

HIGHER EDUCATION IN UKRAINE: ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES OF  
THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

*ENSINO SUPERIOR NA UCRÂNIA: ANÁLISE DOS DESAFIOS GLOBAIS DO SÉCULO  
XXI*

*LA ENSEÑANZA SUPERIOR EN UCRANIA: ANÁLISIS DE LOS RETOS GLOBALES DEL  
SIGLO XXI*



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**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this article is to examine the forces of globalization that affect higher education in Ukraine. The objectives of the paper are to systematically collect, document, study and critically analyze the relationship between the representatives of this issue in the literature, to identify and position our own ideas and observations for further research in this area. The results of the study show that the impact of globalization on higher education in Ukraine is directly related to Americanization, Europeanization, homogenization through diversification, Westernization etc. in the related literature. The paper takes into account the correlation between the opinions and scientific narrative of experts on the vision of higher education as a global priority, as well as transformations that cannot be avoided by higher education in the 21st century. It can be concluded that changes in education in Ukraine should cover all dimensions and forms of education. These processes, in turn, stimulate the transition from specific approaches to global, interdisciplinary approaches that allow us to explore social problems that require specific solutions: peace, democracy, social justice, cultural development, environmental protection, food, health, protection of children and youth, promotion of education and research.

**KEYWORDS:** Globalization. Higher education. Labor market. Global educational services. Internationalization of higher education.

**RESUMO:** *O propósito deste artigo é examinar as forças da globalização que afetam o ensino superior na Ucrânia. Os objetivos do artigo são coletar, documentar, estudar e analisar criticamente a relação entre os representantes desta questão na literatura, identificar e posicionar nossas próprias ideias e observações para futuras pesquisas nessa área. Os resultados do estudo mostram que o impacto da globalização no ensino superior na Ucrânia está diretamente relacionado à americanização, europeização, homogeneização através da diversificação, ocidentalização etc. na literatura relacionada. O artigo leva em conta a correlação entre os pareceres e a narrativa científica de especialistas sobre a visão da educação superior como prioridade global, bem como transformações que não podem ser evitadas pela educação superior no século 21. Pode-se concluir que as mudanças na educação na Ucrânia devem abranger todas as dimensões e formas de educação. Esses processos, por sua vez, estimulam a transição de abordagens específicas para abordagens globais e interdisciplinares que permitem explorar problemas sociais que exigem soluções específicas: paz, democracia, justiça social, desenvolvimento cultural, proteção ambiental, alimentação, saúde, proteção de crianças e jovens, promoção da educação e da pesquisa.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Globalização. Ensino superior. Mercado de trabalho. Serviços educativos globais. Internacionalização do ensino superior.*

**RESUMEN:** *El propósito de este artículo es examinar las fuerzas de la globalización que afectan a la enseñanza superior en Ucrania. Los objetivos del artículo son recopilar, documentar, estudiar y analizar críticamente la relación entre los representantes de este tema en la literatura, identificar y posicionar nuestras propias ideas y observaciones para futuras investigaciones en este ámbito. Los resultados del estudio muestran que el impacto de la globalización en la educación superior en Ucrania está directamente relacionado con la americanización, la europeización, la homogeneización a través de la diversificación, la occidentalización, etc. en la literatura relacionada. El artículo tiene en cuenta la correlación entre las opiniones de los expertos y la narrativa científica sobre la visión de la educación superior como prioridad global, así como las transformaciones que no puede evitar la educación superior en el siglo XXI. Se puede concluir que los cambios en la educación en Ucrania deben abarcar todas las dimensiones y formas de educación. Estos procesos, a su vez, estimulan la transición de enfoques específicos a enfoques globales e interdisciplinarios que permiten explorar problemas sociales que requieren soluciones específicas: paz, democracia, justicia social, desarrollo cultural, protección del medio ambiente, alimentación, salud, protección de niños y jóvenes, promoción de la educación y la investigación.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Globalización. Educación superior. Mercado laboral. Servicios educativos globales. Internacionalización de la educación superior.*

## Introduction

Globalization is a process that is partly beyond our control. Therefore, globalization is often defined either passively or actively. From a passive point of view, globalization can be described as a social process that leads to the social and cultural erasure of geographical boundaries. It results in the growing participation of people in global networks of dependence. In its active definition, globalization can be a process that establishes numerous links and interconnections between states and societies that together constitute the modern global system. As a result, events, decisions, and activities that take place in one part of the world have a significant impact on people and communities in another, so, it is possible to conclude that globalization has many facets. Each of them plays a role in the processes identified above and influences each other. The main ones relate to economics and trade, politics, institutions, communications, culture, social affairs, environment, and regulatory issues. In other words, globalization requires interdisciplinary education (DE LOS REYES *et al.*, 2022).

The purpose of higher education is “to raise the individual, the ethnic community and humanity to higher heights of life through the cultivation of spiritual values”. Education is a phenomenon that has emerged along with human society, undergoing significant changes in the process of its evolution. Education has come a long way from being an empirical action to prepare the younger generation for social life, becoming a real science with its own status. The modern era of rapid technological development, cultural, economic and other interdependencies poses problems to humanity that it has never faced in its history. Education in its three aspects (formal, non-formal, and informal) is designed to form a creative and responsible personality capable of adapting to modernity (NÚÑEZ-CANAL; DE OBESSO; PÉREZ-RIVERO, 2022). The current reality shows that the role of education has not only not diminished but has become increasingly complex. The ideas of freedom and democracy, humanism and creativity in education encourage humanity to break the impenetrable wall of materialistic thinking that has created false stereotypes for years (SAIENKO, KURYSH, SILIUTINA, 2022).

Ukraine, in the current conditions of martial law, needs a dynamic, formative education centered on authentic values. In this context, it should be added that one of the defining elements of modern society is change. However, the war in Ukraine has led to many social, economic and political problems that are far from being resolved. These problems include terrorism by the enemy, unacceptable crimes by the aggressor, an increase in the number of temporarily displaced and unemployed people etc. All this directly affects the development of higher education (RAKHIMOV; MUKHAMEDIEV, 2022).

## Literature Review

Throughout history, higher education has changed its roles and functions to adapt to different societal contexts, not without some conflict and resistance (DIACHKOVA *et al.*, 2021). New challenges in a global society are leading to a rethinking of education and its relationship with the rest of society. In order to face new challenges, higher education must respond to new challenges and higher education institutions must be a space for reflection and action, engaged in local and global challenges, open to the public and cooperating with other universities globally (MOSHINSKI *et al.*, 2021).

In the face of challenges and trends in the development of higher education in the global context, Martinez (2022) notes that the strategic role of higher education is to respond to the challenges and opportunities inherent in globalization (health, energy, food security, environment and intercultural dialogue) and to the emergence of truly global higher education institutions. In the same vein, Alam (2022) notes that adaptation to financial flows, trade, services and ideas across national borders has led to an exponential massification of the evolution of information technology and new media. Today, regardless of the paradigms adopted, higher education is called upon to perform more and more functions with fewer resources, Acosta Castellanos and Queiruga-DIOS (2022) note. According to the scholars, although higher education at the global level often conflicts with society over mission and roles (ideological conflicts and structural politics), education seeks direct, internal, long-term relationships with the economy and practical needs of society, and value and reward are offered academically and institutionally based on research productivity (OLEKSIENKO *et al.*, 2022). In line with this, experts believe that higher education and higher education institutions, by becoming incubators of research and learning, provide the skills needed for a growing number of new professions requiring sophisticated knowledge and skills, but on the basis of equal opportunities (through scholarships, study credit programs, public-private partnerships, etc.) (HAHRO; JAVED, 2022).

Despite the initial resistance and criticism of higher education from this perspective, economic motivation has also increased with the advent of ICT and new media. This has led to a de facto globalization of the education sector, mobility (of students, scholars and ideas), with unexpected effects (JÄRVIS; TAMBOVCEVA; VIROVERE, 2021).

To summarize, the literature is unanimous that in the context of globalization, higher education is now required to present research that is recognized as “cutting edge”, graduates with high goals and ambitions, the ability to provide expert advice on critical issues of

technology, economics, management, health, ecology, environment, politics, and major reference interpretations and visions in the field of culture (KHOVRAK, 2020).

So, what is the new role of higher education in the context of globalization? This is a question that dozens of experts are looking for answers to, but in general, we can say that higher education in Ukraine will achieve its mission if, in the medium and long term, it uses autonomy and academic freedom as an innovative tool, advocates for optimization or even change of the outdated system, gives preference to a certain profile (research, teaching, services, business, etc.), and combines balance in the curriculum: transfer of knowledge and innovation, learning and information, knowledge and application, science and its new vision.

## Methodology

The main purpose of this paper is to provide a narrative review of the related literature, a comprehensive overview of the topic to identify research issues and to help expand and identify new areas for research. Narrative synthesis can be the first step in conducting in-depth, methodical data analysis and organizing it in an appropriate manner. The literature search was conducted using databases (Google Scholar, Research Gate, Web of Science) adopting a combination of broad search terms such as globalization, higher education, labor market, and global educational services. We screened the relevant information, organized the collected information, and summarized the research findings. The articles selected for further consideration were analyzed in turn to determine the general concept that best reflects the relevance of the research topic.

## Results

All these areas and many more are governed by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (BLAYONE *et al.*, 2018). In Ukraine, higher education is called upon to help address the problems caused by the war through specific preventive measures. In the context of war, higher education in Ukraine aims to provide human resources and advanced knowledge necessary to address the complex challenges of sustainable development. The main asset of Ukraine's higher education institutions today is the interdisciplinary nature of their teaching and research, not to mention the ability to imagine innovative solutions to global and local problems. With its functions of teacher training and educational research, higher education is the backbone of the education system. All efforts are aimed at finding adequate solutions to withstand the



military crisis. Failure to find a solution will mean that education is in crisis (FILIPOVA; USHEVA, 2021). By crisis, we mean the gap between the results of education and the expectations of society. Among the specific and general solutions found, we list the following.

**Table 1** – Meeting the challenges of globalization

Innovation	innovations in the development and implementation of educational processes
Updating educational programs	introducing new types of education into the curriculum
Connections	Strengthening ties between higher education institutions
Professional training	initial and professional training of personnel
Cooperation	cooperation between teachers, students and management of higher education institutions
International exchange	organization of information exchange between European countries
Integration	rethinking the educational process to ensure successful integration of young people into working and social life

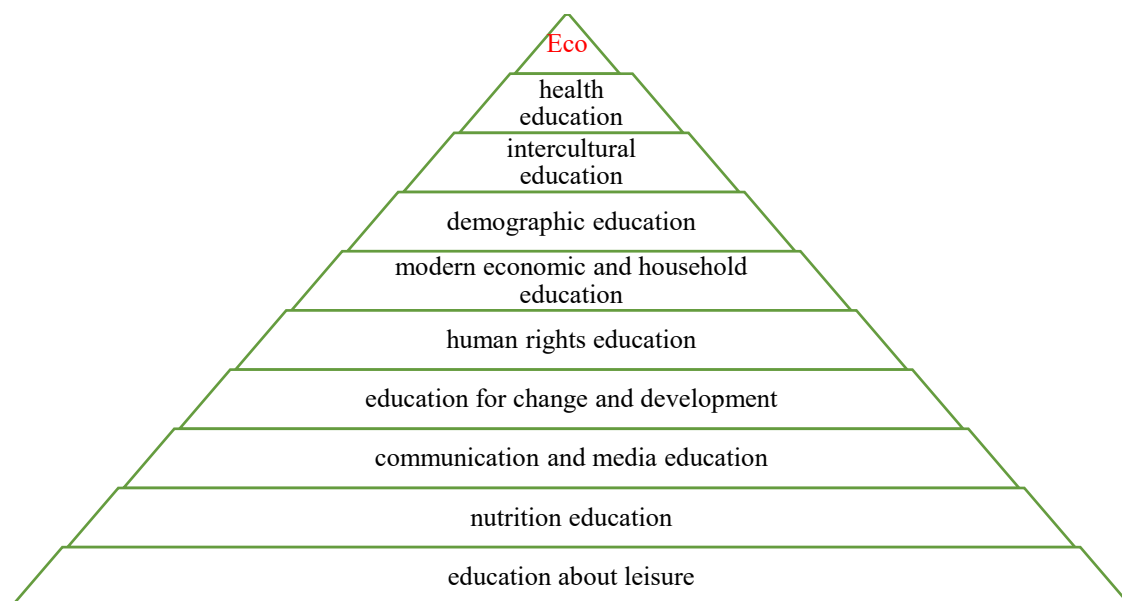
Source: Prepared by the authors

In a broad sense, globalization processes promote the concept of accessibility of higher education (NAMESTIUK, 2022). To be affordable, tuition and living costs should not be a barrier to access to higher education, and they should not be an obstacle to the participation and success of students with the necessary skills (VOLOSHINOV *et al.*, 2020). In this context, there is a need to develop new types of higher education.

New educational systems have taken hold in a very short time as they respond to increasingly well-defined socio-pedagogical needs. Despite the paradoxical situation in which higher education in Ukraine finds itself in the context of war, despite the obstacles it faces, education is called upon to prepare the next generation in a proactive, more constructive and dynamic way. Under these circumstances, new education systems are designed to prepare appropriate, i.e., rational behavior that will help mitigate the shock of the challenges of the future.

The problems of globalization have led to the need to develop new types of education, including (Fig. 1):

**Figure 1** – New types of education as a response to globalization



Source: Prepared by the authors

“New education” at the global level is defined in UNESCO programs adopted in recent decades “as the response of education systems to the imperatives of the modern world” of a political, economic, environmental, demographic, health, and ethical nature (JÄRVIS; TAMBOVCEVA; VIROVERE, 2021). The specific content proposed from this perspective can be integrated at all levels, dimensions and forms of education.

According to Tomlinson and Watermeyer (2022), the “New Education” can be adapted to the level of each dimension of education according to their specificity, as well as to the “life cycles” and social conditions characteristic of each educational system. For example, ecological or environmental education, which can obviously be integrated at the level of moral education (in general education), intellectual education (in secondary education), technological education (in vocational education), raises specific issues in certain regions or countries of the world, or within different social and educational systems.

## Discussion

In Ukraine, new educational systems have taken hold in a very short time as they respond to increasingly well-defined socio-pedagogical needs and EU standards. Despite the paradoxical situation in which it finds itself, despite the obstacles it faces, education is called upon to prepare the next generation in a proactive, more constructive and dynamic way. Under these circumstances, Ukraine's new education system is designed to prepare appropriate, i.e., rational, behavior that will help mitigate the post-war shock (TSEKHMISTER *et al.*, 2022).

Higher education is aimed at changes, at training and development of abilities for rapid and responsible adaptation of human personality to the conditions of innovations and social reforms of the last decades of the XXI century, in the perspective of post-war time. Higher education for technology and progress is aimed at training and education of general and special skills, as well as affective, motivational and characterological attitudes open to the social application of scientific achievements in the economic, political and cultural conditions characteristic of the post-industrial information society model (ZULKIFLI *et al.*, 2022).

Media education aims to teach and foster the ability to culturally use the information provided by the press, radio, television, etc. in the context of diversification and individualization, which require a responsible pedagogical assessment of social values (RADZIIJEVSKA *et al.*, 2022).

Demographic education or population education aims to foster civic responsibility of individuals and human communities in relation to specific population problems expressed in terms of phenomena growth, decline; density, migration; occupational structure, age, gender; natural, social (economic, political, cultural, religious, etc.) conditions of development - in a global, regional, national, territorial, zonal, local context (ROSTOKA *et al.*, 2021).

So, of course, there is no universal definition of quality higher education. Ukraine provides quality education through its national system, and higher education institutions and their faculty define quality according to their own circumstances: disciplines, institutions, local and national contexts (BADER; OLEKSIENKO; MERENIUK, 2022). Therefore, it is quite difficult to follow international recommendations beyond the existing, broadly speaking, very general international codes of practice.



## Conclusions

Challenges and trends in the development of higher education in Ukraine in the global context of internationalization and interdisciplinarity in recent years have led to the adoption of appropriate strategies. The power of globalization requires internationalization and interdisciplinarity of education. These trends will continue to influence the development of higher education worldwide. Thus, the focus on widening participation will require the further development of more diversified institutions and forms of delivery (e-university, open university, multi-university, etc.). The process of globalization will emphasize the skills of graduates in technological professions requiring knowledge of foreign languages as well as sensitivity to different cultures, which will increase internationalization. In the context of diversification and flexibility of higher education, priorities that directly affect its quality come to the fore: increasing the number of providers and private educational institutions, increasing international mobility, increasing international mobility and forms of cross-border higher education, effective quality assurance systems, etc.

The most important challenge of globalization is to expand cooperation to develop systems for assessing the quality of teaching, learning and research. We note that, unfortunately, Ukraine today faces externalization of benefits and internalization of costs due to brain drain. We can say that the gap between those who have and those who do not have education is widening. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to reconsider the conditions aimed at encouraging the return to Ukraine of those who gain professional experience in developed countries.

Thus, the methodology of valorization of the new education in Ukraine covers all dimensions (intellectual, moral, technological, aesthetic, physical) and forms of education (formal, non-formal, informal). The processes taking place in Ukraine stimulate the transition from specific approaches to global, interdisciplinary approaches that allow us to explore social problems that require specific solutions: peace, democracy, social justice, cultural development, environmental protection, food, health, protection of children and youth, promotion of education and research. The limitations of this study consist the use of narrative synthesis only. We believe that for a more extensive analysis in future research, we should use contrastive and comparative methods, which can be the first step in conducting an in-depth methodological analysis of data and organising it in an appropriate way. Prospects for future research in this area relate to the study of higher education models in Ukraine in order to form and adapt the existing educational apparatus to the socio-economic transformations of our time.

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