils and independent expert agencies. In developing countries (India, Indonesia, South Africa), autonomy was limited by dependence on state funding and the politicised appointment of heads of scientific institutions. In post-Soviet countries (Ukraine, Kazakhstan), a transitional state is observed: formally, autonomy was declared in laws, but in practice, scientific institutions significantly depend on the decisions of ministries, have limited access to alternative sources of funding, and have poorly developed self-regulation mechanisms. It has been found that the autonomy of science is not only an indicator of the democratic nature of the management system, but also an important condition for the effectiveness of scientific activity, international cooperation and the country's competitiveness in the global scientific space. A study of official documents and scientometric data showed that the level of autonomy directly correlates with the number of publications, the attraction of international grants, and resistance to political fluctuations. The practical significance of the study lies in the development of a typology of scientific management models that can serve as a basis for reforms in the field of science aimed at strengthening institutional autonomy, improving the quality of research and expanding international scientific integration

**Keywords:** public funding; institutional independence; market mechanisms; academic freedom; knowledge quality standards

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Received 02.05.2025 Revised 29.08.2025 Accepted 23.09.2025

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### **Suggested Citation:**

Matiash, S. (2025). The autonomy of science in a globalised world. *Humanities Studios: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 13(3), 76-92. doi: 10.31548/hspedagog/3.2025.76.

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## Introduction

Autonomy of science acts as a factor in preserving its objectivity, impartiality, and capacity for innovative development. In the context of strengthening transnational ties, commercialisation of research and political influence, science is under pressure from economic interests, government policy or global corporations. In countries such as the United States, China, India, South Korea, and Brazil, there is a growing dependence of scientists on private sector funding, which threatens research freedom and the priorities of fundamental science. At the same time, scientists in authoritarian regimes (Iran, Turkmenistan, North Korea) are forced to align their research with state ideological frameworks, which contradicts the principles of academic autonomy. This is due to the commercialisation of science in leading economies, where research priorities are determined by the market rather than the scientific community, and to ideological control in authoritarian countries, where the state imposes research topics, limiting academic freedom and critical thinking. Such conditions reduce the quality, innovation and global trust in science and create a number of problems, namely restrictions on academic freedom, censorship, dependence of research topics on external requests, and a decline in public trust in science as an independent source of knowledge. The relevance of the topic is determined by the need to understand the limits and conditions of the autonomous functioning of science in a global space where traditional barriers between politics, economics and scientific knowledge are disappearing (Zivkovic, 2020).

Researchers have studied aspects of the autonomy of science in a globalised world, in particular the impact of international policies, transnational links and market mechanisms on scientific independence and freedom of research, namely G. Boulton (2022) views science as a global public good, emphasising the role of representative bodies of science in shaping policies and ensuring coordination at the international level. Author stresses the importance of global

governance of scientific activity to support autonomy and innovation in the scientific community. In addition, Y. Algan *et al.* (2021) investigated the level of trust in scientists during the COVID-19 pandemic in 12 countries, finding significant variations depending on socio-cultural and political factors. They emphasise the importance of trust for the effective implementation of scientific recommendations in crisis situations. The study emphasises that trust in science is a key factor in the acceptance and implementation of scientific recommendations, which directly affects the effectiveness of crisis management.

A. Cavanagh *et al.* (2023) analysed successful initiatives based on the assumption of autonomy, using the concept of attention to explain the mechanisms of their effectiveness. The authors highlighted the role of attention management as a mechanism for prioritising resources, coordinating actions and supporting self-organisation in autonomous global projects. In particular, J. Cerdeira *et al.* (2023) conducted a cross-cultural analysis of international scientific cooperation, focusing on the uniqueness of the African context. The autonomy of science was manifested in the ability of African researchers to build their own models of cooperation and strategic priorities in spite of global trends and constraints. Researchers C. Gomez *et al.* (2022) argued that leading countries in global science receive more citations than other countries with similar research, indicating an imbalance in the recognition of scientific achievements. The imbalance lies in the fact that leading countries receive disproportionately more citations due to their greater visibility and influence, leading to unequal recognition of scientific results regardless of the quality of research in other countries.

The article by S. Lee (2022) examined the science policies of developing countries from the perspective of a marine scientist, focusing on mid-level strategies for entering the global scientific space. The author considered the challenges and opportunities for developing countries,

particularly those in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, which seek to occupy an intermediate position in the global scientific community, given their limited resources, technological barriers, and the need to adapt scientific policies. In their study, J. Metcalfe *et al.* (2020) analyse changes in the relationship between science and society during the COVID-19 pandemic in 11 countries using autoethnographic methods. They note transformations in the perception of science and its cultural authority in the context of a global crisis. In addition, D. Hogan & J. O'Flaherty (2022) explored the nature and culture of science as an academic discipline, particularly its importance for the integration of education into sustainable development. They point to the need to rethink training programmes for specialists. This underscores the importance of fostering scientific autonomy through the development of an academic culture that promotes independent thinking and responsibility in the context of sustainable development. Previous studies have overlooked a number of critical aspects, including restrictions on academic freedom and manifestations of censorship, the thematic dependence of scientific projects on external political and economic demands, and the gradual decline in public trust in science as an autonomous source of knowledge.

The aim of the study was to identify the characteristics of scientific autonomy in the context of globalisation. The objectives of the study were to analyse the influence of international scientific institutions on the freedom of research activity; to assess the role of cultural and political factors in the formation of scientific autonomy; to study the mechanisms for supporting autonomous initiatives in the global scientific environment.

### Materials and Methods

The study used a number of theoretical methods that allowed for a thorough analysis of the phenomenon of scientific autonomy in a globalised world. In particular, the abstraction method was used to identify the essential features of scientific autonomy, such as institutional independence,

freedom of scientific choice, self-regulation and resistance to political influence. These characteristics were abstracted based on a comparison of the situation in leading scientific countries (the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom), developing countries (India, Indonesia, South Africa), and the post-Soviet space (Ukraine, Kazakhstan), which made it possible to identify commonalities and differences in the manifestation of scientific autonomy in the context of geopolitical and economic conditions. These countries were chosen because they are representative of different models of scientific development and levels of autonomy. The analysis covered official scientific development strategies, legislative documents, reports of international organisations, in particular UNESCO (2021), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2023), the European Commission (2005; n.d.), as well as national science support programmes and data from global databases (Scopus, Web of Science), which provided a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms for ensuring or limiting the autonomy of scientific activity in a global context.

Methods of analysis and synthesis to elucidate the structure of scientific autonomy as a complex multidimensional phenomenon. The analysis made it possible to identify organisational, legal, financial and ethical components, which were studied using examples of scientific policies of the European Union, countries with centralised science management systems (Germany, the United Kingdom, South Africa), and countries undergoing the transformation of their scientific institutions (Ukraine, Kazakhstan). The main documents were the National Science Foundation (2022), Federal Government & Länder of Germany (2019), UK Research and Innovation (2022), Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (2021), Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2022), Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (1949), Regulation of the President of Indonesia No. 78/2021 "On the National Research and Innovation Agency" (2021). These documents

were selected as key documents because they represent the strategic approaches of leading national authorities to the development of science, education and innovation in their countries.

The formalisation method was used to construct a conceptual diagram of the relationships between scientific institutions, government agencies and global foundations in each of the above-mentioned countries (without reference to specific institutions) in order to analyse how the autonomy of science is supported or, conversely, restricted by external structures. This scheme was created based on the author's generalisation of the results of a comparative analysis of scientific management structures in selected countries, taking into account the types of interaction between science policy actors, research funding models, the degree of influence of political factors and access to international scientific resources.

## Results

### **Analysis of the impact of international scientific institutions on freedom of research activity**

Science not only performs cognitive and technological functions, but also acts as an important social institution that shapes public perceptions, influences political decisions and sets strategic development guidelines. The role of science is growing, but at the same time new challenges to its autonomy are emerging. Globalisation processes promote international cooperation, the mobility of scientists and the unification of academic standards, but they can also lead to increased dependence on external political, economic or corporate structures (Kwiek, 2023). The autonomy of science means the ability of the scientific system to independently shape research directions, make funding decisions, and set standards for knowledge quality without external pressure from the state, business, or ideology. An important component of autonomy is institutional independence, which is ensured by legislative guarantees, a system of self-regulation, the availability of independent sources of funding, and the participation of scientists themselves in shaping research policy. Without autonomy,

science can lose its critical function and become a tool for political or economic interests. Independent scientific institutions should have own ethics committees, open publication procedures, and mechanisms to prevent academic fraud. Autonomous science can independently develop ethical standards as part of the internal culture of the research community (Zivkovic, 2020). In a democratic society, it should not only create new knowledge, but also make it available to citizens, explain complex phenomena, promote critical thinking, and serve as a basis for informed political decisions. However, in the absence of autonomy, science loses credibility because it is perceived as an instrument of influence rather than a source of objective knowledge. Despite the positive aspects associated with innovation, this trend may limit fundamental research, subordinate scientific activity to corporate interests, and reduce the social responsibility of science.

An analysis of countries has shown how differently formal guarantees of autonomy and the actual conditions for its implementation can relate to each other. In the United States, science traditionally has a high level of autonomy. Major research institutions, universities, and laboratories are mostly independent structures with access to public and private grants. This means they can set their own priorities and take part in international initiatives without political pressure. In the UK, science is partly autonomous. Independent research councils manage public funding, but overall scientific priorities are set in collaboration with the government. This balance allows for independence while maintaining the public orientation of science. In contrast, developing countries such as India, Indonesia and South Africa demonstrate the dependence of science on the political and financial decisions of the central government. For example, in Indonesia, the creation of the National Research and Innovation Agency centralised all research institutions, which led to criticism from scientists. In South Africa, science remains under the control of government departments, which complicates independent

decision-making. In Ukraine and Kazakhstan, the autonomy of science exists mainly at the declarative level. Despite the existence of development strategies, most research institutions remain

dependent on ministerial decisions, and unstable funding makes long-term planning impossible. In particular, Table 1 summarises the key aspects of scientific autonomy in these countries.

**Table 1.** *Comparative characteristics of scientific autonomy in different countries*

Country	Sources of funding	Scientific management	Features/problems
United States	Private investment, federal grants	Independent universities, federal scientific agencies	High competition for grants, mobility of researchers, influence of commerce on research directions
Germany	State budget	Scientific societies, autonomous universities	Constitutionally guaranteed academic freedom, strong academic self-regulation
United Kingdom	State research councils	Partially autonomous bodies under government control	Government sometimes influences research priorities, balance between autonomy and politics
India	State funding	Centralised management through ministries	Significant dependence on government decisions, limited flexibility in choosing research topics
Indonesia	State budget	Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation	High centralisation, criticism due to insufficient transparency and limited participation of the scientific community
South Africa	State funds	State departments and agencies	Frequent changes in scientific policy priorities, insufficient stability of research support
Ukraine	State budget	Ministries of education and science, national academies	Low level of funding, political influence, limited scientific independence
Kazakhstan	State budget funding	Centralised government structures	Formal autonomy exists on paper, but in practice science is controlled by the state

**Source:** compiled by the author based on an analysis of *Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (1949)*, *Federal Government & Länder of Germany (2019)*, *Science, technology and innovation policy of India (2020)*, *Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (2021)*, *Regulation of the President of Indonesia No. 78/2021 "On the National Research and Innovation Agency" (2021)*, *National Science Foundation (2022)*, *UK Research and Innovation (2022)*, *Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2022)*, *Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2024)*

In the United States, scientific autonomy is enshrined both in legislation and in institutional practice. A report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2023) indicates that the American science system is based on the principle of competitive funding, whereby scientific institutions have freedom in choosing research topics and partners. At the same time, agencies such as the National Science Foundation allocate funds independently of political bodies, ensuring a high level of autonomy. In Germany, scientific autonomy is enshrined in the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of research and teaching. The federal science development strategy, "Pact for Research and Innovation", aims to provide long-term funding for scientific

institutions while preserving their academic independence (Federal Government & Länder of Germany, 2019). The document emphasises the need for a balance between scientific autonomy and social responsibility, particularly in the context of climate change and digital transformation (European Commission, 2005; n.d.).

In the United Kingdom, scientific autonomy is ensured by delegating powers to funding organisations, in particular UK Research and Innovation (2022). A UNESCO report (2021) emphasises that the United Kingdom demonstrates a high level of institutional autonomy for universities, especially in the field of strategic research planning. Developing countries demonstrate mixed models of autonomy. Science, technology

and innovation policy of India (2020) declares a desire for greater autonomy for scientific institutions, but notes that administrative dependence on the central government remains significant. In Indonesia, the new structure of the National Research and Innovation Agency has centralised scientific activity, which, according to UNESCO, has temporarily limited autonomy, although the goal of the reform is to create a more effective science management system. In South Africa, the “White Paper on Science, Technology and Innovation” (2024) focuses on integrating science with socio-economic needs, while providing for the institutional autonomy of research centres.

In Ukraine, institutional autonomy is gradually taking shape. Law of Ukraine No. 848-VIII “On Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activity” (2015) laid the foundations for the independence of scientific institutions, but practical implementation remains limited due to unstable funding and political risks. A similar situation can be observed in Kazakhstan, where the National Science Council is advisory in nature and research funding is still closely linked to ministries. Overall, analysis of these documents - including reports by UNESCO (2021), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2023), the European Commission (2005), national strategies (National Science Foundation, UK Research and Innovation), Regulation of the President of Indonesia No. 78/2021 “On the National Research and Innovation Agency” (2021), Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2024). In the United Kingdom, despite the formal autonomy of UK Research and Innovation, there have been known cases of government interference in scientific priorities, indicating tension between the official independence of scientific organisations and the political influence of the state. A telling example was the sharp reduction in the budget for international research in 2021, when the government decided to cut funding for programmes such as the Global Challenges Research Fund, forcing UK Research and Innovation to halt or review hundreds of already approved projects. This practice not only

undermines the scientific community’s confidence in the stability of funding, but also demonstrates how political influence can violate the principles of long-term planning and academic freedom in the scientific sphere (UK Parliament, 2021).

Analyses of different countries often describe them separately, but it is important to generalise the types of scientific autonomy models in order to understand them. In general, several basic models are distinguished: the model of legally enshrined autonomy, which provides clear legal guarantees and self-government of scientific institutions (typical for developed countries); the model of balanced autonomy with elements of state control, where scientific bodies have a certain degree of freedom, but the government intervenes in key decisions (common in countries with mixed political systems, particularly in the United Kingdom); and the model of centralised management with declarative autonomy, where independence exists mainly on paper, but in fact science is controlled by the state (common in countries with authoritarian or transitional regimes). Each model has its advantages and disadvantages: the first promotes high quality and innovation, but may face challenges in securing stable funding; the second allows for government priorities to be taken into account, but risks restricting scientific freedom; the third often leads to restrictions on research freedom and a decline in public trust. When it comes to funding, it is important to distinguish between grant systems and linear budget funding: the grant system allows scientists to choose their own research topics, which increases autonomy, while linear funding, which involves fixed amounts based on administrative decisions, can limit this freedom. Accordingly, a higher level of autonomy promotes flexibility, innovation and improved quality of science, while a lower level can lead to stagnation, corruption and loss of public trust. This approach to classifying models of autonomy and understanding the role of financial mechanisms should be taken into account and presented in a table for comprehensive comparison (UK Research and Innovation, 2022).

At the same time, different countries practise several models of scientific autonomy, which can be summarised as follows: 1) a model of legally enshrined autonomy, where scientific institutions have clearly defined legal guarantees of independence and own management mechanisms, as in the United States, for example; 2) a model of balanced autonomy with state control, common in the United Kingdom, where UK Research and Innovation has a certain level of independence, but the government occasionally intervenes in research priorities, creating tension between autonomy and political influence; 3) a model of centralised management with declarative autonomy, characteristic of post-Soviet countries, where autonomy is formally declared but in practice is heavily dependent on state structures and funding. Each model has its advantages and disadvantages: the first ensures a high level of innovation and critical thinking, but may face a lack of state support; the second promotes the alignment of research priorities with national goals, but risks losing scientific independence due to political pressure; the third model often leads to restrictions on research freedom and a decline in trust in science. Funding, especially through competitive grant systems, plays a key role in supporting autonomy, as it enables researchers to choose own research directions, unlike linear budget funding, which is often associated with directives and control. Greater autonomy promotes more flexible scientific development, innovation and higher quality research, while low levels of autonomy can lead to stagnation, corruption risks and a loss of public trust. Thus, for the scientific sphere to function effectively, it is necessary to find the optimal balance between the freedom of researchers and their responsibility to the state and society.

The organisational autonomy of science is determined by the ability of scientific institutions to independently form their internal structure, manage personnel issues, and set research priorities. For example, in Germany, the autonomy of Max Planck Gesellschaft institutes is ensured through

a decentralised management model, where each institution has a separate administrative board that operates independently of ministries (Federal Government & Länder of Germany, 2019). In the United Kingdom, UK Research and Innovation functions as an independent organisation that coordinates science policy without direct government intervention. In contrast, in Ukraine, despite the formal enshrinement of autonomy in legislation, state research institutes are under the direct control of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (2021), which complicates independent strategic planning. Legal autonomy consists of the legislative enshrinement of the principle of independence of science and scientific activity. This principle is reflected in a number of documents, including the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (European Commission, 2005). At the same time, in Kazakhstan, the autonomy of scientific institutions is often regulated by subordinate legislation, which can be changed by decision of the executive branch, reducing the stability of the legal system for supporting science (Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2022).

Financial autonomy manifests itself in the ability of scientific institutions to independently manage budgets, attract additional funds, and participate in international grants. In the United States, a model based on competitive funding through the National Science Foundation (2022) stimulates innovation and allows scientific teams to propose projects based on own research interests. The United Kingdom and Germany provide multi-year funding for research centres, enabling them to develop long-term programmes. In South Africa, India, and Indonesia, government strategy encourages financial autonomy through the creation of public-private partnerships, but dependence on budget subsidies remains significant. In Ukraine and Kazakhstan, the share of competitive funding is still small, and basic funding often does not cover the real needs of scientific institutions. Ethical autonomy in science requires adherence to the

principles of academic integrity, ethical regulation of research, and prevention of censorship. In Germany and the United Kingdom, there are independent ethics committees that have the right to influence the policies of scientific institutions. For example, UK Research and Innovation has a Research Ethics division that formulates national standards. In South Africa, special attention is paid to ethics in research conducted in vulnerable social groups, as reflected in the document Technology and Innovation (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2024).

Overall, the analysis showed that scientific autonomy is a multi-structural thing that needs legal, financial, organisational, and ethical foundations to develop at the same time. Countries with established scientific traditions (the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom) demonstrate a comprehensive approach in which these components interact and reinforce each other. Table 2 shows the structure of scientific autonomy in selected countries, reflecting the level of independence of research institutions, funding mechanisms and the role of scientific agencies.

**Table 2.** Structure of scientific autonomy in selected countries

Country	Organisational autonomy	Legal autonomy	Financial autonomy	Ethical autonomy
Germany, USA	Decentralised management; institutional independence	Constitutional protection of academic freedom; stable legislative regulation	Long-term core funding + competitive programmes (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung)	Independent ethics committees; high level of institutional integrity
United Kingdom	Independence of universities and UK Research and Innovation; autonomous resource management	Higher Education and Research Act; principle of "independence from the government"	Combination of public funding with a large segment of grants UK Research and Innovation	Research Ethics Framework standards; effective mechanisms for responding to ethical violations
South Africa, India, Indonesia	Partial autonomy of research institutions; centralised strategic planning	Legislative framework provides autonomy, but government control remains significant	Funding is mainly budgetary, unstable; international aid is attracted	Growing role of ethics in research; stricter standards in projects involving socially vulnerable groups
Ukraine	Formal autonomy; real dependence on the Ministry of Education and Science; slow reform	Law of Ukraine No. 848-VIII "On Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activity"; limited implementation	Low share of competitive funding; chronic underfunding	Insufficient regulation; low culture of integrity; weak ethics committees
Kazakhstan	Centralised management; limited institutional autonomy	No autonomy enshrined in the Constitution; variable subordinate legislation	Main funding through state orders; low share of external sources	Formal provisions; poorly developed practical ethics; lack of integrity standards

**Source:** compiled by the author based on an analysis of Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (1949), Law of Ukraine No. 848-VIII "On Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activity" (2015), Science, technology and innovation policy of India (2020), Regulation of the President of Indonesia No. 78/2021 "On the National Research and Innovation Agency" (2021), UK Research and Innovation (2022), Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2022), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2023), Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2024)

In countries undergoing transformation, the gap between normative declarations and practice limits the full functioning of the scientific system.

Analysis of the data presented in Table 2 shows significant differentiation in levels of scientific autonomy depending on the geopolitical context

and model of science management. In countries with developed scientific infrastructure, such as Germany and the United Kingdom, all four components of autonomy – organisational, legal, financial, and ethical – are integrated, ensuring the stable functioning and independence of science. In contrast, in countries with centralised or transformational governing models (South Africa, Ukraine, Kazakhstan), scientific autonomy is partial or nominal: even with a regulatory framework in place, there is a lack of institutional and financial mechanisms for its implementation, and the ethical component remains underdeveloped. This points to the need for a comprehensive approach to strengthening the autonomy of science in a globalised world.

#### **Assessment of cultural and political factors in the process of forming scientific autonomy**

The state of scientific autonomy in a globalised world shows significant differentiation depending on the political system, economic development, level of integration into the global scientific space, and historical features of the formation of scientific institutions. An analysis of countries such as the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, South Africa, India, Indonesia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan shows that scientific autonomy is a heterogeneous and contextual phenomenon determined by a combination of organisational, financial, legal, and ethical factors. In countries with a high level of economic development and established democratic traditions, such as the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom, scientific autonomy has a solid normative foundation. For example, in the United States, the National Science Foundation operates on the principle of independent funding of scientific research with an emphasis on competition, expert evaluation, and long-term support for scientific freedom. Scientific institutions determine own research priorities, while the state creates only a general political framework without interfering in the specific content of research activities. In Germany, scientific autonomy is enshrined in the Basic

Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (1949), specifically in the article on freedom of science. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, the UK Research and Innovation agency operates independently of political interference, based on a peer-review system and autonomous resource management.

In contrast, in countries with a transformational or centralised model of governance (Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, and partly India), scientific autonomy remains declarative. In Ukraine, the autonomy of scientific institutions is limited due to dependence on state funding, weak institutional capacity and political turbulence (Hernández-Torrano *et al.*, 2021). A significant portion of funding is allocated not through open competitions but in the form of state orders, which deprives scientists of the opportunity to choose own priorities (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2021). In Kazakhstan, according to an analysis of documents by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2022), the model of scientific management remains highly centralised, making real institutional autonomy impossible. Here, research programmes are formulated from the “top down” and scientific institutions have limited influence on strategic decisions. Political authorities retain significant control over the activities of research institutions, which limits initiative and the international competitiveness of science. In countries of the Global South, such as South Africa, India and Indonesia, science is at the crossroads of modernisation impulses and political constraints. In South Africa, strategic documents such as Technology and Innovation formally recognise the need for scientific autonomy, but in practice there is a dependence on the social demands of the state, which directs scientific activity towards applied rather than fundamental research (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2024). In Indonesia, the creation of the National Research and Innovation Agency was intended to centralise science, but this has been criticised for reducing the flexibility of scientific institutions and decreasing transparency in decision-making.

On the one hand, globalisation creates additional opportunities to strengthen autonomy through participation in international funding programmes, such as Horizon Europe, knowledge exchange and researcher mobility (European Commission, n.d.). On the other hand, global challenges such as political polarisation, competition for strategic technologies and the influence of geopolitical alliances can increase political pressure on science, reducing its independence. For example, in some countries, scientific institutions are subject to political control or censorship when it comes to factors such as climate, biotechnology, and gender studies (India, Indonesia). Thus, the autonomy of science in a globalised world is not guaranteed; it varies depending on a number of factors. The highest level of autonomy is observed in countries with developed democracies, stable legal systems, independent scientific agencies, and extensive grant funding systems (e.g., the United States, Germany). In contrast, in countries with authoritarian elements, centralised bureaucracy or transitional economies (Ukraine, Kazakhstan), science remains under pressure from political and financial constraints. The reasons for this are a lack of institutional stability, excessive dependence on the state, weak ethical control mechanisms, and limited access to international resources (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2023). In addition, ensuring real autonomy for science requires systematic support not only at the level of legal acts, but also through the creation of institutional infrastructure, financial diversification and openness to international cooperation, which should be a strategic priority for countries seeking to achieve competitive science on a global scale.

**Research into mechanisms for supporting autonomous scientific initiatives in the global scientific environment**

The conceptual framework was built on three structural levels scientific institutions that produce knowledge; national authorities that shape policy and ensure or restrict scientific autonomy; global

scientific actors, including foundations, intergovernmental organisations such as UNESCO and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and international programmes such as Horizon Europe and the National Science Foundation, which influence the development of science through transnational initiatives and funding. For each of these levels, typical roles were identified, as well as areas of influence – from regulatory and administrative to financial and expert.

In countries with developed scientific ecosystems, such as the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom, the main links between the elements of the system are horizontal. In the United States, the activities of the National Science Foundation (2022) are based on the principle of competitive funding, where the state does not interfere in determining research priorities. In the United Kingdom, UK Research and Innovation functions as an independent coordinating structure that provides funding based on scientific expediency rather than political orders. In Germany, the Federal Government & Länder of Germany (2019) works in partnership with scientific institutions without interfering in their internal policies, ensuring autonomy within framework agreements such as the “Pact for Research and Innovation”. The situation is different in countries where scientific institutions are undergoing transformation or centralisation.

In Kazakhstan, according to data from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2022), science is mainly funded through a state order scheme, and strategic priorities are set by ministries. This creates a vertical management model in which scientific institutions depend on decisions made by the political centre. A similar situation is characteristic of Ukraine, where, despite Law of Ukraine No. 848-VIII “On Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activity” (2015), the autonomy of scientific institutions remains limited due to unstable funding, the absence of effective independent scientific councils, and political volatility. In countries of the Global South, such as South Africa, India, and Indonesia,

the model of interaction is hybrid in nature. For example, in South Africa, state policy provides for a combination of the social orientation of science and its autonomy, but centralised planning still dominates. In Indonesia, the creation of the National Research and Innovation Agency was aimed at optimising scientific resources, but in practice, administrative control over scientific activities has increased, leading to a decrease in the flexibility of research institutions.

Within the formalised model, political factors play an important role, which can either indirectly or directly influence scientific autonomy. In the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom, the level of political interference is minimal thanks to a stable regulatory framework and independent agencies. In contrast, in countries with a politically unstable environment (e.g., Ukraine, Indonesia, Kazakhstan), decisions on research funding often depend on the political situation, which reduces predictability and long-term planning in the scientific sphere. The model also takes into account the role of global funds, which provide alternative sources of funding and help science go beyond national politics. In particular, participation in Horizon Europe programmes increases the autonomy of researchers, as project decisions were made based on scientific excellence. In countries where such international sources are available, science has the opportunity to free itself from state dependence and integrate into global networks. The scheme, constructed using the formalisation method, performs two key functions: analytical – it allows identifying the types of interactions and factors that determine the degree of autonomy of science in a specific national context; prognostic – it allows modelling the consequences of certain management decisions or reforms for the autonomy of science (for example, the creation of an independent scientific agency or the transition to grant funding).

Thus, the application of the formalisation method made it possible to create a structural-logical model of interaction between the main

actors in science policy – scientific institutions, government agencies and international foundations – in the context of analysing the autonomy of science. The constructed diagram made it possible to unify complex multi-level relationships and classify them according to types of influence and connections. As a result, it was found that the autonomy of science depends not only on formal legislation, but also on the real nature of relations between scientific policy actors, the level of decentralisation, access to global resources and political culture. Thus, the formalisation method not only facilitated the analysis of a complex system, but also created a basis for strategic forecasting and optimisation of scientific management in different countries.

## Discussion

The autonomy of scientific institutions in a globalised environment proved to be a complex, multifactorial phenomenon, reflecting the interplay of financial, technological, social, and philosophical dimensions. Analysis of own data confirmed that decentralised funding increased project mobility and decision-making speed, which resonated with P. Gauttam's *et al.* (2024) thesis on the need for global open databases to support the independence of scientists. In contrast, centralised models, by reducing response flexibility, exhibited common features with the conclusions of F. Hempel (2021), who emphasised that autonomy encompasses not only the freedom to choose research topics but also the responsibility for promptly responding to societal challenges. The application of AI tools revealed a dual effect: the automation of routine tasks increased productivity but also created a dependence on algorithms. The automation of procedures for processing large volumes of data, particularly preliminary literature filtering, classification of experimental results, and the construction of initial statistical models, significantly accelerated the execution of routine tasks. This conclusion was consistent with the results of M. Gerlich (2025) concerning cognitive offloading.

Excessive reliance on algorithmic processing led to a gradual loss of a critical approach to question formulation: some researchers increasingly rarely verified initial assumptions manually, leading to “umbrella errors” and a reduction in the novelty of ideas. This phenomenon was previously warned about by M. Mayer & Y.-C. Lu (2023) and G. Vasiliadis *et al.* (2024) in the context of the digital dependence of global scientific networks. They also pointed out the risks of digital dependence in global scientific networks. The level of public trust in science proved to be directly proportional to the transparency of procedures and access to data. At the same time, a direct link was confirmed between the level of transparency of scientific procedures and public trust in the results: open access to raw data, experimental protocols, and pre-print versions of articles contributed to an increase in external requests for cooperation and grant resources. This confirmed the observation of G. Gauchat (2023), who argued that the legitimacy of science is formed through openness, and own data showed that institutions with open access policies attracted more external funding and public support. This correlation demonstrates that open access policies not only strengthened the legitimacy of science but also directly influenced the financial and reputational support of research institutions.

The philosophical aspects of autonomy also proved significant: autonomous groups integrated social and environmental values into their programmes, which correlated with the arguments of M. Vogt & C. Weber (2020), and I. Delen & O. Yilmaz-Tuzun (2024) about the impossibility of a value-neutral research process, and with the provisions of K. Vergeles *et al.* (2020) on the necessity of clear ethical frameworks. Young scientists demonstrated a high capacity to adapt methodological approaches to the specifics of projects, experimenting with qualitative and quantitative methods simultaneously, which corresponded to the conclusions of L. Oksana (2020), T. Rasa & A. Laherto (2022) regarding the flexible formation of future technological perceptions. They readily engaged

in cooperation with start-ups offering innovative technical solutions, and with public organisations that provided access to field data and user social networks. Thanks to such cross-sectoral partnerships, young researchers were able to rapidly test prototypes of their ideas and quickly adjust information collection methods in response to feedback from practitioners. The availability of independent grant programmes for start-ups additionally contributed to the formation of independent scientific and technical groups without the need to go through traditional academic procedures.

Autonomy in transnational collaborations was projected through direct data exchange with colleagues in other countries, which increased the speed of new idea implementation and aligned with M. Kwiek's (2023) ideas about the strengthening role of individual scholars in the global context. The absence of intermediate administrative links allowed for the avoidance of multi-stage approvals and instant access to resources from international open data platforms. This approach increased the transparency of research processes and contributed to building trusting relationships between partners based on the reputation of individual scholars, rather than institutions. In the industrial environment, S. Mariotti's (2025) idea of “open strategic autonomy” manifested itself in scientific groups directly entering into agreements with technology companies, gaining access to modern production lines and laboratory equipment. Such cooperation enabled experiments to be scaled with minimal bureaucratic hurdles and supported internal freedom in choosing research priorities. At the same time, flexible contracts with businesses stipulated clear criteria regarding intellectual property and the distribution of rights to results, ensuring a balance between the autonomy of scientists and the commercial interests of partners. This allowed project implementation models to combine the speed of start-up culture with the reliability of academic standards.

The research by L. Gherardini & G. Cabri (2024) on autonomous transport systems revealed parallels with knowledge transfer processes in science:

unmanned networks stimulated continuous and less centralised data exchange, which was reflected in the current study as increased adaptability of inter-laboratory communications. In the structural dimension, M. Sharma & P. Ankit (2023) identified four narratives of global science; own data showed that a combination of market and humanistic approaches yielded the best results, whereas an excessive orientation towards transnational institutions sometimes diluted local priorities. Simultaneously, E. Zivkovic (2020) and K. Ziyaev (2022) emphasised the need for a balance between research freedom and standard harmonisation: in own research, it was found that the fragmentation of standards due to excessive autonomy complicated the comparison of results between groups. The role of universities in ensuring the sustainability of science through a combination of autonomy and a value-based approach resonated with the concepts of L. Hubersky & O. Zhylynska (2021), who demonstrated the importance of integrating value dimensions into the scientific process.

Finally, A. Polejack (2021) argued for the significance of science diplomacy in oceanic sustainability issues, and own data demonstrated that independent environmental assessments contributed to the conclusion of international agreements with clear criteria. In the context of public perception of science, factors of anti-scientism were evaluated, and it was found that open communication structures reduced the level of scepticism: institutions with transparent processes engaged broader segments of the public and received fewer negative reactions, which was consistent with the conclusions of A. Philipp-Muller *et al.* (2022). A review of the philosophical foundations of autonomy highlighted the importance of clear ethical principles in supporting scientific independence: it was found that the enshrinement of ethical codes contributed to a balance between research freedom and social responsibility, correlating with the theses of A. Wildfeuer (2020) on the philosophy of science in the modern world. An analysis of the impact of

technological changes on social history showed that the speed and scale of technological innovations were directly reflected in the nature of scientific initiatives: the rapid implementation of new research tools stimulated the emergence of new topics and methods, confirming D. Tegegn's (2024) research on the role of science and technology in reconstructing social history. Thus, the study confirmed the dual nature of scientific autonomy: it ensured speed, innovativeness, and social responsibility, but could also lead to standard fragmentation and increased inequality.

### Conclusions

The study found that the autonomy of science in a globalised world varied depending on the country, its model of science management and institutional maturity. In particular, in the United States, the autonomy of science was ensured through the National Science Foundation as an independent agency that funded research on a competitive basis without political interference. The fact that funds were distributed competitively indicated a high level of scientific freedom and objectivity. In Germany, the constitutional guarantee of freedom of science created a regulatory framework for the autonomous functioning of institutions such as the Max Planck Institute and the Fraunhofer Society. According to documents from the Federal Government & Länder of Germany, the state provided basic funding but did not interfere in the content of research programmes. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, the UK Research and Innovation agency functioned as an independent structure with broad powers determined by a council of researchers rather than politicians. In Kazakhstan, however, according to information from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, most research was funded through government contracts, and scientific priorities were determined by the central government. In Ukraine, according to Law of Ukraine-No. 848-VIII "On Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activity", the autonomy of institutions was declared, but in fact, most decisions remained in the

hands of the Ministry of Education and Science, and competitive funding did not cover all fields. In Indonesia, the creation in 2021 of a centralised scientific structure, the National Research and Innovation Agency, was criticised by the scientific community for eliminating autonomous research institutes and concentrating governance in a single centre. In South Africa, autonomy was partially limited due to social demand for applied research, which reduced support for fundamental science.

The study was limited by its restricted coverage of countries with authoritarian regimes, where scientific autonomy may be subject to other mechanisms of formal and informal control.

Further research prospects lie in studying the impact of digital transformation and artificial intelligence on changing the nature of scientific autonomy in the context of global knowledge governance.

## Acknowledgements

None.

## Funding

None.

## Conflict of Interest

None.

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## Автономність науки в глобалізованому світі

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**Анотація.** Метою дослідження було з'ясувати особливості прояву наукової автономності в умовах глобалізованого суспільства на прикладі різних моделей наукового управління. Методологія включала використання методів абстрагування, аналізу, синтезу та формалізації для порівняння систем забезпечення автономності науки у США, Німеччині, Великобританії, Індії, Індонезії, Південно-Африканській Республіці (ПАР), Україні та Казахстані. У дослідженні було визначено, що в країнах із розвинутою наукою (США, Німеччина, Велика Британія) автономність науки реалізується через законодавчо закріплену інституційну незалежність наукових організацій, стабільне фінансування, а також механізми саморегуляції через наукові ради та незалежні експертні агентства. У країнах, що розвиваються (Індія, Індонезія, ПАР), автономність обмежується залежністю від державного фінансування та політизованим призначенням керівників наукових установ. У пострадянських країнах (Україна, Казахстан) спостерігається перехідний стан: формально автономність задекларована в законах, однак на практиці наукові установи суттєво залежать від рішень міністерств, мають обмежений доступ до альтернативних джерел фінансування та слабо розвинені механізми саморегуляції. Було з'ясовано, що автономність науки є не лише показником демократичності системи управління, але й важливою умовою ефективності наукової діяльності, міжнародної співпраці та конкурентоспроможності країни в глобальному науковому просторі. Вивчення офіційних документів та наукометричних даних показало, що рівень автономії прямо корелює з кількістю публікацій, залученням міжнародних грантів і стійкістю до політичних коливань. Практичне значення дослідження полягає у виробленні типології моделей наукового управління, що може слугувати основою для реформ у сфері науки, спрямованих на посилення інституційної автономності, підвищення якості досліджень і розширення міжнародної наукової інтеграції

**Ключові слова:** державне фінансування; інституційна незалежність; ринкові механізми; академічна свобода; стандарти якості знань



## Socio-political challenges of the Ukrainian (post-)war reality and the phenomenon of civic maturity

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**Abstract.** The full-scale war in Ukraine has created unique conditions for the transformation of political culture and the development of civil society, thereby actualising the study of the phenomenon of civic maturity as a response to the existential challenges of modernity. The purpose of this study was to identify the key manifestations of the civic maturity of Ukrainian society in the context of war and the post-war reality, as well as to analyse its relationship with political culture and the European vector of development. The study adopted a comprehensive approach encompassing qualitative and quantitative research methods, analysis of scientific sources, documentary analysis, and the comparative historical method. Findings indicated that Ukrainian society demonstrates an extraordinary level of civic maturity through the mass mobilisation of volunteers, high patriotism, and a heightened level of citizens' political awareness. It was established that the phenomenon of civic maturity manifests itself through four interrelated dimensions: civic consciousness, mobilisation, activism, and responsibility. Particular attention was paid to the risks of democratic collapse, including the strengthening of executive power, the decline in pluralism, civil liberties, political competition, and public control, as well as the postponement of democratic procedures during the war. It was further analysed that European integration plays a key role in shaping a positive scenario for Ukraine's future, providing institutional frameworks and value orientations. It was concluded that the European horizon and civic maturity mutually reinforce each other, creating the basis for successful democratic development. The results of the study can be used by political scientists, sociologists, and public administration specialists to develop strategies for the advancement of civil society and democratic institutions in the post-war period

**Keywords:** democratic transformations; volunteer movement; European integration; wartime; political culture; civil society

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Received 22.05.2025 Revised 29.08.2025 Accepted 23.09.2025

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### **Suggested Citation:**

Kychkyruk, T. (2025). Socio-political challenges of the Ukrainian (post-)war reality and the phenomenon of civic maturity. *Humanities Studios: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 13(3), 93-111. doi: 10.31548/hspedagog/3.2025.93.

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## Introduction

Ukrainian society faces unprecedented challenges caused by a large-scale war and the need for post-war reconstruction. Russian aggression has threatened the very existence of Ukraine as a sovereign state, while also mobilising Ukrainians to extraordinary unity and resilience. M. Budjeryn (2024) argues that this war has taken on an existential dimension: it has become a confrontation between the democratic world and neo-imperial authoritarianism, between “liberal modernity and postmodern illiberalism”, with the future of the world order of values at stake. In such conditions, new socio-political realities are being formed in Ukraine, laying the foundation for a “democratic Ukraine forged in the crucible of war”. The experience of the Revolution of Dignity of 2013-2014 (Euromaidan) provided the basis for a new political culture and an active civil society. As a number of researchers have noted, Euromaidan became a catalyst for the development of a “third Ukraine” – a modern Ukrainian identity with a strong civic (rather than purely ethnic) core. It gave impetus to urban civic movements in Ukraine and encouraged many citizens to take greater responsibility for the country’s fate. After Maidan, there was a steady increase in local activism: in different regions, citizens self-organised to protect the rights of residents, preserve historical heritage, and hold the authorities to account.

The volunteer movement that emerged in 2014 with the outbreak of the war in the Donbas is particularly noteworthy. This experience of self-organisation and volunteerism, acquired between 2014 and 2021, became a valuable asset for civil society, fully manifesting after the start of the fullscale invasion in 2022. In the context of a full-scale war ongoing since 2022, Ukrainian society has faced unprecedented existential challenges that require not only physical resistance but also profound transformations in political culture, consciousness, and civil society structures (Strilchuk, 2023). These processes have become the subject of active scientific reflection in global

academic discourse. Researchers emphasise the phenomenon of civic maturity as one of the key factors in resistance, survival, and the renewal of democratic identity in times of crisis. In particular, L. Leonchuk & E. Johnson (2023) analyse the wave of civic mobilisation after the start of the full-scale invasion as a manifestation of deep civic responsibility and maturity. At the same time, K. Zarembo (2023) notes the strengthening of social subjectivity, manifested in the growing participation of citizens in volunteer, humanitarian, and political initiatives. The global academic community interprets the war in Ukraine as a catalyst for a civilisational choice, compelling society to consolidate around democratic values and the European perspective. At the same time, researchers warn of the risks of “democratic compression” in a state of emergency – reduced pluralism, the strengthening of the executive vertical, and the postponement of elections (Budjeryn, 2024; Shumak *et al.*, 2024). This creates a unique situation in which social mobilisation and maturity coexist with challenges to democracy.

The relevance of this study stems from the fact that the phenomenon of civic maturity in the Ukrainian context remains under-researched during a period of deep social crisis. The focus of scientific analysis remains on the general processes of mobilisation, patriotism, and institutional transformation, while the specific mechanisms for the formation and manifestation of civic maturity in relation to the European value horizon require further study. The purpose of the study was to identify the key manifestations of the civic maturity of Ukrainian society in the context of wartime and the post-war reality, as well as to analyse its relationship with political culture and the European vector of development. The tasks were as follows: (1) theoretical substantiation of the concept of civic maturity; (2) analysis of socio-political transformations related to the war; (3) identification of the role of European integration in strengthening democratic identity. The scientific novelty lies in its comprehensive approach

to the phenomenon of civic maturity in the context of an existential threat, combining sociological, political, and value perspectives.

### Literature Review

The impact of war on society and the state has traditionally drawn the attention of scholars in the fields of political science, sociology, and philosophy. Classical theories indicate that in times of extreme threat, societies are capable of high cohesion and mobilisation, but at the same time, there are risks associated with the power and the concentration of erosion of democratic institutions. From the first days of the full-scale invasion, researchers noted an unprecedented rise in patriotism, volunteerism, and civic solidarity in Ukraine, which has been interpreted as a manifestation of the maturity of civil society. At the same time, analysts such as M. Budjeryn (2024) and I. Shumak *et al.* (2024) warn about “undercurrents” – the danger of a democratic rollback due to martial law, the strengthening of the executive vertical, restrictions on pluralism, and other measures. Theoretically, these processes can be understood through the prism of the concepts of national consolidation (the rally-round-the-flag effect) and the “compression” of democracy in wartime, as well as through the concept of societal resilience – the ability to adapt and preserve core values under the pressure of existential threats.

Special attention should be paid to the phenomenon of civic maturity. In the Ukrainian academic literature, this concept is closely related to civic competence, consciousness, and individual activity. In particular, researchers and educators characterise civic maturity through a set of personality traits and values: “patriotism, legal consciousness, political awareness, morality, labour activity” (Buzhyna *et al.*, 2024). In other words, a mature citizen is aware of their rights and responsibilities, thinks critically, upholds democratic principles, and takes responsibility for the community. The formation of such qualities is regarded as the goal of civic education and the upbringing of a conscious patriot and professional

capable of self-development and contributing to the building of a democratic society. In academic discourse, the problem of civic maturity in wartime is analysed from an interdisciplinary perspective – political science, sociology, psychology, and pedagogy. Considerable attention is given to the Ukrainian context, where war is a powerful factor in the transformation of civil society.

L. Leonchuk & E. Johnson (2023) consider the full-scale invasion of 2022 a catalyst for new civic mobilisation and responsibility, signalling deep civic maturity. K. Zarembo (2023) emphasises the formation of an active civic core that self-organises under extreme stress while maintaining ethical norms and democratic values. The pedagogical dimension of civic maturity is explored by I. Buzhyna *et al.* (2024), who interpret it as a set of civic competencies: legal awareness, morality, political activism, and patriotism. This approach allows war to be interpreted as an accelerated environment for civic education. O. Hordiychuk & Y. Hrytsenko (2023) characterise civil society as a fundamental element of the democratic system, emphasising the importance of self-organisation, legal awareness, and citizen engagement in times of war. In their study, O. Malinovska & D. Kryviuk (2023) emphasise the impact of war on national identity, which is gradually shifting towards an inclusive understanding of the political nation. Thus, the research addresses both theoretical and practical aspects of civic maturity, revealing it through the prism of social mobilisation, institutional transformation, ethical consciousness, and democratic identity. It confirms that civic maturity has become not only a reaction to the war but also a foundation for Ukraine’s future democratic progress.

The issue of civic maturity is also studied from pedagogical and socio-psychological perspectives. I. Buzhyna *et al.* (2024) emphasise that this quality is formed through a set of civic competencies – political consciousness, morality, legal orientation, and patriotism. In this sense, war functions as a compelled environment for civic education, in which new ethical and behavioural

standards are being shaped for Ukrainians of all generations. Against the backdrop of these processes, the issue of the European choice is becoming particularly relevant. O. Onuch & L. Way (2024) show that support for EU accession has become not only a geopolitical benchmark but also a symbol of national dignity and values-based self-determination. In this context, EU integration emerges as a key factor in shaping a new political culture based on the rule of law, transparency, accountability, and institutional trust. However, as I. Koshiw (2023) and A. Terzyan (2024) note, post-war reconstruction and EU integration are not without challenges. Corruption, governance dysfunctions, population fatigue, and social fragmentation all require a high level of civic participation, active oversight, and critical thinking. Therefore, analysing the phenomenon of civic maturity is essential for understanding the potential for sustainable democratic development.

### Materials and Methods

The study was conducted between January 2022 and December 2024 within the territory of Ukraine during the period of full-scale war and the initial phases of post-war reconstruction. The research focused on examining socio-political processes, patterns of civic engagement, and the comprehensive transformation of Ukrainian political culture. The selection of research phenomena was strategically determined by their demonstrable impact on strengthening civic maturity, enhancing democratic institutions, and advancing Ukraine's European integration prospects. The methodological framework employed a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms to ensure robust data triangulation and enhanced validity of findings. This approach specifically targeted theoretical frameworks related to civic maturity, democratic transitions during wartime, and European integration processes. The materials included academic monographs, edited volumes on post-conflict democratisation, and policy reports from Ukrainian and international

research institutions. Content analysis methodology was applied to identify recurring themes, theoretical patterns, and empirical evidence supporting the research hypotheses.

Documentary analysis served as the secondary methodological pillar, encompassing the examination of official government documents, legislative acts concerning martial law implementation, national survey data, progress reports on Ukraine's candidacy status, and comprehensive reports from civil society organisations. This method enabled the systematic tracking of policy changes, institutional adaptations, and civil society responses throughout the conflict period. The documents were subjected to thematic coding to extract patterns related to democratic governance, civic mobilisation, and European integration dynamics. The comparative historical method, following Tilly's established framework from 2004, facilitated analysis of temporal changes in civic engagement patterns by comparing pre-war baseline indicators from 2014-2022 with wartime mobilisation data (Tilly, 2004). This methodological approach enabled the identification of causal mechanisms linking war experiences to civic maturity development and provided a comparative perspective with other post-conflict democratisation cases in Eastern Europe. Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study, with all sources verified for credibility and analysed in compliance with research integrity standards.

### Results and Discussion

The full-scale war has caused profound socio-political changes in Ukraine. Foremost, there is an unprecedented level of national unity and mass mobilisation of the population in support of the country's defence. In the face of a mortal threat, Ukrainians have united regardless of language, regional, or political differences, forming a cohesive front against the aggressor. Volunteer and charitable initiatives have extended across all areas, from providing the army with equipment to assisting refugees. In the first six months of the war alone, 86% of Ukrainians financially supported

defence or humanitarian needs (an average of nine times), 79% participated in fundraising for the Armed Forces or Territorial Defence, and 42% personally volunteered (Leonchuk & Johnson, 2023).

Thus, the war has become a catalyst for an unprecedented rise in self-organisation and mutual aid, serving as a sign of the maturity of civil society. Alongside positive developments, wartime has also brought complex political challenges. The imposition of martial law and the concentration of resources on warfare have inevitably affected the functioning of democratic institutions. For constitutional reasons, the next elections in 2023 were postponed, and the terms of office of the president and parliament were effectively extended until the end of hostilities. The centralisation of governance has intensified: emergency powers have been concentrated in the hands of the president and the government to ensure rapid decision-making in times of crisis. This situation is common in many countries at war. In Ukraine, it was reflected in the creation of a single news telethon, which limited the presence of opposition viewpoints in the media space. The difficult situation of the parliamentary opposition, as well as certain signals of pressure on critical voices (accusations against individual journalists, cases of forced mobilisation interpreted as punishment for criticism), have been noted (Budjeryn, 2024). Therefore, it is important to understand the concepts of nation and civil society, as well as their characteristics.

Before the beginning of the military aggression of the Russian Federation, the main activities of Ukrainian civil society included: defending the interests, rights, and freedoms of Ukrainian society in cooperation with the authorities; supporting reforms; promoting political change and improvement; participation in the implementation of anti-corruption policy; strengthening democratic mechanisms at the local level; and charitable activities in various fields, including in the cultural sector (protection of cultural heritage) and social sector (support for vulnerable groups); as well as promoting social unity and resilience. It was shaped as a result of cultural, historical, and

social factors (Malinovska & Kryviuk, 2023). Some scholars argue that the war has affected the identity and cultural values of assimilated persons. Conflicts prompt a redefinition of national identity, often forcing different social groups to identify with the state more intensely.

Civil society in Ukraine has long been characterised as small and weak, a consequence of its colonial past, specifically being part of other states and political entities, in particular the destructive and disruptive influence of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union (Hordiychuk & Hrytsenko, 2023). Russian aggression and the outbreak of active hostilities in a large part of Ukraine in late February 2022 became the starting point for a test of Ukrainian statehood and the level of civil society development. Although not all Ukrainians were concerned about the ATO or the subsequent JFO in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, as well as the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the full-scale war has affected everyone in one way or another. Armed conflict is both a test of the system of state power and a challenge for ordinary citizens as well as civil society organisations (Dokalenko, 2022). The armed invasion led to the intensification of the activities of volunteer organisations, which evolved into a nationwide movement and covered almost all of Ukraine (Shevchenko, 2023). Numerous volunteer initiatives emerging in the first months of the war later grew into large NGOs and charitable foundations that continue to support people affected by the war (Luneva, 2022). Civil society has become increasingly important, and the population shows greater trust in it than is usually observed in other countries (Tishchenko *et al.*, 2021).

The system of checks and balances established in previous years (including the successful decentralisation of 2015-2020) has partially moved into the background during the war, with a significant share of resources and decisions again concentrated at the central level for effective defence management (Budjeryn, 2024). Ukrainian society recognises the need for such centralisation as a temporary wartime measure, but remains

vigilant about potential abuses. Citizens and independent media closely monitor the government's actions, especially in relation to the spending of Western aid and domestic resources. During the hostilities of 2022-2023, anti-corruption scandals repeatedly erupted, forcing the government to respond with resignations and investigations, demonstrating that society is not prepared to tolerate corruption even in wartime (Landi, 2023). Despite the enormous burden, civil society organisations continue to serve as a watchdog, monitoring potential violations and demanding transparency. According to observers, as the war and martial law persist, the role of civil society in preventing the country from sliding into authoritarianism is critical (Budjeryn, 2024). It is already evident that after the end of hostilities, Ukrainians will insist on a return to full democratic politics – holding elections, restoring a competitive political process, and reopening public dialogue on post-war development. The demand for justice and accountability from the authorities will be extremely high: civic activists have explicitly called for the investigation not only of Russian crimes, but also of the mistakes or inaction of the Ukrainian leadership during the war (Zarembko, 2023). The outlook for the post-war period in Ukraine is perceived with both hope and awareness of new challenges. It is clear that after victory, there will be a task of large-scale reconstruction of destroyed infrastructure, reintegration of the de-occupied territories, and social adaptation of millions of veterans, IDPs, and refugees. However, this post-war reconstruction is viewed not merely as a technical process, but also as an opportunity to rebuild the country on stronger foundations. Analysts note that the reconstruction will be a chance to “build back better”, modernise the economy and governance, and deepen integration into the European community. Reforms are already being planned to strengthen the rule of law, modernise the justice system (including ensuring the prosecution of war criminals), and create effective mechanisms for overseeing the use of international assistance (Landi, 2023). The success

of the post-war transformation will largely depend on preserving and harnessing the level of civic consolidation and activism displayed during the war. In other words, the social capital accumulated by the people during the arduous war years will become the foundation for Ukraine's revival and development in its aftermath. This aspect is directly related to the phenomenon of civic maturity, which will be discussed below. One of the key social phenomena that characterises Ukrainian (post-)war reality is the high level of civic maturity among the population. This concept refers to a mature civic consciousness and a culture of behaviour that emerges during critical historical moments. The war has become a kind of “maturity test” for Ukrainians, and a significant part of society has passed this exam with flying colours. The manifestations of civic maturity can be analysed through four interrelated dimensions, which are highlighted in this study.

In the face of an existential threat, the civic consciousness of Ukrainians has increased dramatically – reflecting an understanding of a common national identity, the value of freedom and democracy, and an awareness of their rights and responsibilities towards society. Millions of people have reconsidered their attitude towards the state as an “alien apparatus” and come to regard themselves as a direct part of this state, co-responsible for its fate. Studies by E. Landi (2023) indicate record levels of patriotism and readiness to defend the country across different regions and age groups. This awakened consciousness is fuelled by an understanding of the historical choice facing the nation – to be free Europeans or to return to the imperial yoke. Therefore, Ukrainians widely support the course towards the EU and NATO as a civilisational choice, seeing it as a guarantee of their freedom. Civic consciousness also includes critical thinking and the search for truth: even in the face of military censorship, the population seeks diverse information, volunteers debunk enemy disinformation, and public discourse is not limited to propaganda clichés – there remains an active engagement with the deeper causes and goals of

the struggle.

The maturity of the community was most clearly manifested in its ability to self-organise and mobilise resources for common goals. From the first hours of the invasion, people organised themselves into initiative groups, volunteer units, territorial defence forces, and networks to help the army and victims. Moreover, this mobilisation was mostly horizontal: citizens acted proactively, not waiting for orders from above. Leaders and coordinators spontaneously emerged in every town and village to channel the community's energy into constructive efforts. Thanks to this, Ukraine was able to withstand the first critical weeks when the state institutions were overloaded – citizens themselves covered many needs (evacuating people, arranging shelters, supplying food and medicine, repairing damage, etc.). The current high level of mobilisation readiness continues to be maintained: although constant volunteer activity declined somewhat after its peak in the spring of 2022 (from 80% of those involved in volunteering at the beginning of the invasion to about 40% as of early 2023), a “core” of experienced volunteers has formed, ready to step up their efforts at any time in response to new challenges. As Ukrainians themselves note, their national identity is now closely linked to the ability to “come together when needed and do what needs to be done” (Zaremba, 2023). Such flexible capacity for mobilisation is one of society's most valuable resources.

The war has made mass civic activism part of everyday life. What was once the preserve of a few enthusiasts has become a widespread practice: everyone who can, according to their abilities and skills, contributes as a volunteer. Ukrainians joke that now everyone has their own front – some fight with weapons, others volunteer or provide information. All social strata have joined the aid movement – from students to pensioners, from workers to businesspeople. Sociologists record a high level of trust in volunteers and public initiatives: people willingly donate to foundations and support public fundraisers because they see tangible results

(Leonchuk & Johnson, 2023). At the same time, activism is not only about supporting the army. Volunteer projects to aid vulnerable groups (children, people with disabilities, the elderly living alone), cultural initiatives (preserving monuments during the war, documenting war crimes), and environmental actions (e.g. demining, clearing destroyed facilities) remain active or have been expanded. Importantly, an active minority of society “infects” others with its energy – participation in a common cause has ceased to be something unusual and has become a socially approved norm (Shapovalova, 2017). As a result, a genuine movement of a new generation of civic activists has emerged in Ukraine, with experience in self-organisation under the most difficult conditions and the determination to continue in peacetime.

Civic maturity is impossible without a deep sense of responsibility, both personal and collective. Ukrainians have impressed the world with their maturity precisely because individuals in every sphere have assumed part of the common burden. Ordinary people have sacrificed their comfort, time, and often their lives for the sake of their neighbours and the country. This applies to both military volunteers and civilians – for example, volunteers often took risks by delivering humanitarian aid to war zones or remaining in frontline cities to maintain essential services (Zaremba, 2023). Responsibility has also been evident at the community level: mayors, village elders, and local activists took the initiative when the central government was overwhelmed. Society demonstrated maturity by avoiding panic and anarchy, instead maintaining order and mutual assistance even in exceptional circumstances. Significantly, despite all the hatred for the aggressor, Ukrainians have not generally resorted to widespread acts of vigilante justice or human rights violations within the country. On the contrary, there is an understanding that humanity and the rule of law must be upheld, as these are the very values for which the war is being fought (Shvedenko *et al.*, 2025). Collective responsibility is also reflected in attitudes towards the

future: Ukrainians are already considering what post-war Ukraine should look like, holding public discussions on reforms, and monitoring the government's commitments. Intellectuals and civic leaders have formed a kind of public "manifesto for sustainable peace", which outlines a vision of a just post-war Ukraine – from punishing criminals to EU and NATO membership (Zarembko, 2023). All this reflects a high level of responsibility for the country's fate: citizens feel that it is largely up to them to determine what Ukraine will look like after victory.

Thus, the phenomenon of civic maturity in modern Ukraine has manifested itself vividly and comprehensively. Society, going through the crucible of war, demonstrates maturity of thought and action: an understanding of common goals, the ability to self-organise, and a willingness to act and take responsibility. This is in line with the classical notion of an established political nation and a mature civil society. At the same time, it should be understood that it is difficult to maintain such a high level of mobilisation on a regular basis, as fatigue and burnout inevitably set in. Even volunteers note a tendency towards partial normalisation of life when the share of active participants decreases compared with the peak period. However, the basic elements of civic maturity – consciousness, an active stance, and a demanding attitude towards the government – do not disappear. They have become the property of a large part of Ukrainians and will determine social development in the postwar years. In fact, hopes for a better future are associated not only with victory over the enemy, but also with the belief that the people will be able to transfer this capital of maturity into a peaceful life, building a successful European state. Ukraine's European choice serves as a strategic guideline that gives meaning to the sacrifice of the Ukrainian people and outlines a vision for future development. The war has finally confirmed Ukraine's membership in the community of European democracies and made EU integration a non-negotiable goal for most citizens and elites. While before 2022,

European integration was subject to political debate and fluctuations (especially in the east and south of the country, where support for the EU has historically been lower), public opinion has changed dramatically since the full-scale invasion. According to polls, as of August 2023, almost 90% of Ukrainians were in favour of Ukraine's accession to the EU (Zarembko, 2023). Moreover, support has grown in all regions: even in the south and east, the share of pro-European attitudes has risen by 25%-30% compared with the pre-war period. Such consolidation around European integration has not only a rational but also a deep value-based basis. The European Union is perceived by Ukrainians not so much as an economic club as a "beacon of democratic normative order" – a community of freedom and justice, opposed to the Russian model of despotism. In the eyes of Ukrainian society, the war is a struggle for these European values, and therefore, the future of Ukraine is seen only as part of a single family with the countries of Europe.

From a geopolitical dream, the European horizon has turned into a concrete political process. Ukraine formally applied for EU membership in the midst of the fighting (on the fifth day of the invasion), demonstrating that it was fighting not only for its land but also for the right to belong to a united Europe. The European Union heeded this signal: in June 2022, the European Council unanimously granted Ukraine EU candidate status. This decision was historic and unprecedentedly swift, taken in response to the heroism of Ukrainians and as a sign of faith in their European future. Subsequently, despite the ongoing war, Kyiv made efforts to fulfil the EU's initial requirements (including reforms of the High Council of Justice, media legislation, anti-corruption measures, etc.). As a result, in December 2023, the EU agreed to start formal accession negotiations, which actually commenced in June 2024 (Odarchenko, 2024). Thus, the process of European integration has become irreversible: Ukraine is gradually synchronising its legislation and institutions with those of the European Union, preparing to become a full

member of the Union.

The European horizon has a powerful modernising influence on Ukrainian political culture. First, European integration sets specific standards and criteria in the areas of the rule of law, human rights, good governance, and economic policy. Completion of the “homework” for accession encourages the Ukrainian authorities to implement reforms even during the war, while civil society closely monitors this process. In particular, over the past year and a half, important European integration laws have been adopted (covering media, national minorities, anti-corruption reforms, etc.), judicial reform is underway, and the government is being cleansed of corrupt officials. All these steps simultaneously bring the country closer to EU membership and reshape the political culture, enshrining the values of transparency, accountability, and respect for legal procedures. Second, the European course strengthens the sense of common purpose and historical optimism in society. Despite the difficult military routine, two-thirds of Ukrainians believe that in the next five years the standard of living in Ukraine will approach European levels. This conviction motivates and inspires work for change (Onuch & Way, 2024). Thirdly, the European horizon contributes to a rethinking of national identity: more and more Ukrainians define their identity not only through ethnic origin or their Soviet past, but through belonging to European civilisation. According to historians, the aspiration to Europe has become a part of modern Ukrainian patriotism and a consensus national idea (Onuch & Way, 2024). One of the central topics is the functioning of democracy under martial law. The imposition of martial law is accompanied by objective restrictions on democratic procedures, such as a moratorium on elections, the concentration of power in the hands of the executive branch and military command, and restrictions on certain rights and freedoms. Researchers emphasise that the main task is to preserve the core of the democratic system, even if temporary restrictions are necessary. The collective study of I. Shumak *et al.* (2024) concludes

that, in the context of prolonged martial law, it is important to ensure that all restrictions are proportionate and temporary, backed by democratic oversight, including control by civil society. This aligns with the assessments of European institutions: the European Commission’s 2024 report states that restrictions on fundamental rights in connection with the war generally remain proportionate to security needs (Sydorenko, 2024). Despite the wartime context, no direct censorship has been introduced in Ukraine – although television switched to a single information marathon, pluralism and criticism of the authorities have persisted in the online media, and a new media law was adopted at the end of 2022 as part of European integration. At the same time, scholars warn that the risks to democracy increase in the event of prolonged martial law, including the gradual erosion of checks and balances, the narrowing of the space for public debate, and possible abuse of power (with indications such as scandals involving the SBU’s surveillance of journalists). Therefore, studies emphasise the importance of constant public oversight and readiness to restore normal democratic processes as soon as possible after the security situation improves (Shumak, 2024).

Due to martial law, the next national elections in Ukraine have been postponed, raising questions about the government’s legitimacy in the long term. This topic has become the subject of both academic research and public debate. In an article by V. Lebediuk (2023) on political dynamics in Ukraine during the war, it is noted that holding elections in wartime is extremely difficult and risky, and that the Ukrainian authorities face a dilemma: on the one hand, pressure from certain external actors and adherence to formal democratic principles; on the other, the practical impossibility of organising elections safely and fairly. Most experts agree that the forced postponement of elections is a justified step to preserve Ukraine’s statehood. Importantly, Ukrainian society also supports this position. According to polls, 84% of citizens oppose holding

elections during the war, preferring to postpone them until the end of martial law; more than two-thirds of respondents agree that the president should continue to perform his duties until victory (Onuch & Way, 2024). Even opposition leaders share this consensus, publicly acknowledging that the government's legitimacy is underpinned by broad public support. O. Onuch & L. Way (2024) point out that despite the pause in the electoral process, Ukrainian politics remains pluralistic – the opposition continues to function, diverse opinions are expressed, and grassroots social mobilisation actively influences decisionmaking. This, according to the authors, is a sign of democratic resilience and augurs well for Ukraine's democratic development after the war. At the same time, legal scholars emphasise the need to develop in advance the legal mechanisms for holding elections in the post-war transition period. As noted by I. Shumak *et al.* (2024), Ukrainian researchers have explored the legal conflicts and organisational challenges of the electoral process under martial law and in the immediate post-war period. Their article addresses issues such as updating legislation, registering IDPs as voters, and ensuring the participation of the military and refugees in voting – all of which form part of the set of tasks that must be resolved before elections can be held safely. The authors' general conclusion is that democracy in Ukraine is currently "on pause" but not abolished – institutions should maintain continuity, and electoral processes should resume as soon as circumstances allow (Lebediuk, 2023). The dramatic changes in the security situation have challenged Ukraine to reconsider its public administration system. In the first days of the invasion, elements of over-centralisation were introduced in practice: critical decisions were made quickly at the central level, and military administrations were established in the regions. Some researchers refer to the temporary curtailment of public policy (e.g. the disappearance of public debates in parliament, the transition of most political forces to a stance of supporting

the government) for the sake of unity in the face of aggression. I. Pavchuk (2024) has studied the legal status of the newly created military administrations. He notes that military administrations have become a new institution of public authority that replaces or supplements local self-government in frontline or occupied communities. At the same time, the legislation contains gaps: for example, it does not provide an exhaustive list of grounds for the early termination of powers of local councils or for the introduction of military administrations at the community level. This has already caused conflicts – most notably the creation of the Kyiv City Military Administration, which prompted debate, as the Kyiv City Council continued to work, and the legal justification for the parallel existence of the military administration was not sufficiently transparent. I. Pavchuk (2024) concludes that the legislation needs to be improved to clearly define the limits of state interference in local self-government during the war, as well as the criteria for returning to a normal constitutional order at the local level. The issue of strategic development management in wartime is discussed in the article by D. Dzvinchuk *et al.* (2023). The researchers note that Russian aggression has disoriented the development planning system: government programmes and regional strategies have lost their relevance, as defence has become the priority. The authorities' efforts were focused on immediate responses, while a unified long-term strategy for the country's reconstruction and development remains under formation. The authors analysed the National Recovery Plan and other documents and concluded that the goals and activities of disparate programmes are not consolidated into a single strategic document that would set a coherent direction for development (Dzvinchuk *et al.*, 2023). They emphasise that the absence of such a national strategy creates a risk of uncoordinated actions among the regions in the post-war period. It is recommended that strategic planning processes be amended to ensure that the plans of individual communities and regions

are aligned with national goals and interregional solidarity. In other words, in the post-war period, a new approach to public development management is needed – one that is more integrated, takes into account the experience of the war, and involves all levels of government.

Another important topic is the fate of decentralisation reform during the war. On the one hand, the need for a single decision-making centre for defence has led to a certain step back towards the centralisation of power. On the other hand, it was the decentralisation achievements of previous years that largely contributed to the effective defence and viability of the home front, as local communities independently addressed humanitarian issues, hosted IDPs, and provided territorial defence. In their article, O. Kulinich & O. Popov (2024) emphasise that decentralisation has had a positive impact on the government's ability to respond to the challenges of war. They cite evidence that communities acted with flexibility and precision during the crisis: resources were quickly redistributed locally to meet priority needs, and decisions were taken locally that could not have been made effectively at the central level. Decentralisation enabled the attraction of additional resources (volunteer assistance, international grants) directly to communities, thereby increasing the resilience of the regions. At the same time, the authors note that the war has objectively slowed the planned development of communities, shifting it to a model of survival and mobilisation. In their view, the success of the decentralisation reform both during the war and in the post-war period will depend on the level of civic engagement and the involvement of residents in local decision-making. According to O. Kulinich & O. Popov (2024), the priority areas of decentralisation in post-war Ukraine should include strengthening the financial independence of communities, developing local democracy, and integrated, region-wide planning for reconstruction.

European experts confirm the importance of this: EU recommendations advise Ukraine to continue strengthening public administration

and decentralisation as a component of post-war reforms (Sydorenko, 2024). Corruption has traditionally been one of the main problems in Ukrainian politics, and the war has brought new challenges in this area. On the one hand, martial law requires the concentration of resources and may reduce the priority of anti-corruption measures. D. Kos (2022) – analysing the situation at the beginning of the war – stated that in 2022, the anti-corruption infrastructure (NABU, NAPC, SAPO, etc.) continued to operate, but its capabilities were limited and the appointment of leaders was delayed. The war creates new risks: weakened oversight, shortages of goods and funds, and a massive influx of Western aid all increase the likelihood of corruption. On the other hand, awareness of these risks has prompted the Ukrainian authorities to demonstrate political will to fight corruption even during active hostilities. In early 2023, a high-profile anticorruption purge took place: following a series of journalistic and NABU investigations, more than ten high-ranking officials, including a deputy minister and several heads of regional administrations, were dismissed or suspended (Koshiw, 2023). President V. Zelenskyy publicly announced a “zero-tolerance” policy towards corruption, assuring that there would be no return to past corrupt practices. These steps have been positively received both domestically and internationally as a signal that even on the “domestic front”, Ukraine continues to reform. Both of these trends are documented in academic publications. A. Terzyan (2024) notes that despite the war, Ukraine continued to implement anti-corruption reforms in 2022-2023: the National Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2021-2025 was adopted, and the state anti-corruption programme for its implementation was approved. Moreover, in 2023, Ukraine slightly increased its score in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) – from 33 to 36 out of 100 – representing one of the most notable improvements globally for that period. This signals some successes, including improvements in the legal framework and institutions (such as

the launch of the High Anti-Corruption Court and the election of the head of the SAPO). However, the level of corruption remains high, and military circumstances have given it “new forms”: experts warn of risks such as the embezzlement of funds for reconstruction and the development of schemes involving humanitarian aid and military procurement (Terzyan, 2024). D. Kos (2022) warned that after the war, Ukraine’s anti-corruption system might be weakened, while the temptation to misappropriate some of the substantial reconstruction resources could be very high. Therefore, there is a need to establish mechanisms for the transparent and accountable distribution of international assistance, restore the full functioning of anti-corruption bodies, and strengthen the capacity of civil society to hold the authorities to account. It is important that the fight against corruption is one of the criteria for EU membership. The European Commission’s aforementioned conclusion noted that Ukraine had strengthened its anti-corruption institutional system and improved the prosecution of high-level corruption, although additional efforts remained necessary (Sydorenko, 2024). Recommendations for Ukraine include continuing to clean up the judiciary (as corrupt justice perpetuates impunity) and ensuring that the principle of “no impunity” for top officials is effectively enforced. Thus, the scientific discourse agrees that corruption remains a serious threat to post-war development, but there is also an understanding of the problem and a basis for overcoming it (institutions, public demand, international pressure). Victory in the war must be accompanied by a “victory on the anti-corruption front”, without which successful reconstruction and European integration will be impossible (Kos, 2022). Based on the findings of various studies, the main risks and prospects for Ukraine’s political development in wartime and post-war periods can be outlined. Among the risks, the most obvious is the weakening of democratic institutions due to the prolonged absence of elections and the concentration of power. Although martial

law is justified, researchers warn of the danger of becoming accustomed to it: if the war drags on, Ukraine may find itself without elections for four to five years, which will test the resilience of democratic traditions. There is a risk that certain elements of authoritarianism may take root (such as an overly centralised style of governance and the suppression of criticism under the pretext of military necessity). The second major risk is corruption and ineffective governance during the transition period. Unless transparency is ensured in the spending of reconstruction funds and full parliamentary and public oversight of the executive branch is restored, there is a threat that the persistent problems of Ukrainian politics will intensify and undermine the government’s credibility in the eyes of citizens and international partners (Mygal, 2023). The third set of risks is related to socio-political tensions in the post-war period: the return of millions of veterans and IDPs, the need to reintegrate the de-occupied territories, and the resolution of transitional justice issues for collaborators will all require considerable wisdom from the state to avoid internal conflicts. The political system must be prepared for the emergence of new actors – including a possible demand for the political representation of veterans and volunteers – and, if democratic channels of participation fail to function effectively, there is a risk of the radicalisation of certain groups. Finally, the impact of the war on international support remains an external challenge: the Ukrainian government must maintain the trust of the West by proving its commitment to reforms and a democratic course – otherwise, there is a risk of losing some aid or facing pressure to make compromises unacceptable to Ukraine. At the same time, the literature also notes significant positive conditions and prospects. First, the war has consolidated Ukrainian society around the idea of defending freedom and democracy. As noted, for example, by I. Shumak *et al.* (2024), the establishment of democratic values has become the basis for the consolidation of modern Ukrainian

society. Mass citizen participation in defence, volunteerism and mutual aid has strengthened civil society and generated an active demand for good governance from public authorities. According to the IISI, in 2023, more than half of Ukrainians expressed trust in civil society organisations, and the balance of trust in volunteers, the army and local government was record-breakingly positive. This means that social capital and civic awareness have increased, providing a solid foundation for the development of democratic institutions after the war. O. Onuch & L. Way (2024) noted the remarkable increase in the share of Ukrainians convinced that democracy is the best form of government (over 75% of citizens). Thus, the public demand for democracy and transparent governance has only strengthened during the war – Ukrainians are fighting not only for independence, but also for the right to live in a democratic state. This supports the expectation that, after victory, meeting this demand will become a top priority.

The next prospect is European integration as a framework for reforms. Despite the war, Ukraine achieved official EU candidate status in 2022-2023 and continued to implement the necessary reforms. The European Commission recognised that the key requirements of candidate status (including judicial reform, anti-corruption efforts and the law on national minorities) had been fulfilled (Sydorenko, 2024). Further progress towards EU membership will be a powerful incentive for political development: it will guard against authoritarian deviations, as democratic standards and the rule of law are mandatory. The prospect of receiving financial and expert assistance from the West for reconstruction also depends on adherence to the principles of good governance. Thus, Ukraine's European choice will serve as both a guide and a safeguard for the political system in the postwar period. As for institutional prospects, researchers expect a return to competitive politics after victory, although this politics will be different. Military experience is likely to change the configuration of the party system – as

V. Lebediuk (2023) notes, new political forces may emerge rooted in unity and the volunteer movement, while the old “pro-Russian” forces will not have legitimacy in the eyes of voters. The de facto ban on pro-Russian parties in 2022 and the general patriotic consensus among the main elites during the war created the preconditions for a more pro-European and reformist political spectrum in the future (Onuch & Way, 2024). In post-war Ukraine, the central political issues will be reconstruction, modernisation of the country, integration into the EU and NATO, and support for veterans – in other words, an agenda that unites the nation. Based on this, scholars make cautiously optimistic predictions: if Ukraine survives as a democratic state until the end of the war, then, after the victory, there is every chance not only of restoring but also of significantly strengthening democratic institutions. Ukraine's “warring democracy”, as the experts of the Centre for Political and Legal Reforms aptly put it, demonstrates resilience and can become even stronger after going through the crucible of trials (Shumak *et al.*, 2024). Specific prospects include holding fair elections as soon as the situation stabilises, restarting the decentralisation process in light of new realities, continuing judicial reform and cleansing the state apparatus, and integrating veterans into government and administration. Ukraine will have a unique chance to re-establish itself on the principles of integrity and efficiency.

The Ukrainian political system has faced unprecedented challenges since 24 February 2022. Academic studies conducted between 2022 and 2024 comprehensively cover these challenges – from preserving democracy under martial law, holding elections, ensuring good governance and fighting corruption, to continuing decentralisation and reforms. Despite the obvious risks of wartime, the overall tone of academic assessments is cautiously optimistic. The war has brought Ukraine not only destruction but also the consolidation of society, the rise of civil society, and a clear civilisational choice in favour of democracy (Fig. 1).

Wartime political challenges	
<b>Institutional challenges</b>	
→ Martial law restrictions	
→ Elections postponement	
<b>Democratic compression</b>	
→ Power concentration	
→ Reduced media pluralism	
→ <b>Governance issues</b>	
→ Corruption risks	
→ Resource oversight	
<b>Civil society response</b>	
→ Volunteer movement & Civic oversight	
→ Democratic vigilance	
→ Transparency demands	

**Figure 1.** Main challenges of Ukraine's political system during the war

**Source:** compiled by the author based on I. Koshiw (2023), M. Budjeryn (2024), and I. Shumak et al. (2024)

Researchers agree that if the war is successfully concluded, Ukraine has every opportunity to enter a new stage of political development – one that is more mature and sustainable. The foundations for this are already being laid: despite the military difficulties, the obligations for EU membership are being fulfilled, pluralism is being preserved, and the government's accountability to society is not being lost. The Ukrainian case has few historical parallels – a democracy

that continues to function under bombardment – and is therefore the subject of close attention by scholars. Their studies help to determine what decisions are needed for Ukraine's political system to emerge from the war, not weakened but reformed and strengthened. This would ensure that the sacrifices of the Ukrainian people are not in vain, and that, after the victory, the country will develop as a democratic, lawful, and effectively governed state (Table 1).

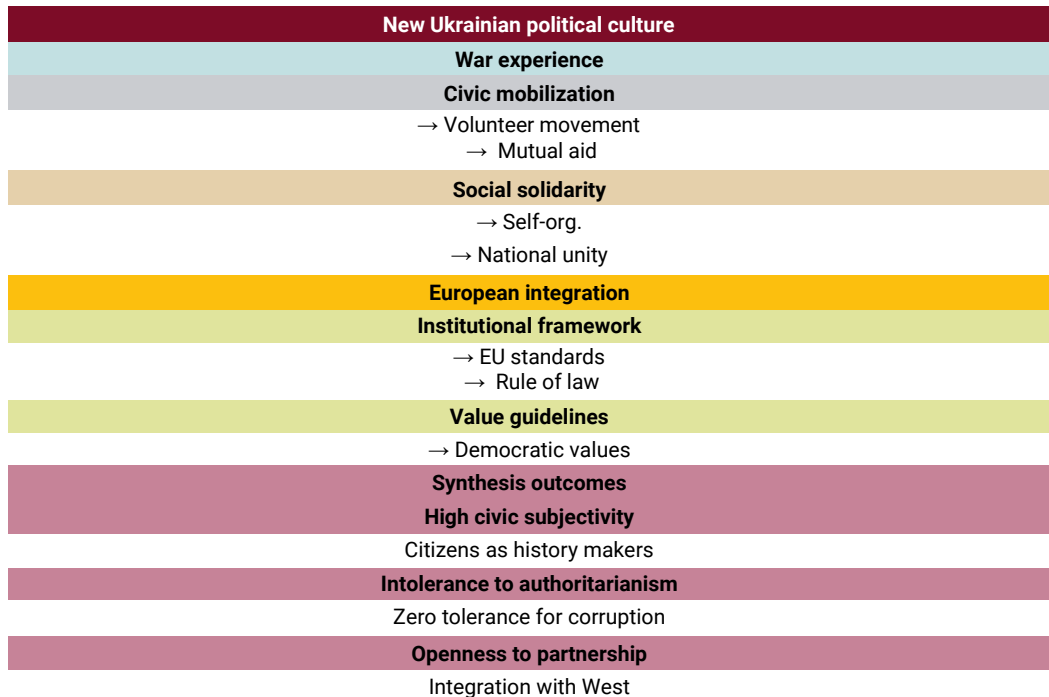
**Table 1.** Expected post-war changes in Ukraine's political system

Sphere	Current wartime state	Expected post-war changes	Timeline
Electoral process	Elections postponed due to martial law	Resumption of genuinely competitive elections with the emergence of new political forces	6-12 months after the end of the war
Democratic institutions	Centralised executive power	Restoration of the system of checks and balances	12-24 months
Civil society	High mobilisation and activism	Institutionalisation of volunteer networks	Ongoing process
Anti-corruption	Limited capacity, wartime risks	Strengthened institutions and enhanced transparency	18-36 months
Decentralisation	Partial rollback towards centralisation	Strengthened local governance informed by wartime experience	24-48 months
European integration	Candidate status achieved	Acceleration of full membership negotiations	5-10 years
Judicial reform	Continuing under EU pressure	Full independence and effectiveness	36-60 months
Media landscape	Single marathon format	Return to a pluralistic media environment	12-18 months

**Source:** author's analysis based on L. Leonchuk & E. Johnson (2023), K. Zarembo (2023), and A. Terzyan (2024)

The emerging Ukrainian political culture is being shaped by the war and the process of European integration, forming a synthesis of civic engagement and European values. On the one hand, the war has made society more cohesive, fostering trust in its own strengths and grassroots

initiatives. On the other hand, the European path provides a top-down direction for development, offering an institutional framework and value-based guidelines. A qualitatively new political reality is thus taking shape at the intersection of these two factors (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2.** Formation of the new Ukrainian political culture

**Source:** developed by the author based on N. Shapovalova (2017), O. Onuch & L. Way (2024), and I. Buzhyna et al. (2024)

Its features include: a high level of citizen agency (with citizens seeing themselves as shapers of history rather than passive observers); intolerance of authoritarianism and corruption (given the immense sacrifices made for freedom, society will not tolerate any usurpation of power or return to the old order); openness to the world; and a desire for partnership with democracies (Ukrainians perceive themselves as an integral part of the Western democratic community). In broad terms, Ukraine's existential search for its place in Europe continues: Ukrainians are reinterpreting their historical trauma and experience

in order to integrate into the European community as an equal partner, while preserving their identity. Europe, for its part, is also learning from Ukraine's sacrifice and courage, and is increasingly recognising Ukraine as an indispensable part of a united Europe.

It is important to stress that the European perspective does not guarantee an automatic solution to all problems, but it does offer a roadmap for reforms and unites society around a positive vision for the future. In the post-war period, civil society – working alongside the government and with the support of European partners – is expected

to advance the country's progress through democratic transformation. According to researcher E. Landi (2023), Ukraine's civil society is already preparing to play a central role in post-war reconstruction, ensuring transparency, public oversight, and citizen involvement in decision-making. Integration into European institutions is viewed by both society and experts as a mechanism for safeguarding Ukrainian democracy from internal and external threats. Ultimately, EU membership will mean inclusion in the systems of collective security, the rule of law, and the single market – creating an environment fundamentally incompatible with authoritarianism. This civilisational choice, sealed by the sacrifices of Ukrainians, will be the most fitting tribute to their civic maturity.

### Conclusions

The war in Ukraine and the ensuing post-war reality poses enormous socio-political challenges, but at the same time open new horizons for national development. The analysis shows that Ukrainian society has demonstrated an extraordinary level of civic maturity, responding to the existential threats of war with unity, self-sacrifice, and active participation in a common cause. The massive mobilisation of volunteers, high patriotism, maturity of thought, and citizens' sense of responsibility have significantly strengthened the country's defence capability and transformed the quality of interaction between the state and society. At the same time, the war has exposed the vulnerabilities of the political system – the risks of concentration of power, corruption, and erosion of democratic norms. Overcoming these risks forms part of public demand and is a prerequisite for a successful future.

The phenomenon of civic maturity in Ukraine should be viewed as a multidimensional concept, encompassing the maturity of consciousness, the ability to self-organise, a culture of activism, and a deep sense of responsibility. These qualities did not appear suddenly – their roots can be traced back to the events of recent decades, particularly the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of

Dignity. However, it was the extreme conditions of the war that fully unleashed the potential of Ukrainian civil society, tempering it and bringing it to a new level of maturity. The challenge now is to preserve and enhance this potential in peacetime, directing it towards the post-war reconstruction and modernisation of the country. The European horizon plays a key role in shaping a positive scenario for Ukraine's future. European integration has become a unifying idea for the Ukrainian nation, imparting meaning to the current struggle and outlining the desired model of the state – democratic, law-governed, and prosperous. Successful integration into European structures will require continued reforms and sustained civic engagement, which are the very traits that constitute civic maturity. Thus, the phenomenon of civic maturity and European perspectives are mutually reinforcing: mature citizens have secured a chance for a European future, and the European choice in turn motivates them to remain active and responsible.

In conclusion, it should be emphasised that Ukraine's path remains difficult. There are significant challenges ahead in terms of post-war recovery, economic reform, and healing social wounds. It will be crucial to maintain the democratic course: victory must be not only military, but also one of values. It is vital that Ukraine, having won, remains a democratic state – and this democracy should not merely survive, but be tempered in the fire of war, hardened and strengthened. Only under such conditions will the sacrifices and efforts of Ukrainians be fully justified, and the nation's historical existential quest will be crowned with success within the horizon of European prospects. Future research should focus on several critical areas. First, longitudinal studies examining the sustainability of civic engagement patterns as Ukraine transitions from wartime to post-war reconstruction will be essential in determining whether current levels of civic maturity can be maintained during peacetime. Second, comparative analysis with other post-conflict societies that have undergone European integration

processes could provide valuable insights into best practices and potential challenges. Third, an in-depth investigation of generational differences in the formation of civic consciousness, particularly among youth who have experienced formative years during the conflict, will be crucial for predicting long-term democratic development trajectories. Additionally, research into the specific mechanisms for translating wartime social capital into effective post-war governance structures represents a vital area for policy-relevant scholarship. Finally, ongoing monitoring of the relationship between European integration progress and democratic consolidation will provide essential evidence for both academic understanding and practical policy formulation in post-conflict democratic transitions.

### Acknowledgements

Gratitude is expressed to the research participants who shared their experiences and perspectives during challenging wartime conditions. Special appreciation is extended to the volunteer coordinators and civil society leaders who facilitated

data collection efforts despite operational constraints. Acknowledgement is also made of the valuable feedback provided by colleagues at the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine and international research collaborators who contributed to the development of the theoretical framework.

### Funding

This research was conducted without external funding and was supported through institutional resources provided by the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine. No specific grants or financial support from governmental, commercial, or non-profit organisations were received for this study.

### Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was declared that could have influenced the conduct, analysis, or reporting of this research. There are no financial, personal, or professional relationships that could potentially bias the research findings or their interpretation.

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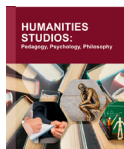
## Соціально-політичні виклики української (після)воєнної реальності та феномен громадянської зрілості

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**Анотація.** Повномасштабна війна в Україні створила унікальні умови для трансформації політичної культури та розвитку громадянського суспільства, що актуалізує дослідження феномену громадянської зрілості як відповіді на екзистенційні виклики сучасності. Мета роботи полягала у визначенні ключових проявів громадянської зрілості українського суспільства в контексті воєнної та повоєнної реальності, а також аналізі її взаємозв'язку з політичною культурою та європейським вектором розвитку. У дослідженні використано комплексний підхід, що включає якісні та кількісні методи дослідження, аналіз наукових джерел, документальний аналіз та порівняльно-історичний метод. Було досліджено, що українське суспільство демонструє надзвичайний рівень громадянської зрілості через масову мобілізацію волонтерів, високий патріотизм та зрілість мислення громадян. Було встановлено, що феномен громадянської зрілості проявляється через чотири взаємопов'язані виміри: громадянську свідомість, мобілізацію, активізм та відповідальність. Особливу увагу було приділено ризикам демократичного згорання, зокрема посиленню виконавчої влади, зниженню рівня плюралізму, громадянських свобод, політичної конкуренції, суспільного контролю та відтермінуванню демократичних процедур під час війни. Було проаналізовано, що європейська інтеграція відіграє ключову роль у формуванні позитивного сценарію майбутнього України, надаючи інституційні рамки та ціннісні орієнтири. Було узагальнено, що європейський горизонт та громадянська зрілість взаємно підсилюють один одного, створюючи основу для успішного демократичного розвитку. Результати дослідження можуть бути використані політологами, соціологами та фахівцями з державного управління для розробки стратегій розвитку громадянського суспільства та демократичних інститутів у повоєнний період.

**Ключові слова:** демократичні трансформації; волонтерський рух; європейська інтеграція; воєнний час; політична культура; громадянське суспільство



## Philosophical-theological critique of greed in the work *De Nabuthae* of Ambrose of Milan

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**Abstract.** The relevance of the research lay in the fact that a systematic analysis of early Christian criticism of greed allowed one to outline the origins of the Church's social ethics and to correlate the origins with contemporary debates on property inequality. The aim of the work was to reconstruct the philosophical-theological foundations of the condemnation of *avaritia* in the sermon *De Nabuthae* of Ambrose of Milan and to assess the contribution to the formation of the Latin patristic concept of property. The methodology was based on historical-genetic analysis of the text, comparative exegesis of Stoic and biblical concepts, as well as on socio-economic hermeneutics of the late imperial context. In the course of the research, it was found that Ambrose interpreted *avaritia* as a form of idolatry, which replaced the worship of God with the cult of things and destroyed the vertical relationship between God and man. Exegetical analysis showed that Naboth appeared as an image of a martyr for justice, while Ahab functioned as a symbol of corrupt state authority. The rhetorical devices of anaphora, antithesis, and apostrophe directed pastoral polemic at the magnates of Milan and appealed to voluntary restitution of illegally acquired property. The synthesis of the Stoic dichotomy "use – abuse" with the biblical motif of stewardship formed a programme of mercy, sacrifice, and justice, which was later developed in the scholastic concept of the social function of property. The research also demonstrated that the sermon incorporated ancient legal argumentation, legitimised ecclesiastical intervention in private property disputes. The conclusions obtained clarified the genealogy of the Latin critique of economic inequality and provided conceptual guidelines for further interdisciplinary studies of Christian economic ethics. The practical significance of the work lay in the fact that it clarified terminological and conceptual aspects of Ambrosian critique of greed and could serve as a source of reference material for further research on early Christian social ethics

**Keywords:** colonate; mercy; justice; Stoic dichotomy; biblical narrative; classical Latin philology

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Received 29.04.2025 Revised 01.09.2025 Accepted 23.09.2025

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### **Suggested Citation:**

Smetaniak, M. (2025). Philosophical-theological critique of greed in the work *De Nabuthae* of Ambrose of Milan. *Humanities Studios: Pedagogy, Psychology, Philosophy*, 13(3), 112-129. doi: 10.31548/hspedagog/3.2025.112.

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## Introduction

In the period of the late Roman Empire, Christianity had already become a state-forming factor after the edict *Cunctos populos* (AD 380), by which Theodosius I declared the Nicene Creed the only lawful confession. This decision legitimised ecclesiastical institutions, which in turn intensified competition between orthodoxy and various forms of Arianism, and also led to increased dependence of local communities on bishops as moral arbiters. The syncretic religiosity of the cities still preserved pagan elements, but the systematic closure of temples and transfer of the functions to Christian communities gradually transformed the public space into a theatre of theological-political polemics. The social structure of late Roman society demonstrated a tendency towards increased economic inequality and reinforced social stratification, tax innovations and agrarian crises stimulated the transition of small landowners under the patronage of large landowners, which led to a new format of dependence – colonatus. Christian leaders responded with the development of charitable practices and the preaching condemnation of greed, offering theological arguments in defence of fair distribution of resources. In this context, Ambrose's sermon *De Nabuthae* played the role of a moral manifesto directed against the abuses of landowners and officials of the city curia.

The life and activity of Ambrose of Milan (c. 339-397) were defined as a relevant subject of study, since the figure of this bishop combined the administrative competence of a Roman magistrate and the theological erudition of a Church Father, which determined the ability to form new moral and legal guidelines for the urban society of the late Empire. The intervention in tax and land disputes, support for socially vulnerable groups, and struggle against Arianism created a precedent of public influence of episcopal ministry, and therefore required careful analysis of the sources and motivations of this pastoral activity.

M. Edwards (2020) carried out editorial work on a comprehensive interdisciplinary study devoted to the philosophical foundations of early

Christian thought, with special attention to the reception of Greek metaphysics, ethics, and logic in the patristic tradition. The collection analysed the ways of adapting Platonism, Stoicism, and Aristotelianism in the context of Christian doctrine and exegesis. M. Fernández-Götz *et al.* (2020) analysed Roman expansion within the framework of critical archaeology, considering it as a form of systemic expansionist policy that combined structural violence with deliberate use of material objects to consolidate power. The authors applied the concept of the agency of things to rethink the functional role of infrastructure, trophies, and monumental representation in legitimising the imperial order. The study highlighted the shadow aspects of the Roman state mechanism, in particular its ability to undermine local identities under the guise of civilisational rhetoric. Within the study of the work *De Nabuthae* such approaches provided additional analytical foundations for interpreting Ambrose's critique of greed as condemnation not only of a personal vice, but also of a broader politico-social system based on inequality, appropriation, and symbolic domination.

M. Gassman (2020) studied the transformation of religious policy in the Roman Empire in the era of Christian emperors, focusing on the shift of the ideological centre from the traditional cultic order to imperial orthodoxy. The author analysed how emperors used Christianity to legitimise the power and centralise the religious space. The study showed that religion became an instrument of imperial control, integrated into the mechanisms of administrative governance. F. Schulz (2014) analysed the image of Ambrose of Milan as a Christian adviser at the imperial court, paying particular attention to the relations with the rulers of the late Roman Empire. The author proved that Ambrose not only carried out spiritual guidance but also formed a new model of moral control over imperial power. G. Todeschini (2024) studied the functioning of money as a metaphor and symbol in Christian thought from

the time of the Church Fathers to the twelfth century. The author analysed how financial images reflected moral-ethical notions of power, sin, justice, and mercy. The research revealed that money in Christian discourse appeared not only as an economic tool but as a bearer of theological symbolism, capable of forming normative conceptions of social order.

M. Vessey (2024) carried out a large-scale study of the works of Latin Christian authors of Late Antiquity, focusing on the relationship between literary form, institutional context, and theological content of the texts. The author showed how Christian rhetoric adapted classical genres to new pastoral and doctrinal tasks. J. Zachhuber (2020) studied the formation of Christian theology as an autonomous philosophical direction, which gradually displaced ancient metaphysics in the Late Antique period. The author traced the evolution of patristic thought from the Cappadocian Fathers to John of Damascus, analysing its conceptual innovations and methodological reorientation. The research demonstrated that Christian philosophy formed a new ontological paradigm, the centre of which was not substance, but the relationship between God and man. In previous studies, the main focus had been on the genre-rhetorical features of Ambrose of Milan's sermons and the significance in anti-religious and dogmatic polemics, while a comprehensive analysis of the socio-economic content, aimed at condemning greed as a systemic phenomenon, remained insufficiently developed.

Therefore, the aim of the article was to reconstruct the philosophical-theological foundations of the critique of *avaritia* in *De Nabuthae* and to specify its contribution to the formation of the Latin concept of just ownership. To achieve this aim, the study set the following tasks: to outline the historical background of the sermon's proclamation and its influence on the content of social critique, and to analyse the conceptual apparatus through which Ambrose justified the moral and legal fault of greed.

## Materials and Methods

The source basis of the research consisted of a corpus of four patristic texts, each of which provided interpretation of different levels of theological-philosophical critique of greed. The main source was the sermon S. Ambrosii (1927) *De Nabuthae*, which was used in the edition entitled *De Nabuthae: A commentary, with an introduction and translation*. This academic edition contained the Latin original text, commentaries, and a parallel English translation, which allowed comprehensive analysis of the vocabulary, stylistics, and structure of argumentation. To reproduce the context of early Christian ethics, the treatise Clement of Alexandria (1885) "The Pedagogue" in the translation of William Wilson was used, which contained condemnation of material insatiability within the Alexandrian theological school. An additional opportunity to compare the biblical basis of Ambrose's critique was provided by Origen's work "Origen's Hexaplos: Which remain" in the edition of F. Field (1875), where variants of the Greek Septuagint were preserved, precisely the biblical narrative on which Ambrose based the sermon. "The Complete course of Patrologia" under the editorship of J.-P. Migne (1855) contained a selection of Ambrose's letters and treatises, from which additional rhetorical figures, *topoi*, and concepts related to the theme of greed were extracted. Only texts dated to the third-fourth centuries, which had attribution of authorship and thematic relevance to the analysis of *avaritia*, were included in the source base. Late medieval, apocryphal, and anonymous materials were excluded to prevent methodological distortion of the chronological and conceptual focus. The primary processing of sources was carried out in May 2025 with the help of digitised materials available in open digital libraries.

The historical-genetic method made it possible to reconstruct the socio-economic circumstances of Italy at the end of the fourth century. The philosophical analysis was aimed at identifying the influence of ancient ethics – Stoic and Platonic – on Ambrose's argumentation. The

comparative-theological method made it possible to trace the differences between Western and Eastern Christian traditions in the understanding of greed. The hermeneutical method made it possible to carry out a multifaceted interpretation of the key concepts of the sermon in the context of biblical allusions. The rhetorical-discursive analysis was applied to study the compositional structure of the sermon, its stylistic means, logical transitions, and methods of influencing the listener.

The institutional analysis made it possible to identify the peculiarities of interaction between church and state authority in the conditions of Late Antique Milan. The cultural-anthropological method provided the opportunity to understand greed as an element of collective mentality and moral representation of welfare, sacrifice, and the limits of the permissible within the Christian community. The narrative analysis was used to reconstruct the internal logic of the construction of the sermon *De Nabuthae*, in particular for the purpose of identifying rhetorical strategies of personalisation, typologisation, and mythopoetisation of the biblical narrative. The economic-historical method made it possible to connect theological critique of private property with the specific context of the decline of the fiscal mechanism, concentration of landownership, and the formation of colonate as a structural form of social dependence. The intertextual analysis made it possible to identify biblical and philosophical sources integrated into the text of the sermon and to trace how quotations, allusions, and reminiscences functioned as means of deepening the critique of *avaritia*.

## Results

### **Ambrose of Milan in the context of the socio-ethical crisis of the late Roman Empire**

Ambrose of Milan (approx. 339-397 AD) occupied a prominent position among the intellectual and ecclesio-political authorities of the Late Roman period. The multifaceted activity contributed to the formation of the main principles of the Latin theological tradition, the strengthening of the institutional organisation of the Church, and had a

significant influence on the transformation of social relations throughout the fourth century. Born in Trier (present-day Trier, Germany) into a senatorial family that linked career prospects with imperial administration, Ambrose had already in the youth mastered the corpus of classical education, which encompassed Roman law, rhetoric, grammar, dialectics and the literary heritage of antiquity (Colish, 2008).

This humanitarian-legal basis ensured rapid career advancement within the administrative hierarchy: first Ambrose held the post of advisor to the praetorian prefect, and around 370 Ambrose was appointed prefect of the provinces of Liguria and Emilia with the residence in Milan – one of the leading political and cultural centres of the Western Roman Empire. While holding the governor's post, Ambrose was not limited in carrying out purely fiscal-judicial functions, but consistently defended socially vulnerable groups – the poor, widows, orphans, veterans. In the administrative activity, Ambrose openly opposed the abuses of local magistrates, which manifested in corrupt practices and excessive tax pressure. Thanks to this stance, even before entering church service Ambrose had acquired a reputation as a principled defender of social justice, which significantly increased the level of trust in Ambrose among different strata of the population and strengthened the moral authority.

The confessional crisis in Milan following the death of the Arian bishop Auxentius in 373 triggered an exceptional chain of events: in December 374, during a popular assembly that ended in sharp dispute between supporters of Arianism and of the Nicene Creed, the people unanimously proclaimed the name of the governor Ambrose as a candidate capable of ensuring confessional reconciliation (Mercer, 2017) (Table 1). Despite the absence of baptism and clerical rank, the candidacy was supported by both camps, and Emperor Valentinian I sanctioned it, seeing in it a guarantee of stability. Within eight days Ambrose was baptised, successively ordained lector-*exorcista-acolyta-subdiaconus-diaconus*-presbyter, and enthroned on

the episcopal see of Milan. This unexpected transition from the world of state administration into the sphere of spiritual leadership testified to the

flexibility of the Late Roman elites, capable of integrating secular leaders into the church hierarchy for the sake of social peace (Colish, 2008).

**Table 1.** *The confessional crisis in Milan after the death of Bishop Auxentius (373 AD)*

Category of analysis	Arian faction	Nicene faction	The role of state power	Religious and political consequences
Social base of support	Mainly part of the military, representatives of the bureaucracy, officials arriving from the eastern provinces of the Empire	Urban majority, local clergy, educated strata, part of the trade and craft sector	Emperor Valentinian I maintained nominal neutrality but allowed the community to elect a bishop	Formalised victory of the Nicenes in the confessional conflict, further displacement of Arians from government and church positions
Theological position	Rejection of the fullness of Christ's divinity, Christ as the highest creation but not consubstantialis (of one substance) with the Father	Support for the Nicene Creed, Christ as true God from God, co-eternal and consubstantial with the Father	The authorities did not attempt to impose a specific doctrine but sought political stability	Confessional polarisation led to an increased influence of bishops as moral and political authorities in urban life
Behaviour during a vacancy	Actively promoted the candidate, exerted pressure, sought the support of magistrates	Organised prayers, public gatherings, demanded a pastor who would uphold Nicene teaching	The prefect of Milan, in the person of Ambrose, attempted to act as mediator	The election of Ambrose became a compromise, but later Ambrose was clearly distanced from Arian doctrines, which definitively changed the confessional situation in the region
Mechanism of election of the new bishop	Initially opposed the election of a non-confessional figure but lacked sufficient strength for open resistance	Public support for Ambrose's candidacy – a catechumen with the authority of a just administrator	Approved the election without openly interfering in the process	Strengthening of the model of charismatic episcopacy receiving power from below – from the community, not through imperial appointment

**Source:** compiled by the author based on J. Cheung (2022), A. Cady (2022)

In the new role Ambrose was devoted to theological study, systematic exploration of Holy Scripture and patristic exegesis, as well as to the works of Plato, the Stoics and the Christianised Neoplatonic tradition. The Latin treatises, sermons and pastoral letters were distinguished by strict logic, programmatic appeals to social responsibility and refined classical style, combining Ciceronian periodicity with biblical parallelism. As one of the first Western authors to develop Christian teaching on social justice, Ambrose consistently argued that material goods had to serve as a means of practising love of neighbour, and that the gap between

wealthy strata of the population and socially vulnerable groups constituted both a moral and political threat to the stability of the Roman state. In Ambrose's ethical teaching, central place was given to the analysis of the sin of greed, which in the tradition of Christian authors, including Clement of Alexandria (1885), Origen (Field, 1875) and Cyprian of Carthage (Migne, 1855), was regarded as a fundamental vice that destroyed the human capacity for love – both for God and for other people.

The biblical basis of Ambrose's exposition was formed on the ground of a consistent tradition encompassing different stages of sacred history:

from the story of the relations of Abraham and Lot, the prescriptions of Deuteronomy, the prophetic denunciations of usury – to the New Testament warnings of Christ against unjust enrichment and apostolic exhortations to avoid avarice as “the root of all evils”. The totality of these texts constituted the structural foundation of Ambrose’s theological discourse (Toneatto, 2025). By systematising these texts, Ambrose demonstrated that greed was not merely a private moral failing but a structural sin of society, which determined unjust redistribution of resources, generated usurious practices, initiated conflicts and destabilised imperial governance. In the assessment of the Church Fathers, formed between the second and fourth centuries, the close connection between greed and idolatry acquired fundamental theological significance, since it allowed socio-economic deviations to be regarded not only as ethical violations but as manifestations of deeper spiritual pathology. Such an interpretation was based on consistent reading of biblical texts, where the desire to possess was directly equated with idolatry. For Clement of Alexandria (1885), greed was a form of self-enclosure of the individual who chose the material limitation of things instead of God, while for Origen it meant rejection of participation in God’s gracious order. Cyprian of Carthage, for the part, emphasised that love of wealth obscured the capacity for sacrifice and therefore contradicted the very essence of Christian life. These reflections not only

fixed the theological inadmissibility of excessive enrichment but also gave theological legitimacy to social critique, since opposition to unjust ownership or insatiable accumulation was seen as a form of spiritual purification and restoration of the true hierarchy of values (Bucci, 2014).

The Fathers believed that when a person directed desire towards material goods, such people in effect “shifted the sacred centre” from the Creator to the created world, replacing the transcendent absolute with fragile earthly guarantors. Ambrose continued the line of interpretation formed in the early Christian tradition, pointing out that the refusal of wealthy persons to share the surplus constituted a functional denial of the divine mandate of stewardship of material goods, and thereby doomed such owners to severe eschatological judgement. The socio-economic circumstances recorded at the end of the fourth century reinforced the relevance of Ambrose’s denunciatory speeches. The western provinces of the Roman Empire were under the pressure of a number of interrelated factors – monetary inflationary instability, fiscal overload directed at covering military expenditures, degradation of transport infrastructure and barbarian invasions. The consequence of these processes was the progressive impoverishment of small landowners who, losing the ability to fulfil tax obligations, transferred the land plots to large latifundists or entered into patronal dependence upon these landlords (Table 2).

**Table 2.** *Structural parameters of socio-economic relations in the Roman Empire at the end of the fourth century*

The sphere of social order	Characteristic manifestations at the end of the 4 <sup>th</sup> century	Institutional mechanisms of regulation	Socio-economic tensions	Long-term transformations
Agrarian relations	Concentration of land in the hands of senatorial families, military magnates and the episcopate caused the decline of free small landownership. Colonate turned into a hereditary form of dependence bordering on serfdom	Theodosius I’s edicts legalised the attachment of coloni to the land. Church land plots were exempted from part of the taxes, which stimulated the transfer of property under church patronage	Displacement of independent farmers from the market, growth of social inequality in the countryside, flight of peasants to barbarian frontiers, mass attachment to the land	Institutionalisation of agrarian dependence, formation of the feudal landscape of Western Europe on the basis of colonate

Table 2. Continued

Fiscal exploitation	The Empire supported the army and administration by means of a system of direct and in-kind taxes, which became an excessive burden for payers. Urban communities were collectively responsible, which demoralised the curial class	Law on collective responsibility of municipalities, accounting functions entrusted to local aristocracy; tax registers not updated, causing abuses	Mass bankruptcy of curials, flight of free peasants to barbarian lands or under the protection of bishops, demographic decline in the provinces	Destruction of the tax base, transfer of part of responsibilities to the Church, undermining of state control over regions
Structure of social hierarchy	A rigid estate-professional structure was formed, with hereditary service and prohibition of transitions between estates. The bureaucracy lost mobility, and the provincial elite distanced itself from the lower classes	Edicts on hereditary fixation of professions, legislative prohibition on leaving municipal duties, imperial decrees on estate boundaries	Alienation of the population from authority, formation of "two empires" – official and shadow (church, local), flights to barbarian kingdoms as a form of protest	Conservation of estate hierarchy into the Middle Ages, decline of civic identity
Urban economy	Cities lost the function as centres of trade and crafts. Due to rising taxes and loss of markets, the economy concentrated around consumption rather than production	Formal preservation of collegia as mechanisms of craft regulation, control of prices and supply volumes in cities, especially in the capital, reorientation towards gifts from authority	Destruction of economic initiative, shift towards natural economy, decline of infrastructure; reduction of monetary circulation	Transition from urbanised economy to rural-oriented households, city as residence of authority rather than economic hub
Migrations and demography	Significant resettlement of barbarian tribes who made treaties with the Empire and settled on its territory. At the same time, internal mobility of the Roman population was restricted	Administrative restrictions on movement; treaties with barbarian groups, integration of foederati into the army	Overpopulation of certain regions, conflicts between settled and newly arrived populations, ethnocultural contradictions	Change of demographic face of provinces, gradual barbarisation of the composition of the army and administration
Christian Church	The Church was turning into a parallel institution of power, capable of providing social functions no longer carried out by the state	Granting the Church property and judicial privileges, involving bishops in administrative decisions, formation of parish structures	Tension between church and municipal jurisdiction, conflicts over property concentration, clergy as new elite	Institutionalisation of the Church as the foundation of the future European medieval order

**Source:** compiled by the author based on M. Fernández-Götz et al. (2020)

At the same time, magnates, making use of official connections and influence over procurators, arranged purchase agreements, lobbied prefectural verdicts and, reinforcing ownership with legions of clients, de facto monopolised agricultural markets. The Church, having been strengthened after the Edict of Milan (313) and the Edict of Theodosius I (380), emerged as an alternative moral arbiter which could appeal to

the authority of Holy Scripture to counteract the excessive concentration of economic power. In this context, the sermon-treatise *De Nabuthae* became a textbook example of biblical exegesis in the service of social advocacy. The very plot was a compelling illustration of how private greed shaped the policy of institutions and led to the systemic destruction of law (Bergida, 2019).

The preacher stressed that the violent seizure of plots undermined communal solidarity, provoked divine wrath and threatened imperial integrity no less than external aggression. Ambrosian criticism of greed had a threefold dimension: theological – attachment to wealth Ambrose qualified as a concealed apostasy from the divine order, which deformed the image of God in man; moral-anthropological – material excess, in Ambrose's view, clouded spiritual vision, produced psychogenic effects of pride and cruelty, and reduced empathy towards the needs of neighbours; socio-legal – the accumulation of resources in the hands of a restricted oligarchy undermined the tax base, demoralised the administration and weakened the capacity of the centre to maintain infra-state unity.

It was precisely in view of these circumstances that Ambrose associated greed with a broad spectrum of social and even potentially geopolitical threats. In Ambrose's conception, moral vice acquired a structural dimension, threatening the integrity of the community and the security of the state. The pastoral activity of the Bishop of Milan testified to the desire for the practical embodiment of the proclaimed principles: the Bishop organised systematic grain distributions, ransomed captives, supported the renewal of urban space through the reclamation of neglected quarters, and also initiated the establishment of hospital-diaconal infrastructures for the support of the poor population. Moreover, the active participation in political conflicts – in particular the resistance to Empress Justina's attempt to hand over the basilica Porta Romana to the Arians, as well as the confrontation with Emperor Theodosius I after the massacre in Thessalonica in 390 – attested to the assertion of ecclesiastical authority as bearer of moral authority, capable of exercising control over imperial competence.

In sum, the life path and theological-social legacy of Ambrose of Milan illustrated the model of the bishop-statesman, who integrated classical legal culture, biblical-patristic exegesis and active civic engagement. the doctrine of the sin

of greed, which rested upon the combination of theological arguments, ethical anthropology and economic analysis, constituted a holistic project of Christian social thought, relevant both in the Late Roman period and in the wider tradition of Church teaching on justice, mercy and responsible stewardship of property in accordance with divine and human laws of justice.

### **The exegetical and socio-ethical structure of the treatise *De Nabuthae* as a condemnation of greed**

The treatise *De Nabuthae*, delivered by Ambrose of Milan, is an example of a Late Antique moralising sermon in which the biblical narrative became an instrument of sharp socio-political critique. Ambrose brought into the central focus the story from the First Book of Kings about King Ahab's appropriation of the vineyard of the simple Israelite Naboth, and imparted to this ancient text a striking relevance for the inhabitants of Milan, who at the turn of the fourth century were experiencing a sharp increase in property inequality and the spread of corruption (Khodanych, 2023; Cathel, 2025).

The city, enriched by the presence of the imperial court and military command, saw great landowners and financiers rapidly accumulating estates, so the example of royal greed was intended to serve as a warning to the local elite. Already in the introduction Ambrose formulated the thesis: the sin of Ahab was a mirror for many rulers of the time, and thus the story of Naboth was a matter of urgent civic ethics, not merely a biblical illustration. Ambrose structured the sermon according to the five-part classical rhetorical scheme: thesis, narration, confirmation, refutation, conclusion. In the "narration" section, Ambrose retold the biblical story, emphasising the legal aspect of Naboth's act (Smetaniak, 2018). The vineyard had been received by its owner as an inheritance and was protected by a prescription that forbade the final sale of ancestral land. The private dispute between the king and the peasant thereby assumed the weight of a national religious-legal issue: Ahab encroached not only upon

another man's plot, but also upon the order established by God. In the confirmation section Ambrose presented a consistent argument against greed, outlining it both as an internal moral deformation manifested in the insatiable direction of the will towards accumulation, and as an external unjust act of appropriation that violated both ethical and legal order (Villazala, 2024). In the refutation section Ambrose polemicised with the proponents of the then widespread political discourse of state expediency, according to which the concentration of land holdings and resources in the hands of a limited circle of persons was justified by the strategic interests of imperial stability and administrative efficiency. Ambrose critically evaluated such a position, stressing that it concealed moral degradation under the rhetoric of the public good and in fact legitimised social injustice (Dressler, 1947).

The bishop argued that a state founded upon injustice destroyed its own moral basis and ultimately doomed itself to internal degeneration. In conclusion, the bishop addressed landowners directly: return seized plots to heirs, limit rent to a quarter of the harvest, and establish permanent material support for landless families. Ambrose's exegetical approach went far beyond literal interpretation. Using the fourfold scheme of reading common in the Church at that time, Ambrose focused particular attention on the moral sense. By means of intertextual resonances the preacher linked the story of Naboth with the prescriptions of the Mosaic Law regarding land, with the prophetic condemnation of luxury in the Book of Amos, with the Song of the Vineyard in the Book of Isaiah, and with the Gospel parable of the murderous vine-dressers (Gemeinhardt, 2024).

Such intertextual connection shaped in listeners the idea that a just order of property ownership was not merely a social construct but an integral component of divine order. Accordingly, attempts to legalise private greed by using the machinery of the state, in Ambrose's logic, inevitably turned against political power itself, which thereby lost moral legitimacy. Of special

significance in this context, the author assigned to the figure of Naboth. In the Latin text of the sermon, the author deliberately used the verb meaning "suffered", whereas in the older Latin recension of the biblical text the neutral "died" had been used. This lexical modification reoriented perception: Naboth's death ceased to be merely the domestic consequence of a property conflict and acquired the characteristics of martyrdom. It was interpreted as a sacrifice for fidelity to God's law, to which the righteous man remained devoted even at the price of the life. Through this narrative, Ambrose created a typological parallel between Naboth and Christ, embodying in the Old Testament hero the figure of the innocent one killed for another's greed. In such an interpretation Naboth appeared as a martyr for justice, and the voluntary refusal to compromise with unjust pressure from authority became a foreshadowing of Christ's passion.

The psychological portrait of Ahab and Jezebel Ambrose constructed in the technique of contrast. The king's greed generated lies, false judgement, bribery of elders, and finally violence. One vice dragged behind it a whole chain of crimes. Ahab appeared as the embodiment of political greed, which invested personal desire with the force of state law. Jezebel, having organised a false trial, embodied structural evil: the institution appointed to protect justice was transformed into an instrument of robbery. In this way Ambrose demonstrated that the matter concerned not a private weakness but the collapse of public ethics, when the service of justice was replaced by the mechanics of profit. The central concept Ambrose made was precisely greed. Ambrose defined it both as an insatiable drive for possession and as the practice of unjust seizure.

In the sermon, there was a vivid comparison: passion was like thirst intensified by drinking – the more one took, the more one desired. The greedy person, Ambrose insisted, lost inner freedom and became hostage to external things. Here one senses the influence of Stoic thought on passion as disease, but the Christian thinker

added a soteriological dimension: attachment to the transient cut the person off from eternal blessedness. Key for the argument was the Stoic dichotomy “use – abuse”. Material goods were neutral; the moral value was determined by the manner of use. Wealth that supported those in need served love; the same property, when it only fed luxury and oppression, was transformed into sin (Goryacha, 2018).

From this followed a sharp condemnation of the royal palace adorned with the bones of the innocent: stones and jewels became as it were an inscription exposing the owner. The socio-economic critique of the third part of the work concerned excessive rents, usurious interest and the transformation of the rural periphery into extensions of urban villas. Ambrose recalled the old principle that private ownership must not destroy the common good. Ambrose proposed concrete measures: to limit rents to a quarter of the harvest, to return unjustly alienated plots, to regulate regular financial support for landless families.

Almsgiving here was not a chance act but an element of systemic reform. In the following paragraphs, the preacher moved to the theological anthropology of property. The land remained God’s gift, and man merely its steward. Naboth did not sell the vineyard even for generous compensation, since inherited land had sacred status. From this, Ambrose derived a norm: the right to own was subordinated to the obligation to practise mercy. Such a claim corrected the idea popular in Roman law of the unlimited right of property by natural law, and also demanded state intervention where excessive enrichment destroyed public peace. To reinforce the point, the bishop cited the Late Republican practice of annulling a “dishonourable will”, when the will of the deceased grossly wronged the relatives. Likewise, Ambrose said, civil authority must correct property injustice. Elijah’s prophecy that dogs would lick Ahab’s blood Ambrose interpreted as a symbolic illustration of self-destruction: passion to which one surrendered ultimately destroyed the person. Greed closed the heart and rendered it unfit to

receive God’s grace. Therefore, the story from Samaria turned into a universal warning: evil legitimised by power would have consequences not only in time but also in eternity. Naboth’s fidelity to the Law simultaneously bore christological significance: the righteous man killed for justice foreshadowed Christ, who accepted death for the sins of the world and overcame injustice by resurrection (Sidaway, 2021).

In this way, the biblical narrative became part of the drama of salvation, while rulers who followed Ahab appeared as antitypes of the King-Servant. Earthly authority, Ambrose stressed, had to reflect the divine order of selfless gift. Thus, the exegetical generalisation of the Bishop of Milan outgrew the bounds of a specific sermon and became one of the cornerstones of Latin social thought. In the conceptualisation of sin presented by Ambrose, greed was described as a process unfolding in three successive stages: initial captivation by imagined gain, gradual formation of inner dependence on material possession, and finally inevitable completion in the form of deep disappointment and existential dissatisfaction. Such a structure revealed the dynamic of vice as a destructive state affecting at once the will, reason, and capacity for spiritual orientation. Healing likewise appeared as a process: to acknowledge God’s primacy over all creation, to train in generosity, and later to enter into the joy of a heart freed from insatiability. Here is discernible a Stoic motif of constant spiritual progress, but the ultimate goal was not self-sufficient tranquillity but love that shares the received gift (Thomas, 2021).

In conclusion, Ambrose affirmed: as Naboth gained imperishable glory, so too each one who renounced unjust enrichment would inherit heavenly joy, while the blood of Ahab remained forever as a warning to those who privatised power and wealth. The small vineyard proved to be a universal lesson: property was destined for service, authority for the defence of the weak, wealth for the creation of solidarity. When these principles were ignored, greed destroyed not only the soul but also the civic order. Making use of the

biblical plot, Stoic ethics and a critical rethinking of Roman legal order, Ambrose created a coherent teaching that condemned greed as both inner disease and social danger, and called for just use of material goods.

### **Economic injustice and pastoral rhetoric in the sermon of Ambrose of Milan**

The treatise *De Nabuthae* recorded the moment when theological thought in the Western Roman Empire moved from rhetorical condemnation of individual abuses to a systemic understanding of greed as a profound spiritual disorder, which alienated the person from God, from the neighbour, and ultimately from the self. Ambrose of Milan considered the behaviour of King Ahab not only as a single violation of the rights of a small landowner, but as a symptom of the cult of things, which elevated a material object to the rank of an absolute goal and transformed the ruler into a servant of the own desire. For this reason, at the very beginning of the sermon Ambrose equated the king's longing for another man's vineyard with a pagan sacrifice: Abraham beheld God on the horizon, but Ahab saw only the shadow of the own craving, and this shadow demanded the sacrifice of human blood. Such a reading allowed the biblical text to be stitched together with the realities of Milan, where great landowners sacrificed the well-being of peasants for the expansion of the estates, and simultaneously lifted the problem out of the economic sphere into that of cult.

Ambrose explained the idolatrous character of greed through the structure of communion with God. Whereas in faith a person turned the gaze outward, perceiving good as a gift, in passion the people became enclosed, rejecting the giver and beginning to turn the world around personal profit. This shift, in the words, "built a shrine inside the heart" and set in motion the process of spiritual death (Colish, 2006). The first sign of such death was deafness to the prophetic word: Ahab, having heard Elijah's rebuke, bowed outwardly, but inwardly proved incapable of repentance. The bishop connected this with the

condition of contemporary rulers, who listened to liturgical texts but did not transfer these teachings into the practice of governance.

In the treatise, a medical metaphor appeared: passion acted like poison paralysing the nerves, so that the "dead spirit" still moved in a bodily shell but did not respond to the call of conscience. The next step the author outlined was the opposition between greed and mercy as two incommensurable programmes of life. Mercy, expanded human nature to the common use of goods, allowing one to see in another the image of a brother rather than a competitor, while greed contracted the heart and generated fear of loss, which provoked new seizures.

The Eucharistic motif in the sermon played a special role as an antithesis to avarice: in the liturgical act of breaking bread one saw not only the sacred re-enactment of Christ's sacrifice but also a normative model of social gesture, testifying to voluntary self-limitation and participation in the distribution of gifts as behaviour antithetical to accumulation. This argument was addressed to those who, while remaining formally practising, justified accumulation by reference to the "gift of providence". Ambrose stressed that a gift received without readiness to share became judgement upon the recipient and cancelled the benefit of the sacrament (Pierson, 2010). In the theological grounding of the hierarchy of mortal sins, the sermon occupied an early place in the Latin tradition. Ambrose did not yet use the later fixed list of seven sins but clearly named greed "the mother of lawlessness", since it shook the vertical of worship.

According to the structure of the first commandments, sins were assessed by whether the sins displaced God from the summit of values: greed turned creation into a new centre, thus equating it with apostasy. From this scheme, it followed that even adultery or murder had a derivative character, since such sins sprouted from the desire to appropriate another's property. In this way the author not only elevated the problem of economic injustice to the level

of cult but also set a method of assessing any moral act through the question: to whom is ultimate worship directed? In parallel, Ambrose proposed a positive programme focused on the triadic bond “mercy – sacrifice – justice”. Mercy was defined not as emotional benevolence but as voluntary distribution of resources; sacrifice meant the ability to limit one’s own consumption for the integrity of the community; justice demanded restoration of the rights of those who had become victims of coercion or financial pressure (Šarkić, 2009). Using the example of Naboth, the preacher emphasised that true sacrifice could also be passive: the peasant refused to break the law, even though the cost of resistance was understood. Thus, Ambrose proved that material loss endured in fidelity restored justice more fully than forced redistributions, since it passed into the eschatological dimension, where God recognised the righteous man as heir to imperishable wealth.

The immoral practices of the Italian nobility of that time gave the polemic its concrete content. The sermon mentioned speculative purchases of neglected estates, seizures of irrigation channels, imposed debt obligations and restrictions on peasants’ right to leave the estate. All these actions were presented as contemporary replicas of the biblical crime, since the actions caused “blood without innocent judgement”; what was morally significant was not the mere fact of killing but the destruction of livelihood. Directly before the wealthy hearers, Ambrose voiced the formula, “the earth cries out against you”, stressing that one’s own field became a witness that would not be silent on the day of final judgement. The rhetorical device of personal apostrophe compelled the addressees to recognise the own identity in Ahab’s character and project the biblical punishment onto the own future. In this context, the figure of the bishop acquired a socially prophetic expression. Ambrose emphasised that the Church did not claim confiscation of estates but reserved the right to name injustice and call for voluntary restitution (Villazala, 2024).

Such a stance distanced Ambrose from radicals who demanded violent levelling, while simultaneously undermining the idea of the absoluteness of private ownership popular among Roman jurists. The theologian argued that property rights, although established by civil law, were subordinated to the higher law of love. Subordination did not abolish property but placed it in the regime of service, where the title of owner was transformed into the title of steward. To achieve persuasive effect, the preacher used an elaborate system of stylistic devices. Repetition and anaphora fixed key theses: “greed kills”, “mercy gives life”. Rhetorical questions without answers interrupted the usual linearity of listening and forced the audience to continue the thought internally. The sharp antithesis “wine of blood and wine of joy” contrasted the festive cup of the rich palace with Naboth’s blood, emphasising the mutual exclusivity of the two ways of drinking.

Legal allusions to cases of annulment of unjust wills added practical weight to the argument, reminding listeners that even secular courts recognised limits to a proprietary will when it harmed the neighbour. Such compositional multi-layeredness translated the emotional impulse into a programme of action, offering ethical and legal routes of correction. The influence of the treatise *De Nabuthae* on the subsequent development of Western Christian thought was manifested in the formation of a number of conceptual directions: the consolidation of an exegetical model in which the righteous was identified as bearer of divine order, the deepening of the moral-legal understanding of property as a function of justice, and the reception of pastoral criticism of economic violence as a component of social ethics.

All these receptions proved that Ambrosian criticism of greed laid the methodological foundation for the social theology of the Roman Empire: from the early Christian community to the Scholastic theory of justice. Thus, in *De Nabuthae* greed was interpreted as a form of apostasy, which delivered the heart into slavery to things and engendered spiritual death, while its

opposite appeared as mercy, capable of restoring relationship with God and the neighbour. Ambrose described the vice within a not yet codified but already clearly hierarchical system of mortal sins, showing its generative role in the chain of unjust acts. Mercy, sacrifice, and justice were presented as necessary links of a single ethico-theological logic, calling upon the wealthy voluntarily to limit the desires for the sake of the common good. The rhetorical mastery of the bishop transformed the biblical plot into an instrument of pastoral denunciation of concrete economic abuses, and the treatise itself became a starting point for subsequent Patristic and Scholastic reflection on the social function of property and the primacy of love over the right of ownership.

### Discussion

In the conducted study, it was proved that Ambrosian criticism of greed was not limited to the moral condemnation of individual abuses but constructed a coherent theological-social doctrine, which interpreted private accumulation of resources as a structural sin capable of destabilising the imperial legal order and destroying ecclesial solidarity. Such an interpretation, compared with the data on agrarian concentration, fiscal crisis and the decline of the curial class, demonstrated that *De Nabuthae* functioned as a kind of “normative manifesto” of the Late Antique Church. The identification of rhetorical strategies (anaphora, the contrast “wine of blood/wine of joy”, apostrophe to landowners) showed that the sermon deliberately transformed the biblical narrative into a public instrument of social mobilisation, while the discovery of the threefold paradigm “mercy – sacrifice – justice” moved Ambrosian ethics beyond the boundaries of purely spiritual discourse, translating it into the sphere of legal demands upon property. The significance of the obtained results lay in the specification of the role of Latin Patristics in the formation of early Christian political economy: it was shown how Stoic and Platonic *topoi*, integrated into Ambrose’s exegesis, provided the theoretical basis

for later Scholastic doctrines of the social function of property, and also outlined the historical prerequisites of the medieval concept of the just distribution of goods.

M. Pardo (2022) considered the concept of hunger as a metaphor of spiritual dissatisfaction, emphasising the existential dimension of human need for divine grace. In the present study, however, the focus shifted from metaphysical hunger to systemic criticism of greed as a social and spiritual violation. Whereas for M. Pardo (2022) spiritual hunger was interpreted as a positive condition for growth in piety, in this study greed was instead represented as a form of distorted need, enclosing the human being in the material. Both approaches used exegesis of Ambrose’s works, but M. Pardo’s research concentrated on the anthropological experience of lack, while in this work the key point was criticism of the privatisation of goods and the moral destruction of social structure. Moreover, the present study engaged with a broader socio-historical context, which allowed *De Nabuthae* to be interpreted as part of a pastoral reaction to the economic practices of Late Antiquity.

Building on Cicero’s rhetorical legacy, I. Davidson (2025) explored how Ambrose shaped his pedagogical self-presentation, emphasising the rhetorical mechanism of *imitatio-aemulatio* in shaping pastoral argumentation. In the present study rhetorical means were also taken into account, but the role was assessed through the prism of socio-ethical impact, in particular the ability of the sermon *De Nabuthae* to construct normative ideas about the just distribution of property. The comparison showed that I. Davidson analysed classical patterns mainly in a literary dimension, whereas in this study the rhetorical form was considered as an instrument of theological criticism of economic inequality. I. Davidson’s research focused on Ambrose’s pedagogical authority and the construction of the “*persona magistri*”; whereas here the central place was given to the disclosure of the concept of greed as a structural sin deforming social relations. Ultimately, both

works confirmed the key role of classical tradition in Ambrose's stylistics, but the methodological vectors diverged: I. Davidson demonstrated literary continuity, while this study demonstrated the social-theological relevance of rhetoric for the regulation of economic behaviour.

The "paradox of value" stood at the core of J. Hengstmengel's (2021) investigation, in which Patristic definitions of the usefulness and rarity of material goods were systematically compared with the ancient tradition of political economy. The present study, however, focused not on the theoretical dilemma of value but on the practical evaluation of greed as a structural sin in the specific historical context of *De Nabuthae*. J. Hengstmengel paid attention to comparative analysis of the views of the Fathers of the Church, especially the Alexandrian and Cappadocian traditions, whereas in this study the subject was limited to Ambrose's sermon, which enabled an in-depth analysis of its socio-economic orientation. For J. Hengstmengel, the concept of value was interpreted mainly in an axiological sense and remained an abstraction, while in this study the category of value was transferred to the level of normative action, where mercy, sacrifice, and justice functioned as practical correctives of market relations. In addition, J. Hengstmengel applied a hermeneutic of the "paradox of value" to explain theological compromises about private property, whereas here property was considered through the prism of pastoral responsibility and legal limitation.

R. Grant (2013) regarded the "Ambrosian doctrine" as a synthesis of biblical law and Roman legal thought, emphasising the incorporation of the categories *aequitas* and *ius naturale* into Latin pastoral practice. The present study, however, shifted the focus to the critical function of these categories in relation to private accumulation of wealth, rather than the integrative role in legal theory. R. Grant described *De Nabuthae* mainly as an illustration of universal moral law, whereas here the text was interpreted as a response to specific economic abuses in Milan at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. R. Grant framed Ambrose's ethics within

the coordinates of dogmatic continuity, while this research highlighted its social-regulatory potential, which envisaged limiting rent and restitution of property. R. Grant concentrated on the theological concept of *caritas* as an inner principle of justice, while in this analysis *caritas* was considered through the prism of public practices – almsgiving, ransoming captives, supporting the landless. Thus, R. Grant's research provided a dogmatic framework, while the present project deepened it with socio-economic content, demonstrating how Ambrose's synthesis of theology and Roman law was transformed into concrete mechanisms of protection for vulnerable groups.

For C. Lévy (2021), the key issue in the reception of Hellenistic ethics by Philo and Ambrose was the tension between the Stoic principle of *oikeiōsis* and the Platonic hierarchy of goods, a conflict that shaped the ambiguity of their teaching on passions. In this study, however, the previous philosophical discourse was subordinated to the analysis of pastoral practice, through which Ambrose transformed Stoic *topoi* in favour of social criticism of greed. C. Lévy situated Ambrosian thought mainly within comparative philology, while the present work emphasised the economic context of Milan and the normative consequences of the sermon *De Nabuthae*. For C. Lévy the Stoic ideal of *apatheia* was interpreted as a path to inner balance, whereas here the same concept was seen as a necessary condition for social service, restraining idolatry of wealth. Thus, compared with Lévy's philosophical reconstruction, the present study showed how Hellenistic ideas were turned into an instrument of pastoral regulation of property relations.

N. Lenski (2021) projected Ambrose's understanding of *servitus* onto the political imagination of Late Antiquity, focusing on how the status of the slave was turned into a rhetorical tool for teaching humility and hierarchy. In this study, however, the vector of analysis shifted, with the dominant theme being *avaritia*, while slavery was marked only as a derivative effect of resource disproportion aggravated by land appropriation.

In N. Lenski's work slavery served as a model of interdependence within the community, whereas in this study the key norm was the threefold scheme "mercy – sacrifice – justice", regulating economic behaviour of landowners. N. Lenski's method was predominantly socio-historical and aimed at reconstructing status categories, whereas in this analysis a theological hermeneutic was applied, revealing the moral grounds of redistribution of goods. N. Lenski highlighted the symbolic function of slavery in shaping pastoral norms, while here emphasis was placed on using the same moral paradigm to condemn greed in order to protect coloni and peasants from economic exploitation, which demonstrated the shared ethical core of both approaches despite the different social orientation – disciplinary and anti-proprietary.

To summarise, it should be noted that this study expanded the established interpretation of *De Nabuthae*, focused mainly on dogmatic or stylistic aspects, and shifted the emphasis to its social-regulatory and economic-critical potential. Unlike previous approaches, which treated Ambrosian ethics within anthropological, literary or philosophical perspectives, this work demonstrated that the sermon was a response to specific socio-economic challenges of Late Antiquity. Systematic comparison with the works of modern scholars showed that Ambrose's critique of greed had the character of a normative project, aimed at rethinking the function of private property in Christian society.

### Conclusions

The study demonstrated that Ambrose of Milan's treatise *De Nabuthae* was not only an ethical-homiletic work but also a profound philosophical-theological reflection on the essence of greed as a structural sin. The author brought the problem of avarice beyond private morality, interpreting it as a form of idolatry that destroyed not only personal spirituality but also social justice. Based on the biblical narrative of King Ahab and Naboth, Ambrose formulated a normative context in which social abuses and appropriation

of another's wealth acquired theological weight. Through rhetorical and exegetical devices, Ambrose revealed the danger of accumulation as spiritual corruption, which distanced man from God and neighbour, transforming a man into both an object of desire and simultaneously a victim of the own passion.

An important result of the study was the focus on how in Ambrose's sermon the opposition of greed and mercy acquired the function of a diagnostic matrix for evaluating the behaviour not only of individuals but also of whole social groups. Greed appeared not only as an individual sin but as a factor of destruction of social order, deepening economic asymmetry, justifying violence against the poor and distorting religious life. Mercy was not an emotional reaction but a normative attitude presupposing distribution of resources, sacrifice, and restoration of justice. This allowed the sermon to be read not only as moral teaching, but as a project of Christian social thought aimed at overcoming inequality.

The identification of the triune interrelation between mercy, sacrifice, and justice outlined the core ethical content of the treatise, which had not only theoretical significance but also practical application in church governance and preaching activity. It was also established that theological criticism of property in the treatise was not reduced to a call for asceticism or renunciation of wealth but was rather directed at subordinating private property to the higher law of love. This approach made it possible to critically reconsider the concept of ownership in Roman law by introducing into it the criterion of responsibility before the community and God. This ethical vector, as shown, subsequently influenced Western Patristic and Scholastic thought, primarily in interpretations of the functional nature of property, the priority of mercy over legal title and pastoral responsibility for economic injustice. Through comprehensive study of the text, it was proved that the treatise *De Nabuthae* constituted a key link in the formation of Christian social ethics of the Late Antique era, with particular emphasis on the ethical-theological content of the concept of property.

The limitation of the research remained the fragmentary preservation of contextual sources regarding the specific economic situation of Milan's communities at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, which made impossible a complete reconstruction of the social background of the sermon. However, reliance on Ambrose's own textual corpus and other sources of the period allowed a reliable interpretation of the ideological content of the treatise. In future, interdisciplinary studies of the reception of *De Nabuthae* in the Latin West from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries may be promising, as well

as comparative analysis with traditions of Greek Patristics in reading the economic and moral aspects of greed.

### Acknowledgements

None.

### Funding

None.

### Conflict of Interest

None.

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## Філософсько-теологічна критика захланності у творі “*De Nabuthae*” Амврозія Медіоланського

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**Анотація.** Актуальність дослідження полягала в тому, що системний аналіз ранньохристиянської критики захланності дозволяв окреслити витоки соціальної етики Церкви та співвіднести їх із сучасними дебатами про майнову нерівність. Метою роботи було реконструювати філософсько-теологічні засади засудження *avaritia* у проповіді “*De Nabuthae*” Амврозія Медіоланського та оцінити їхній внесок у формування латинської патристичної концепції власності. Методологія ґрунтувалася на історико-генетичному аналізі тексту, порівняльній екзегезі стоїчних і біблійних концептів, а також на соціально-економічній герменевтиці пізньоімперського контексту. В ході дослідження було з'ясовано, що Амврозій трактував *avaritia* як форму ідолопоклонства, яка підміняла Богопоклоніння культом речей і руйнувала вертикаль боголюдських стосунків. Екзегетичний розбір показав, що Навуфей поставав образом мученика за справедливість, тоді як Ахав функціонував символом корумпованої державної влади. Риторичні прийоми анафори, антитези й апострофу спрямовували пастирську полеміку на магнатів Медіолана й апелювали до добровільної реституції незаконно набутого майна. Синтез стоїчної дихотомії «користування – зловживання» з біблійним мотивом управителя сформував програму милосердя, жертви та справедливості, що згодом була розвинена у схоластичній концепції соціальної функції власності. Дослідження також продемонструвало, що проповідь інкорпоровала античну юридичну аргументацію, легітимуючи церковне втручання в приватні майнові конфлікти. Отримані висновки уточнили генеалогію латинської критики економічної нерівності та надали концептуальні орієнтири для подальших міждисциплінарних студій християнської економічної етики. Практичне значення роботи полягало в тому, що вона уточнила термінологічні й концептуальні аспекти Амврозієвої критики захланності та могла слугувати джерелом довідкових матеріалів для подальших досліджень ранньохристиянської соціальної етики

**Ключові слова:** колонат; милосердя; справедливість; стоїчна дихотомія; біблійний сюжет; класична латинська філологія

**ГУМАНІТАРНІ СТУДІЇ:  
ПЕДАГОГІКА, ПСИХОЛОГІЯ, ФІЛОСОФІЯ**

*Науковий журнал*

**Том 13, № 3. 2025**

Заснований у 2013 р. Виходить 4 рази на рік

Оригінал-макет видання виготовлено у відділі науково-технічної інформації  
Національного університету біоресурсів  
і природокористування України

**Відповідальний редактор:**

Н. Шевченко

Підписано до друку 23 вересня 2025 р.

Формат 70\*100/16

Умов. друк. арк. 10,4

Наклад 50 прим.

**Адреса видавництва:**

Національний університет біоресурсів і природокористування України

03041, вул. Героїв Оборони, 15, м. Київ, Україна

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# HUMANITIES STUDIOS: PEDAGOGY, PSYCHOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY

*Scientific Journal*

**Volume 13, No. 3. 2025**

Founded in 2013. Published 4 times a year

The original layout of the publication is made in the Department of Scientific  
and Technical Information of National University of Life  
and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

**Managing Editor:**

N. Shevchenko

Signed for print of September 23, 2025

Format 70\*100/16

Conventional printed pages 10.4

Circulation 50 copies

**Editors Office Address:**

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

03041, 15 Heroiv Oborony Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

E-mail: [info@humstudios.com.ua](mailto:info@humstudios.com.ua)

<https://humstudios.com.ua/uk>