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PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION: OVERVIEW OF EUROPEAN UNION RESEARCH

Summary. The main theme of the research is European context of professional training in the system of European education. The article deals with the analysis of the main literature in the European professional training system that leads world in the impact of innovational and democratic education for the 21-st century society and has gained a positive experience in creating effective strategies for reforming of all the important professional education components.

Key words: education, professional training, 21-st century skills, European environment, problem-based learning, blended learning.

Statement of the problem. The fundamental property of this study is the changing educational context and its challenges. This study presents and analyses the features of teaching methodologies as they emerge from both disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary curricula. It is fast becoming a key instrument in a series of hands-on research on some of the most innovative learning tools emerging in the field, such as simulation games, e-learning, problem-based learning, blended learning and learning through the use of social networks.

The analyzed material is an important component in the development of the education system.

Research and Publications analysis. Definition of strategic directions for the development of professional education system is of concern to the entire world community today. Recently there were appeared new studies of domestic scientists, connected with modern changes in the quality of education as a whole and the analysis of foreign experience in professional training. The article presents analytical materials of European scientists: Stefania Baroncelli, Roberto Farneti, Ioan Horga, Sophie Vanhoonacker, Birgitte Bikvard, Jean-Claude Juncker, Scott Davies, Ove Korsgaard, and so on.

However, the scientific literature analysis shows that in Ukrainian educational environment very few studies have investigated the problems of professional training in terms of higher education modernization in the 21st century. This led to the choice of the topic of our study.

Aim of the research. Based on literature analysis to generalize international experience and design the new technological model of professional education system in Europe.

Basic investigation material. The first part of the investigation is undoubtedly the most diverse, dealing with questions ranging from the professional requirements for graduates in Europe to issues of civic education and multilingual teaching. The authors examine the literature on professional education and examine how insights from established professions can be of use to new professions such as European Union specialists. They not only plead to engage the learner more actively in the learning process but also advocate more educational research and more attention on guiding learners so that they can deal with the continuous changes in practice.

The second part presents an empirical analysis of the use of teaching methods and tools in European Union studies across a number of disciplines (Economics, Law, History, Political Science, Libraries and Cultural studies). Secondly, it also tests the influence of multilingualism on European Studies courses. The three chapters are all based on the results of a survey conducted on more than 2,000 European Union courses in 30 European countries and 7 different disciplines via the above mentioned SENT European Studies network and the Jean Monnet Programme network.

The third part elaborates on the use of innovative teaching methods in European Union studies and presents a number of case studies on the use of simulation games, distance learning, problem-based learning, blended learning, the use of social media and internships. The contributors share their experiences with the use of these tools and reflect on both the strengths and possible pitfalls.

Let's consider these parts and its sections of this study in more details.

The first part of *European Studies: Contexts and Challenges* includes the following sections: *Shaping the New Professional for the New Professions*. Modern higher education systems should rethink how to design learning systems that prepare young people as the new professionals in the established (engineering, law, health care, management) or newly emerging professions (e-librarian consultants, governance experts, European Union experts, specialists in finance or law). This chapter focuses on current literature and landmark works on professional education and examines how insights from those traditional professions can be transferred to the new professions. Attention is paid to what professional practice and society need for further development, yet which is not brought in by professional schools. The final part of this chapter provides educators in the new professions with guiding principles for course and program design.

The second chapter is *Working at the EU Institutions: New Human Resources Selection Strategy*. Intellectual organizations, human capital, the main resource, and choice as a key aspect. The European Personnel Selection Office's (EPSO) Development Programme modernised the EU Institutions' selection methods for the first time in decades, introducing radical reform in three areas: Planning and needs (3-year strategic human resources planning, annual competition cycle), Testing and professionalism (competency-based testing, accredited assessors), Diversity and

attractiveness (neutrality, employer branding). Comprehensive job analysis of EU officials identifies seven core competencies valid for all entry levels. Job-relevant assessments are created to reflect performance requirements for different profiles and levels. The added importance of current staff leads to the inclusion of an eighth competency, «Leadership» that uses at Administrator level for early identification of management potential. New test content and assessment tools applied for the first time in 2010 allow testing on an objective and fair basis, providing new cohorts of motivated and talented staff.

The next chapter is *Educating for EU Citizenship and Civic Engagement Through Active Learning*. It says that a great challenge for university educators is teaching so that students become “owners” of the knowledge imparted in the classroom. Author explores the fact that, simultaneous to governmental pressures being placed on American educators, both the European Union and the Council of Europe have also called for civic education to ensure long-term, active citizenship. In fact, European and American governmental elites, civil society organizations, nongovernmental educational organizations, and European Studies scholars have contributed diverse ideas, strategies, and tactics to the now rich conversation about the European Identity and the meaning of “good” European citizenship [2, p.18]. Finally, author examines what is needed at the classroom level to help European students connect academic learning with the practical realities of citizenship. This examination considers the development of civic skills and key competences and the value of active and experiential learning.

The main aim of *Multilingual Universities: Policies and Practices* is to examine European higher education from the perspective of language use that is, in view of the multilingual reconfiguration currently affecting universities in European Union countries. In this section recent developments of European Union language policies are illustrated, and the notion of ‘functional multilingualism’, which informs such policies, is discussed against the background of societal, political and economic changes, determining a reconsideration of linguistic needs in Europe. This section also is devoted to the analysis of communicative practices in multilingual universities, in particular at the trilingual Free University of Bozen-Bolzano in Italy. Different ways of handling linguistic diversity in the classroom are examined, showing how the use of more languages in teacher-student interaction can not only enhance learning processes and participation but can also prepare professionals who can successfully act in a multilingual, multicultural Europe.

The final chapter of the first part is *Thinking Europe: A Canadian Academic Immersion Inside the European Institutions – EU Study Tour and Internship Programme* that provides innovative opportunities for students to reinforce their academic knowledge about the European Union and related institutions with practical immersion and hands-on experience. This chapter describes the teaching and learning experience which characterizes the Study Tour and Internship Programme, describe

the activities, explain the methodology and, in a discursive way, describe its success and problems as a learning activity directed to advance knowledge and understanding of the European Union. Further, the problems of program development and internship conditions are discussed here[4, p.11].

The second part Mapping Innovations in Teaching and Learning includes the following sections: Mapping Innovative Teaching Methods and Tools in European Studies: Results from a Comprehensive Study that focuses on the results of a research on European Studies aimed at identifying which teaching methodologies and tools are used in such disciplines. It discusses the educational policy of the European Union and its implementation with reference to the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy, highlighting the skills required of students in the new knowledge society.

The next chapter is Innovativeness in Teaching European Studies: An Empirical Investigation. Due to the growing centrality of knowledge in our society, innovation in teaching is playing an increasingly important role for maintaining the competitiveness of the European Union. Innovative teaching methods allow a more effective delivery of knowledge as compared to the more traditional pedagogical approaches – thus fitting the educational needs of a modern competitive society. Using primary data from a large research project aiming at understanding how European Studies are currently taught across the European Union, authors set out to test the correlates of three different innovative methods used in teaching these classes, namely internships, distance learning, and exchange programmes. In particular, they investigated whether certain lecturer's characteristics (Jean Monnet scholars' status, tenured academic position, and level of experience) and class features (presence of students' evaluations and class size) correlate with more innovation in teaching European Studies. These findings partially support their hypotheses across the three innovative teaching methods which would allow a more nuanced understanding of the correlates of innovation in teaching European Studies.

Linguistic Pluralism in European Studies focuses on the concept of linguistic pluralism as interpreted by the European Union and applied in European Studies courses. Authors argue that linguistic pluralism in teaching European Studies courses is intended more as a static respect for member states' and single institutions' linguistic policies than as an active tool. The chapter identifies the member states which have promoted English as teaching language in European Studies courses and the role of the Jean Monnet Programme within different countries. The final part of the chapter deals with some specific disciplines in European Studies.

Innovative Teaching and Learning in European Studies consists of such sections – Assessing EU Simulations: Evidence from the Trans-Atlantic EuroSim. This paper investigates pedagogical literature and presents a framework to assess the added value of simulations in European Studies programs. More specifically, the paper evaluates the use of simulations as powerful learning environments and as a way to increase affective learning among political science students. It presents the

example of EuroSim, a yearly-extended simulation, organized by the Trans-Atlantic Consortium for European Union Studies and Simulations (TACEUSS) by assessing the organization of the event and by using data from pre- and post-simulation surveys among student participants.

Distance Learning as an Alternative Method of Teaching European Studies – examines to what extent distance learning, as an innovative teaching tool, tackles the needs of the European Studies field. The study investigates the pedagogically sound techniques of online learning by focusing on the blended distance learning through the case study of a master course on ‘EU-Turkey relations’ carried out at Maastricht University in 2009. Based on the analysis of the advantages and limitations of distance learning, this study argues that distance learning is a suitable tool for teaching European Studies because it is able to incorporate a variety of theoretical frameworks, practical experiences, and models of teaching. It provides space for innovation in learning and makes the learning process more accessible as well as provides a framework for interuniversity cooperation and exchange of best practices.

We want to stress that Information and communication technologies (ICT) at present stage of a social development are important elements in the formation and transformation of human knowledge capacity and culture. Any transformation has to be the result of a systematic strategy and since professionals today are considered to be the driving force for change and carriers of intellectual values of a knowledge-based society, one of the most important criteria of the modern specialists professional level is their own ICT competences or the abilities to use in practice the acquired knowledge and skills in the field of information and communication technologies [7, p.132]. Educators themselves, embodying the concept of advanced education, are able to target their students, future specialists to master technologies (including ICT) that will help them to get better employment in the international labor market adapting to work and life in an epoch of fast digital change [6, p.259]. In conditions of open access to large number of informational sources, new technologies play a significant role in a learning process. Through new information systems, students and teachers can easily and in a rather short period of time may accumulate a certain amount of knowledge, focusing on the 21st Century learning skills, essential for participation in lifelong education. Thus, ICT must become an integral part in the professional education [5, p.153].

So, the main advantage of distance learning is that it allows you to fit your learning around your work and home life. You can usually also set your own pace of study. It is your decision as to when and where you study. It doesn't matter where you live – you can gain a degree from anywhere in the world. As with a full-time degree, students may find that they gain useful, transferable skills, such as planning and research.

Problem-Based Learning in European Studies. The approach of problem-based learning is the main teaching method within the field of European Studies, at

both the bachelor and master's degree level. Problem-based learning method is based on activities that encourage several education competencies, making shorter the distance between real and hypothetical learning problems. Problem-based learning is a student-centred approach in which students collaboratively – in small groups with the support of a tutor solve problems that are presented in different assignment texts. Experts of problem-based learning claim that it enhances content knowledge and fosters the development of communication and problem-solving skills as well as self-directed learning [6, p.290]. This study reflects on how and why to apply this method to the field of European Studies. It starts by presenting the grounding of problem-based learning and then moves on outlining the application of problem-based learning in practice, focusing on the seven-step approach as developed at Maastricht University and the role of students and tutors.

Finding the Right Mix? Teaching European Studies Through Blended Learning – this chapter looks into the teaching method developed by the Institute for European Studies in Brussels, combining an e-learning tool, the e-modules, with face-to-face training sessions and webinars. The main aim of this study is to analyse the three different components of this 'blended learning' pedagogical approach, as well as the way they complement each other, and to address a few of the challenges that have emerged from the experience of working with them so far. The mixture of delivery and interaction methods is chosen in order to accommodate a large variety of target groups, ranging from students to professionals working with European Union-related issues, with different backgrounds and geographical origins. One of the main challenges is to use each medium for the functionalities it is best designed for and to ensure that the various pieces of the pedagogical puzzle fit together perfectly, while allowing the learners the flexibility that had initially directed them towards 'blended learning' instead of a classical classroom approach[3, p.98]. The chapter analyses blended learning as a vital pedagogical method for European Studies, considering the specificities of this study field, such as its interdisciplinary character as well as its complex and constantly changing nature.

The last chapter is The Network Is the Message: Social Networks as Teaching Tools that draws from a pilot project at the Free University of Bozen/Bolzano consisting in using an electronic forum in a political science class. Students were challenged to respond to a "prompt" from the instructor on some of the topical issues in European Union politics and engage in informed discussions on topics addressed in the class. Authors of this study argue that beyond the content-specific elements involved, the forum was designed to train students in such practices as discussing and discussing issues that are featured prominently in current EU politics. This chapter refers to Jürgen Habermas's seminal studies on the notion of 'public sphere' and shows how the European Union public sphere is largely shaped by the new electronic media. This study is dedicated to Gretchen van Dyke's chapter on civic education in this volume and connects current issues and challenges in higher education with an

increasingly relevant problem of so-called democratic deficit of the European Union. It concludes with an analysis of electronic media that draws on Marshall McLuhan's understanding of the particular status of messages in complex societies.

Conclusions. The conducted study allows us to make the following conclusions:

- professional training for a modern knowledge-based society can be considered in three dimensions: 1) social; 2) institutional; 3) individual;
- from the point of view of the institutional dimension, professional training in Europe is characterized by: multilevel, flexibility, modularity, mobility, use of ICT;
- for the individual dimension, the leading idea of European model of professional education is to support and ensure the professional development throughout life.

The analysis of European experience may be used in reforming of professional education in Ukraine especially its transformation from traditional to innovative type due to the overall implementation of information and communication technologies, blended and problem-based learning.

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Головною темою дослідження є європейський контекст професійної підготовки в системі європейської освіти. Стаття присвячена аналізу основної літератури в системі європейської професійної підготовки, яка є світовим лідером за наслідками інноваційної та демократичної освіти для суспільства XXI століття і отримала позитивний досвід у створенні ефективних стратегій реформування всіх важливих професійних компонентів освіти.

Ключові слова: *освіта, професійна підготовка, навички 21 століття, європейське середовище, проблемне навчання, змішане навчання.*