

Inspiration from abroad

UKRAINIAN INSPIRATION

The Ukraine on the way to inclusion and Czech involvement

Lenka Gulová

Since 2014, the Ukrainian educational system has been going through a systemic reform with the objective to modernize university (tertiary) education and approximate it to European educational sphere. Since the adoption of the Higher Education Act, Ukrainian universities have undergone major changes which however universities implemented at a different pace and different level of effectiveness, as is quite common not merely in the Ukraine.

Concurrently, an extensive reform is being implemented in the area of elementary and secondary schools under the name “The New Ukrainian School”. The **concept of the New Ukrainian School is strongly oriented on students and on application of modern teaching methods, with a consistent promotion of inclusion**. Prerequisite to a successful implementation of new educational policies into practice is, *inter alia*, higher professional competence of teachers, future teachers, and other workers in the educational system as special pedagogues, pedagogic assistants, social pedagogues, psychologists, etc.

Quite noteworthy are examples of a relatively intensive engagement of the Czech Republic in the transformation of the Ukrainian educational system. One of the most important actors is the Association for International Issues in Prague which invited members of the Department of Social Pedagogy of the Masaryk University to join its projects in 2011. The result is several years of joint endeavor and cooperation on solutions for various projects in support of the current trends on all levels of education, i.e., elementary, secondary, and tertiary. As an example, let us mention the developmental project Association for International Issues “*On the Way to Inclusion*” (2019–2020) which concentrates on three regions in the south of the Ukraine: Cherson, Mykolayevo, and Odessa. The inclusion methods are taught in the form of training and lecturing hundreds of workers in the educational system, all in cooperation with and the Dept. of Social Pedagogy of the PdF MU. Intensively engaged in all the projects also are various Ukrainian educational institutions as well as the Ukrainian Ministry of Education, where a special section for inclusion has been formed.

Another joint project, where the principal actor is the Masaryk University, a project entitled “*Transformation of Pedagogic Faculties and Universities for the 21st century*”, which ties onto a successful project named “*Progressive Management of Universities*” (2017–2018). In this project, support was given to 25 Ukrainian universities whose representatives would come to Czechia for regular academic exchanges, where they acquired intensive training in such themes as internationalization, quality in education, and *inter alia* also in inclusion. The objective of the new project, “*Transformation of Pedagogic Faculties and Universities for the 21st century*”, to be realized in 2019–2021, is to improve the quality of future teachers’ training as selected Ukrainian universities through sharing of Czech experiences and support is the implementation of the concept of “**New Ukrainian School**” into practice. Taking part in the project are the representatives of 21 Ukrainian universities that play an important role in the development of the Ukrainian educational system both on regional and national level. The participants also include universities relocated from the east and south of the Ukraine. One of the project’s important themes is inclusion, as well. The involvement of the Czech Republic in the Ukraine is bilaterally meaningful. The proximity of cultures and languages, historical context, sense of togetherness, and mutual inspiration bring enrichment to all participants of joint projects. Like the Czech Republic, the Ukraine is on the way to inclusion. Projects like this one help us go a part of the way together.

A successful implementation of new educational policies into practice depends, *inter alia*, on higher competences of teachers and future teachers. In the Ukraine, contrary to Czechia, there exist specialized pedagogic universities or faculties of humanities with very strong pedagogic departments that function in nearly every region of the Ukraine and prepare pedagogic experts for the given region. Thus, their influence on the development of education in the region is considerable. At the present, one of the institutions that is intensively dealing with the implementation of inclusion is the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology of the Zaporozhye National University, *inter alia* particularly thanks to the person of professor Yevgeny Klopota, one of the leading specialists in the process of inclusion in the educational system.

Professor Yevgeny Klopota

Zaporozhye National University, Ukraine

Professor Yevgeny Klopota is a highly recognized and respected Ukrainian expert in the fields of psychological and pedagogic disciplines, especially in the context of inclusion. He teaches at the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology of the Zaporozhye National University. He is editor-in-chief of a professional magazine named “[Current Issues in Pedagogy, Psychology and Professional Education](#)”. Furthermore, he is chairman of a regional [organization in Zaporozhye](#) that is part of the All-Ukrainian Parliament of the Working Handicapped.

The areas of his interest include special psychology, typology, special education, social integration of the handicapped, problems of inclusive education, and the situation of blind people. He has many years of experience in teaching the following subjects: psychology, social psychology, ontogenic psychology, and pedagogy, pedagogic psychology, training in self-knowledge and self-conception, psycho-diagnostics, study of conflicts, intercultural psychology, and basic psychology in inclusive education

He is active in providing psychological support to young people as part of various national and international projects. He cooperates with universities abroad, currently with the Masaryk University on a project named Progressive Management of Universities (2017–2019) and most recently he participates in a new international project named Transformation of Pedagogic Faculties and Universities for the 21st century (2019–2021). He trains the post-gradual student Natalia Voronska and cooperates with her on the theme of the psychological factors in the development of the communication competence of the students in the inclusive educational sphere.

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In 2015, she defended her diploma thesis on the theme of “The Technology of Forming the Professional Competence of Future University Sociologists”. At the present, she is doing research in the area of the psychological factors of the development of the communication competence of the students of secondary schools.

The areas of her interest include themes related to communication, internal communication in small private companies and communication in the area of education. Other areas of her interest include inclusive education and development of professional competences related to inclusion. She conducts research activities, teaching, and project designing. She has extensive experience in sociological research. She cooperated on this professional text with her trainer, professor Yevgeny Klopota.

Currently, she studies in a post-graduate program at the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology of the Zaporozhye National University.

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