



# Inclusive Education at universities: the experience of European Union countries and prospects for development in Ukraine

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## Abstract

Inclusive Education is a key aspect of the modern educational system aimed at ensuring equal access to Education for all people, regardless of their individual needs. Tolerance in society plays an important role in the success of inclusive Education because it promotes respect for diversity and understanding of others. The Ukrainian Higher Education system is not fully prepared for students with special needs. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to study world practices of adaptation of students with disabilities to studying at universities in order to implement and improve inclusive Education at universities. In the course of the study, the conceptual principles of the organization of inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions of the European Union (UE) were outlined. Moreover, with the help of the sociological method of research, the level of tolerance to students with special needs and the impact of the creation of a tolerant learning environment on receiving Higher Education by students with disabilities

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Received: Jan. 12, 2024

Accepted: Jun. 28, 2024

were investigated. As a result, the directions of implementation of the inclusive paradigm in modern universities of Ukraine were developed. This article will be useful to teachers, practitioners, as well as to everyone who is interested in the study of inclusion and its fulfilment in society.

**Keywords:** Higher Education. Inclusive Education. Tolerance. Inclusive Higher Education.

## 1 Introduction

The modern system of Higher Education in European countries meets social demands in the context of new realities of life. Therefore, it is advisable to focus on the processes that are now taking place in Ukraine, namely globalization and European integration of Ukraine (Zayed *et al.*, 2022).

It is worth mentioning that unlike Ukraine, Education in the EU is on the path of post-industrial development and is built on the principles of humanization of production and Education. Since currently the transformations in the Ukrainian Education system take place against the background of significant changes in all spheres of society, it is essential to rethink and reformat the worldview, scientific and pedagogical positions, developing the legal and legislative aspects of Education from the standpoint of building a democratic state (Davydenko, 2014). These challenges are especially visible in the Education of students with special needs.

Inclusive Education is an important component of modern society, as it promotes equal access to Education for all people, regardless of their individual characteristics, physical, psychological or intellectual limitations (Fichten *et al.*, 2020). Inclusion in Education is a complex concept that encompasses not only students with special needs, but also a wider range of students, pupils and children who may be excluded or marginalized for various reasons. Some authors, including Brazilian researchers, make a great contribution to the understanding of this term (Unesco, 1994). Thus, inclusive Education is aimed at ensuring equal access to quality Education for children with special educational needs by organizing their Education in secondary schools on the basis of personality-oriented teaching methods, taking into account the individual characteristics of the educational and cognitive activities of such children.

Inclusion is defined as a process that seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination and ensure equal opportunities for all students. In this regard, it is important to mention that inclusion requires adapting curricula and teaching methods to the

diverse needs of students. When studying at university, students undergo active formation of social maturity, which consists in the ability of each young person to master the social roles (Kaminska, 2012).

Ensuring equal access to Higher Education for all students, regardless of their individual characteristics and needs, has become an important task for universities around the world. (Semenets-Orlova *et al.*, 2022). When comparing the usual educational process with an inclusive one, the inclusive process is characterized by a number of obstacles and dependencies considered problem situations since, in addition to the problematic situations of the educational process, it is necessary to overcome the contradictions between the students' needs and access to Education, as well as the possibilities of perception and reproduction of knowledge and adaptation to the social environment. Inclusive Education in universities has become an increasingly relevant issue in present-day Higher Education environment. However, this process is accompanied by numerous challenges and problems that require detailed analysis and discussion.

At the beginning of the 21 century, inclusive Education is recognized by the international educational community as the most innovative movement in the Education of democratic countries (Yuldashev; Khomiachenko; Yuldashev, 2022). At this time, in Ukraine, in the context of the new paradigm of education, public interest has increased concerning improving the organizational and legal foundations for ensuring the right to Education for children with special needs, the adaptability of Education to the needs and demands of people with special needs (Sytnyk; Zubchyk; Orel, 2022). Meanwhile, active search for ways and means of their implementation is carried out.

That is why the study of world experience in the field of inclusive Higher Education is an urgent issue aimed to improve in the educational process at universities in Ukraine.

The article is aimed at studying the world experience in inclusive higher education, considering and analysing the problems of inclusive Higher Education in Ukraine, and discussing the role of tolerance in society to solve them. In accordance with the aim, the following objectives were set:

- to consider the global experience in the field of inclusive Education at universities and analyse the best practices in the field of inclusive higher education, which can be useful for university communities in Ukraine;

- to formulate conceptual principles for the organization of inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions of the European Union (EU);
- to reveal the directions of implementation of the inclusive paradigm in modern universities in Ukraine;
- to investigate the level of tolerant learning environment in Higher Education institutions and how this environment affects students with special needs.

The research methodology is an integrated approach that combines theoretical review, questionnaires, statistical and qualitative data analysis. This approach provided a comprehensive picture of the state of inclusive Education in Ukrainian universities and facilitated the development of recommendations for its further improvement based on the experience of the EU countries.

Using the comparative analysis, policies and practices of inclusion in EU universities were analyzed to determine possible ways to adapt these approaches in Ukraine. The leading method of research is the empirical method of research - a sociological survey, thus stipulating the scientific novelty of the research. The questionnaire was developed taking into account modern methodological approaches and contained questions about the learning experience, attitudes towards inclusion, the presence or absence of barriers in the educational process and the necessary support for students with special educational needs.

By this research, the authors hope to broaden understanding and awareness of the problems of inclusive Education in universities and emphasize the importance of tolerance in society to address them. The novelty of the study lies in the characterization of conceptual principles and methods of organizing inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions of the educational systems of the EU and the introduction of effective models of inclusive Education in the higher Education system in Ukraine, as well as in a comprehensive analysis of the level of tolerant educational environment in Ukrainian universities. The results of the study can be useful to teachers and practitioners in the system of pedagogical and continuing education. Moreover, they can be useful for specialists who work with people with special needs.

## **2 Inclusive Education at universities in European countries**

Scientific studies in the field of inclusive Higher Education abroad cover the context of the social and legal changes that have occurred in the educational policy

of countries where the inclusion of children with special needs has long been a successful and sustainable practice. The principle of accessibility is formulated as the basis of human rights. This principle is set out in the resolution of the UN General Assembly of December 12, 1997 as a priority to promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Since 2010 in the EU, globalization trends in the organization of inclusive Education have been outlined, which are considered “inclusive Education throughout life”. However, among the EU member states, it is still possible to single out states with tendencies to improve the technological component of higher inclusive (United Nations, 1990; United Nations, 1994) Education and countries that emphasize the anthropological factor. Since the states of the EU have different social and pedagogical traditions and different levels of funding for inclusive reforms, the latter can be implemented fragmentary. World experience shows that countries that actively develop inclusive Education and support tolerance in society achieve greater success in creating a level playing field for all citizens.

Methodological support of inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions is based on the optimal distribution of responsibilities between the participants of inclusion, technical and didactic equipment and modification of the educational process. The main principle is a differential approach and individualized learning. The latter is implemented through the introduction of an individual training schedule (individual, distance, mixed learning, free attendance, attendance of basic courses); the use of maximum number of channels of sensory information assimilation; continuous monitoring of students’ with special educational needs involvement in the process of information perception; prolongation of terms (preparation, passing exams, training in general); conducting current, modular and border control in the most optimal form for the student (oral survey, tests, written survey, computer diagnostics, etc.) (Edwards, 2022).

The organization of classes in inclusive groups of Higher Education is a separate methodological problem since the educational needs of physically healthy students and young people with disabilities must be met at the same time. It is the most difficult to differentiate the learning process in lecture sessions. This difficulty is solved by providing an extended methodological package in parallel with the maximum multimedia of the material. Seminars are held in the form of individualized reproduction of material (oral response, written response, commenting, drawing up schemes, tests, etc.), varying the duration of tasks.

The human factor in the organization of inclusive Education in universities is typically represented by full-time employees (usually 3–5 people per faculty) and volunteers or people hired for social security funds. In the educational inclusive process, students with special educational needs and teachers have separate clear rights and responsibilities (the first should show the maximum level of independence and effectiveness of training, the second - to promote differentiation and consideration of the special needs of the first) (Kent, 2016). The process of inclusive Education in universities in Europe is as follows: according to the framework laws, pedagogical staff, psychologists, and social workers implement a personally oriented, flexible, differentiated approach to students in terms of training, upbringing and socialization on the basis of framework capabilities (physical: access, architecture; legal: rights, duties, opportunities; financial resources) (Mitchel; Sutherland, 2015).

Depending on educational traditions and legislation in different countries, psychological support may focus more on advisory, supportive, initial adaptation or problematic issues. It is mainly three-levelled in organizational terms and involves the work of university specialists, state (municipal) institutions, and independent centres to support people with disabilities (Lowenthal *et al.*, 2020). The EU developed two types of implementation of inclusion in Higher Education as follows: with responsibility and initiative on the local level (Austria, Belgium, Italy, Great Britain) and on the principle of “from top to bottom” (Sweden, Holland, France, Germany) (Davydenko, 2015a).

The experience of Western European countries and North American countries indicates the pattern of evolutionary interpenetration of the system of mass and special Education (erasing the boundaries between them and merging into a single system of heterogeneous educational institutions) (Davydenko, 2015b). In different countries, this process has begun not from the same starting positions, in different conditions, in different ways and at a different pace, accompanied by strategic and tactical mistakes and miscalculations such as the imperfect legislative framework, interdepartmental inconsistency of actions, extremes in trends (rejection of special institutions, mass integration without proper support, etc.) (Davydenko, 2015c).

Inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions in South America, in particular in Brazil, is actively developing, reflecting global trends towards equal educational opportunities for all students, including those with special educational needs. In this context, Brazil has made significant steps in the implementation of inclusive practices and policies aimed at creating a favourable learning environment for

all students. Thus, Law No. 13.146/2015 (known as the Statute of Persons with Disabilities) obliges universities to create conditions for the Education of students with disabilities.

The countries of the EU are divided into the following groups by addressing the issue of access of students with disabilities to higher education: a) those that focus on the human factor of accessibility (Romania, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Poland); b) those that invest heavily in engineering and architectural re-equipment in parallel with human resources (France, Sweden, the Netherlands, Great Britain). The leaders of universal design and access to learning are the countries of Scandinavia and the UK (Sadova, 2020).

For example, in Germany, in parallel with the system of special educational institutions, where children are mainly with complex disabilities, there are institutions of inclusive education. 19% of students with limited health possibilities and 4-8% of students with disabilities study at German universities. A student with a disability is legally equipped with special technical and auxiliary means necessary for domestic life, he/she is provided with social and medical support and services from state social services (Studieren mit Behinderung..., 2023).

At the same time, with the increasing development of theoretical aspects of inclusion and practical experience, it is observed that professional support and support of children with developmental disabilities and their families is not enough. In order to achieve the stability of the educational space, where everyone (including a person with developmental disabilities) has the opportunity to achieve maximum success and receive high-quality education, the range of support and support services should be extended to all participants in the educational process, including teachers of educational institutions. It is this rethinking of auxiliary services of specialists and support services that should be taken into account by Ukrainian specialists when creating such an organizational structure (Slozanska, 2013).

On the one hand, the educational process in modern world differ in the variability of Education systems, their structure, the definition of ways to solve specific problems. On the other hand, it traces a number of general trends, one of which is the implementation of inclusive education. Since the main goal of inclusive Education is to eliminate any discrimination in the educational process and ensure the availability of Education for all, the achievement of this goal can be organized in different ways, which is observed in the educational systems of different countries.

During the research, it was found that students with standard needs in an inclusive environment increase self-esteem, realize humanistic and communicative needs, show a high level of motivation and satisfaction with the educational process. It should be noted that students with a different set of psychophysical, cognitive and social needs do not interfere with them; on the contrary, they help in achieving educational and personal goals.

Inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions of the EU is based on conceptual principles of equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their individual capacity and needs. The authors specified key concepts that determine the organization of inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions of the EU: equality and diversity; individual curricula; social interaction and cooperation; taking into account the multifaceted needs and characteristics of students, including physical, emotional, cognitive and social aspects; professional development of teachers. These concepts contribute to creating an accessible and receptive learning environment for all students in Higher Education institutions of the EU and Ukraine.

### **3 Inclusive Education in Ukraine: prospects for the development of inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions**

Ukraine is taking significant steps towards the implementation of inclusive education, but still faces many challenges. Inclusive Education in Ukrainian universities aims to ensure equal access to Education for all students, including those with special educational needs, socio-economic and cultural differences, etc. Therefore, it is important to consider the main aspects, problems and prospects of inclusive education in higher educational institutions of Ukraine. Ukrainian Education has entered this evolutionary stage of introducing inclusive practice, so together with other countries it faced the problems of the period of industrial modernization. During 1991–2016, Education of children with special needs has undergone significant transformational changes: from institutionalization to inclusion.

Currently, the issue of financing inclusive Education is still relevant. According to the current legislation, financing of educational institutions occurs through the mechanism of estimated financing. The lack of methodological and technical support for the educational process of students with special needs is one of the problems of inclusive Education for this category of students. Moreover, the insufficient level of training of teachers of higher educational institutions to work



with students with special needs is another urgent problem. However, until recently the state policy was mainly compensatory in nature, in general, the response was limited to minor financial assistance and the provision of certain services. The absence of a law on inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions does not make it possible to fully realize the rights of persons with disabilities to receive high-quality higher education, taking into account their capabilities and needs (Law No. 2145-VIII “On Education”, 2017 (Ukraine, 2017), the Law No. 875-XII “On the Foundations of Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities in Ukraine”, 1991 (Ukraine, 1991), Law No. 651-XIV “On General Secondary Education”, 1999 [Ukraine, 1999]).

In order to be part of the EU in the context of inclusive education, Ukraine needs to adapt and implement a number of legislative and regulatory acts that meet the standards and practices of the EU. In particular, the harmonization should take into account the European Union Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for 2021-2030, Council of 2000/78/EC Directive “On establishing a common framework for equal treatment in employment and labour”, and European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships.

Inclusive Higher Education in Ukraine requires a systematic implementation on the basis of a balanced approach, both on the part of state authorities and the public, since inclusive processes in the Education of children with disorders of psychophysical development in the countries of the post-Soviet space have their own specifics, develop in conditions of a special socio-cultural status, taking into account the positives and achievements of differentiated Education in special educational institutions.

Since 2016, there have been attempts to introduce inclusive Education in general Education institutions (schools), but this did not apply to university Education (Mirror of inclusive Education in Ukraine: on the state of inclusive Education 2017–2018, 2019). Children with special needs, undoubtedly, have access to Education at all levels of accreditation and they decide whether to receive Higher Education or not at their own discretion. However, due to the lack of information, material support, and outdated social dogmas, such students deprive themselves of access to Higher Education. The effective integration is possible only in conditions of constant improvement of systems of general and special Education, elimination of existing borders between them. In this regard, a well-thought-out state policy is fundamental, which should optimise the process of integrating students with special needs into the general Education space and taking into account scientific and methodological approaches to the introduction of inclusive education.

However, speaking about the need to introduce inclusive Higher Education in Ukraine, in particular, by creating an inclusive environment in Higher Education institutions, it should be said that today there is a number of contradictions that impede the rapid implementation of reforms in this direction. These contradictions include the imperfect legal regulation; the need for additional funding for inclusive educational institutions; unpreparedness of teaching staff to work in conditions of inclusion; the lack of special Education specialists in the state of the educational institution, inflexibility and oversaturation of educational programs that are difficult to adapt and modify in accordance with the needs of a child with special educational needs; inconsistency of the educational institution building with the principles of universal design, etc. (Lytvynova; Stadnytska, 2018). All these factors negatively affect and complicates the processes of effective implementation of inclusive Education in Ukrainian universities.

Therefore, for inclusion to be successful, it is necessary to work on creating an appropriate educational climate and mastering a set of practical approaches as follows:

1. The development of a positive attitude towards the idea of inclusion, (in particular, towards students with special educational needs). The formation of a positive attitude towards inclusive Education should be carried out at all levels, i.e., from the system of training students of pedagogical educational institutions to the system of advanced training of experienced teachers-practitioners. At the same time, the extensive educational work and the formation of appropriate public opinion regarding inclusion is necessary not only as an educational practice, but as a worldview concept of a democratic society in which every person (regardless of his/her differences) has the same rights and opportunities for realization of his/her rights, in particular, the right to Higher Education.
2. The policy and leadership aimed at providing support (at the state level, educational bodies, community, educational institutions). National educational policies and legislation should be consistent with international instruments ratified by the international community. The determining factor in creating higher educational institutions with considered inclusive needs of future students with disabilities is the support of initiatives of universities. Therefore, it is advisable to create leadership teams to manage and support inclusion in an educational institution of all accreditation levels. It is also important to cultivate the belief that all the university community has a common responsibility for creating an inclusive environment.

3. Processes taking place in classes, which are based on practical activities confirmed by research results (use of technologies and methods). In order for universities to work effectively, it is important that they change and adapt to meet the diverse needs of all students. Given the historical realities of Ukraine, where special Education has been functioning for many decades, teachers should become “teachers of all children”. Teachers who will have students with special needs in their classes need to think about how to use their skills in order to improve and enrich the educational practice of all children in the Education system that moves to inclusive approaches.
4. A flexible curriculum and teaching (application of adaptation and modifications; the use of differentiated, collaborative teaching technologies; supporting training; practices of social integration, etc.). Curricula that were in force until recently made it much more difficult for educators to implement an inclusive approach. Currently, teachers are offered to informally modify the curriculum, use appropriate adaptations (technology, additional resources, etc.) or do it formally (using the Individual Curriculum). Inclusion and the overall quality of Education will improve if teachers adapt teaching methods in such a way that they correspond to the best teaching practice.
5. The community involvement (the widest use of its resources and its involvement in the activities of the educational institution). Involvement of the local community in the activities of universities in the field of inclusion adaptation is extremely important for the success of inclusive Education in Higher Education institutions. It is useful to provide partnerships with local, national and international public organizations.
6. Appropriate training and resources (acceptance as a necessity of constant professional growth; adequate use of resources for the benefit of all students). In addition to traditional forms of advanced training (courses, trainings, master classes, etc.), it is advisable to establish partnerships with a university/research institution that already has a developed strategy or experience with inclusive students. The transition to inclusive Education can be seen as one of the ways to attract additional resources to educational institutions. Partnerships with public organizations that promote inclusion can provide access to additional human and material resources. These resources can be used for the benefit of all students.

So, summarizing the above, it can be argued that universities in Ukraine are not yet ready to openly talk about the full accessibility of students with special needs

to the educational process. Thus, undoubtedly, the state allocates preferential budget places and introduce aspects of inclusion, but this is not observed at the full-scale level. This is most likely to be the initiative of a certain university, and is not fixed at the state level. Ukraine is an open, democratic, and progressive country. The introduction of inclusion in Higher Education institutions is a promising direction, taking into account the European integration of our country. Hence, the following directions of implementation of the inclusive paradigm in modern universities in Ukraine can be singled out:

1. Creating a supportive learning environment. An important aspect is the adaptation of premises and infrastructure of the university to ensure the availability of educational space for all students, including those who have physical limitations.
2. Development of individual curricula. The implementation of inclusive Education involves the development of individual curricula for students with special needs. This allows teachers to adapt the learning process to their needs and capabilities.
3. Training and methodological support of teaching staff. Educational institutions provide training to teachers and other staff on the methods and approaches of inclusive learning. This includes skills to work with different types of students and the use of adapted teaching techniques.
4. Technology development and implementation. Without a special architectural and technological improvement of university activities, it is impossible to talk about ensuring inclusion.

#### **4 The level of a tolerant learning environment in universities and its impact on students with special needs**

An appropriate tolerant learning environment contributes to a more successful Education for students with special needs, allowing them to maximize their potential and actively participate in the educational and social processes of the university. The authors conducted a survey of students of higher educational institutions to study the level of a tolerant learning environment in universities for inclusive students in classrooms and during the educational process, in particular.

The obtained data are the theoretical and methodological basis for the development of generalizations and recommendations for the implementation of the European model of inclusion in Ukrainian universities. The organization of data collection among students of different universities and faculties was carried out taking into account the diversity of gender, ethnic, socio-economic groups. The study surveyed 1,535 students and 124 university teachers. At the beginning of the study, the questionnaire indicated the anonymity of this survey, which allowed attracting a larger sample of both students and teachers. Anonymity is attributed to the fact that the Ukrainian environment is not yet ready to openly support inclusive students. The anonymity of the survey was a key factor in attracting a large number of participants. This ensured greater openness and honesty of the answers of students and teachers.

Universities were selected in such a way to collect survey data to ensure geographical diversity from different regions of Ukraine. When collecting data, it was important to consider universities of different areas of study (humanitarian, natural, technical and medical specialties) to include a wide range of student experiences and needs. The questionnaire was developed taking into account modern methodological approaches and included questions about the learning experience, attitudes towards inclusion, the presence or absence of barriers in the educational process, and the necessary support for students with special educational needs. The obtained data serve as a theoretical and methodological basis for the development of generalizations and recommendations for the implementation of the European model of inclusion in Ukrainian universities. In particular, the results allow to identify the main barriers faced by students and develop effective strategies to overcome them.

One of the main tasks of the pedagogical experiment was to track the dynamics of the efficiency of the process, the mutual influence of ordinary students and students with special educational needs, the dependence of the dynamics of their development on the time spent in an inclusive environment.

During the study, 156 students gave a positive answer to the question “Do you classify yourself as a person with special needs?”. During the additional survey of persons who consider themselves inclusive or have a certificate of special needs, the difficulties faced by students in the process of studying at universities were clarified, namely: 56% of the additional sample of respondents who consider themselves to be persons with special needs noted the lack of educational material in an adapted form to their needs, 24% noted the lack of special equipment and

barrier-free environment; 12% of respondents said that they hide their inclusion from classmates in order not to succumb to moral or physical bullying.

Answering the question “How do you treat students with inclusion?”, 65% of respondents indicated a positive answer (the overall percentage of teachers and students). 15% gave a neutral answer, 15% - negative, 5% said it was difficult to answer or refused to answer. As a result, we can say that the vast majority of the university community is positive towards people with inclusion. The question “Would your attitude towards a student/classmate change if you learned at the end of the school year that he/she has inclusive needs?” was answered in the following way: 90% of respondents said that their attitude would not change.

Answering the question “What is the reason for your negative attitude towards students with inclusive needs?”, the respondents indicated the lack of understanding of communication with such people. Having analysed the answers to this question, it is necessary to mention that the vast majority of negative attitudes are seen in teachers. In general, in higher educational institutions of Ukraine, a neutral or negative attitude of teachers to the introduction of inclusion prevails. Teachers are more loyal to students with physical disabilities, while emotional and mental disorders are a barrier to acceptable relationships. In the argumentation of this answer, the teachers noted that they did not understand how to properly assess their skills (if we talk about psychological inclusion) and how to submit the material (auditory and otorhinolarinic inclusion) for better perception by students.

If the answers of respondents are classified by age characteristics, the survey showed that the older generation of teachers (50–60 years old) is inclined to the negative attitude of students with inclusion, the middle generation (40–50 years old) is neutral, but has its own prejudices (regarding the assessment of the educational process), the younger generation of teachers (27–40 years) is positive towards students with inclusions despite all the challenges of the educational process. Regarding the form of education, it was established that the respondents of the middle and older generation of university teachers, they are inclined to the segregated education, while the young teachers are prone to advocate the integrated education.

Discussing the student aspect, 85% of the students have a positive attitude towards students with inclusive needs, even despite the communication challenges. There are students who noted that they have a positive attitude but do not understand how to communicate with them in practical classes, conferences, etc. However,

they mention that they would quickly adapt and in no way discriminate against students with inclusion).

Solving the problem of the destructive attitude of teachers to students with special educational needs lies mainly in the organizational plane. Thus, it is possible to solve it by increasing the professional and personal competence of teachers, reducing social tension due to overcoming of communicative difficulties and barriers, encouraging teachers to new forms of learning, Education and communication, as well as creating a separate form of assessment of knowledge and skills, acquired during the educational process, based on the characteristics of student inclusion.

Analysing the additional questionnaire of students with special needs, who are currently studying at university in Ukraine, Higher Education is received by students with the following types of inclusion: impaired hearing functions, impaired vision, impaired functioning of internal organs, birth defects of the body that do not constrain free movement, partial paralysis. In an additional survey of this category of students, it was found that 80% hide or do not openly talk about their inclusive needs, arguing this by fear of being discriminated against or being bullied by classmates.

In this regard, a study of the relationship between students and their inclusive peers showed that their cooperation can be both a stabilizing and destructive factor. Students are attuned to the positive perception of peers with disabilities in terms of successful communication with them. Their relationship largely depends on the system of informing students from authoritative sources, positive personal experience of their communication with people with disabilities. The most effective communication of physically healthy students and students with disabilities is observed in the process of joint educational activities between physically healthy students and students with diseases of the musculoskeletal system, while mental disorders worsen such cooperation.

According to the results of the study, it is possible to state that the introduction of inclusion in universities is more effective than in school because the value-ethical worldview of youth is already formed. When receiving Higher Education by students with special needs, there is a real opportunity to realize their intellectual potential and become more competitive in the modern labour market. To do this, it is necessary to conduct scientifically based studies of professions more promising for this category of students (creating a bank of professions) in accordance with their capabilities and needs, use existing programs of their employment, and

introduce world experience in working with this category of students. Finally, it is necessary to form a tolerant attitude towards a person with special needs in society, and the media should constantly form a new thinking in society regarding this category of people.

## 5 Conclusions

An inclusive approach to the organization of the educational environment for the national Education system is relatively new in Ukraine. Owing to the study of the world experience, the improvement of the legislative and regulatory framework of Ukraine, the organization of additional training of pedagogical personnel, the deepening and expansion of the content of training future teachers, the creation of inclusive resource centres, the allocation of a subvention from the state budget to provide state support to people with special educational needs, support and promotion of the relevant activities of public organizations, it is possible to summarize the first results of the introduction of inclusion into the national Education system. Nevertheless, despite the positive developments in the implementation of inclusive education, there are still many obstacles, barriers and challenges that need to be overcome. In particular, the aspect of obtaining Higher Education requires special attention.

The practical experience of integrating students with special needs into the educational process at university in different countries of the world shows that all activities related to involvement had a different degree of success, depending on the professional competence of teachers, the use of special psychological and pedagogical assistance. For Higher Education to reach the level of advanced countries of the world, it is necessary to create new forms of organization of educational activities based on adequate forecasting and rapid response to possible challenges arising in the present.

As evidenced by foreign and Ukrainian experience, the effectiveness of inclusive Education is achieved only with the maximum support of all participants of this process and special support for students with special needs. Specific steps for the design and implementation of individual elements of the European system of inclusive Education cover such main areas as ensuring a barrier-free environment for students, technical and informational, methodological support of the project. In this regard, the authors suggest the following ways to solve the problems related to inclusive higher education:

- to finalize regulatory documents on inclusive Education for students with disabilities in addition to documents regulating the training of this category of students;



- to bring into conformity the scientific apparatus in the field of training students with disabilities;
- to provide scientific and methodological support for inclusive Education of students in the university;
- to create a technical base, including special equipment and software;
- to conduct seminars for university teachers on the specifics of inclusive Education for students with special needs;
- to create a barrier-free environment in universities;
- to adapt educational materials to the needs and capabilities of the category of students with special needs.

## **Educação inclusiva nas universidades: a experiência dos países da União Europeia e as perspectivas de desenvolvimento na Ucrânia**

### **Resumo**

*A Educação inclusiva é um aspecto fundamental do sistema educativo moderno que visa garantir a igualdade de acesso à Educação para todas as pessoas, independentemente das suas necessidades individuais. A tolerância na sociedade desempenha um papel importante no sucesso da Educação inclusiva porque promove o respeito pela diversidade e a compreensão dos outros. O sistema de Ensino Superior ucraniano não está totalmente preparado para estudantes com necessidades especiais. Portanto, o objetivo desta pesquisa é estudar as práticas mundiais de adaptação de alunos com deficiência ao estudo em universidades, a fim de implementar e melhorar a educação inclusiva nas universidades. No decorrer do estudo, foram delineados os princípios conceituais da organização da Educação inclusiva nas instituições de Ensino Superior da União Europeia (UE). Além disso, com a ajuda do método sociológico de investigação, foram investigados o nível de tolerância aos alunos com necessidades especiais e o impacto da criação de um ambiente de aprendizagem tolerante na obtenção do Ensino Superior por alunos com deficiência. Como resultado, foram desenvolvidas direções para a implementação do paradigma inclusivo nas universidades modernas da Ucrânia. Este artigo será útil para professores, profissionais, bem como para todos os interessados no estudo da inclusão e na sua concretização na sociedade.*

**Palavras-chave:** Ensino Superior. Educação Inclusiva. Tolerância. Ensino Superior Inclusivo.

## **Educación inclusiva en las universidades: la experiencia de los países de la Unión Europea y las perspectivas de desarrollo en Ucrania**

### **Resumen**

*La Educación inclusiva es un aspecto clave del sistema educativo moderno cuyo objetivo es garantizar la igualdad de acceso a la Educación para todas las personas, independientemente de sus necesidades individuales. La tolerancia en la sociedad juega un papel importante en el éxito de la Educación inclusiva porque promueve el respeto por la diversidad y la comprensión de los demás. El sistema de Educación superior ucraniano no está completamente preparado para estudiantes con necesidades especiales. Por tanto, el propósito de esta investigación es estudiar las prácticas mundiales de adaptación de los estudiantes con discapacidad a estudiar en las universidades con el fin de implementar y mejorar la Educación inclusiva en las universidades. En el transcurso del estudio, se delinearon los principios conceptuales de la organización de la Educación inclusiva en las instituciones de Educación superior de la Unión Europea*

*(UE). Además, con la ayuda del método de investigación sociológica, se investigó el nivel de tolerancia hacia los estudiantes con necesidades especiales y el impacto de la creación de un ambiente de aprendizaje tolerante en la educación superior de los estudiantes con discapacidad. Como resultado, se desarrollaron las direcciones de implementación del paradigma inclusivo en las universidades modernas de Ucrania. Este artículo será útil para profesores, profesionales y todos aquellos interesados en el estudio de la inclusión y su realización en la sociedad.*

***Palabras clave:*** *Educación Superior. Educación Inclusiva. Tolerancia. Educación Superior Inclusiva.*

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**Contribution of the authors:** Mykhailo Goncharenko and Svitlana Herashchenko – Conception and elaboration of the article. Iryna Markus and Oksana Kruhlyk – data collection and analysis. Nataliya Bondar – writing of the text and revision of the final writing.

**Datas:** The entire dataset supporting the results of this study was published in the article itself.

**Conflict of interest:** The authors declare that they have no commercial or associative interest that represents a conflict of interest in relation to the manuscript.