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Analysis of system of vocational teacher education and its governance at Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman

Institutional report





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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Erasmus+ Project:	New mechanisms of partnership-based governance and standardization of vocational teacher education in Ukraine
Project number:	609536-EPP-1-2019-1-DE-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP
Title of the document:	Analysis of system of vocational teacher education and its governance at Kyiv national economic university named after Vadym Hetman
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Submission Date:	01.07.2020
Reviewer(s) (name, surname, institution):	Oksana Melnyk, UKON
Editor (s) (name, surname, institution):	Oksana Melnyk, UKON (technical review on 16.07.2020)
Final version date:	
Revision date(s) and comment, responsible (name, surname, institution):	
Version:	
Work package:	WP1 Analysis of governance of vocational teacher education
Work package leader:	P9/IVET
Type:	Report
Form, language:	MS Word/PDF, EN
Distribution:	Public: international, national, regional
Summary:	The document contains the results of analysis of the system of VET teachers' education and training and its governance at the Kyiv national economic university named after Vadym Hetman



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CONTENTS

Acronyms.....	iv
General characteristics of education and training of students of speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)”	1
Results of survey of students of speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)”	3
Results of survey of teachers involved in training of students of speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)”	7
Analysis of system of vocational teacher education and its governance at KNEU: results of focused group interview	10
New mechanisms of governing higher education development in Ukraine: analysis of results of foresight session	13
General conclusions.....	14



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ACRONYMS

ECTS – European Credit Transfer System

EU – European Union

HEI – higher education institution

KNEU – Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman

VET – vocational education and training

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF STUDENTS OF SPECIALITY “VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (ECONOMICS)”

Education and training of students of the speciality¹ “Vocational Education (Economics)” at Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman (KNEU) was launched in 2013. *Its purpose* is to educate highly-qualified specialists who will be able to effectively engage in both teaching and economic activities, especially activities related to training and development of personnel, social and educational and training work.

Primary positions that a bachelor’s degree graduate may hold:

- specialists in the field of education: trainee teacher, educator at a vocational school, instructor of industrial training, laboratory assistant (education), master of industrial training, teacher of vocational education and training (VET), etc.;
- specialists in the field of finance and trade: dealer, broker, insurance agent, property agent, etc.;
- commercial service agent and trading broker;
- laboratory assistants and technicians in other economic activities.

The modern educational process differs in complexity, variety of forms and methods, use of innovative educational and information technologies. That is why only specialists who, in addition to economic knowledge and skills, have knowledge and skills in such areas as didactics of vocational education, methods of vocational training, psychology of professional activity, educational management, economic didactics, communicative processes in teaching etc., can effectively teach economic disciplines.

This knowledge and skills can be successfully adapted to the sphere of economic activity, filling it with humanitarian context, providing specialists in economics with the opportunity to effectively implement their professional activities, engage in self-education, communicate competently with other people, manage their own activities and subordinates’ work, solve problems, etc. Thus, such education and training has a positive effect on the professional development of specialists, giving them a number of important competences, and significantly expands employment opportunities for graduates.

Despite the objective need and benefits of professional training of students of the speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)”, the first recruitment of students was carried out only in 2015.

During 2016-2018, the team of KNEU participated in an international project of the EU program Erasmus+ “Improving teacher education for applied learning in the field of VET (ITE-

¹ Speciality is a specific study program at higher education institutions in Ukraine, which leads to a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in a specific occupational or scientific field.

VET)” № 574124-EPP-1-2016-1-DE-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP. Participation in the project and cooperation with partner universities from the EU countries allowed reviewing vocational teacher education and making some adjustments. The curriculum of the study program for vocational teacher education in the field of economics was modernized:

- the practical training was increased from 12 ECTS to 23 ECTS;
- the project team developed nine new training courses aimed at the formation of significant professional and personal competences identified by the results of the employers’ survey;
- the number of normative and selective psychological and pedagogical disciplines was increased;
- a cross-cutting integrated practice program was developed, which enabled students to realize the acquired professional competencies in the conditions of real economic and pedagogical activities.

In order to ensure a greater practical orientation of the teacher education and training at KNEU, a new educational and professional program “Economic and Business Education” (within the speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)”) was launched in 2017. The purpose of such a program is the formation and development of general and professional competencies in education and economics necessary for educational activities in educational institutions, centres of educational services and business education, training activity, sales of educational services, development of business education market and effective governance of finance and human potential in the field of educational and economic activities.

The specifics of the program are the following:

- binary education and training, provided by the proportional representation of economic and pedagogical disciplines in the program;
- practical orientation of the program, which includes trainings, practicums, educational and pedagogical practices, and internships;
- use of a package approach to the formation of a variable part of the study plan, according to which students can choose both integral packages of certification programs’ disciplines, and non-integrated selective disciplines.

The disciplines are based on modern theories and are closely related to the practical application of knowledge and skills in educational and economic activities.

In 2019, an accreditation examination was conducted and a certificate of accreditation of the speciality 015 “Vocational Education (Economics)” was obtained, valid until July 1, 2024.

Today, the process of improving the education and training program in the direction of increasing its practical orientation is underway. The urgent tasks are the following:

- strengthening professional guidance activity among students of secondary schools and vocational education institutions;
- preparation of modern educational and methodological literature;
- conducting research on the problems of vocational pedagogy, preparation of scientific publications in professional journals, primarily included in the scientometric databases Scopus and Web of Science;
- strengthening cooperation with vocational education institutions, educational and scientific-methodical centres of vocational education, primarily in the direction of organizing students' practices, internships and teachers' professional development.

RESULTS OF SURVEY OF STUDENTS OF SPECIALITY “VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (ECONOMICS)”

In order to identify problems in the system of the education and training students who are studying on the speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)”, as well as in the management of this training, a survey was conducted in the form of a questionnaire among students and teachers.

Twenty nine students took part in the survey, the vast majority (86%) of whom were second-year students of the bachelor’s level of training in the educational and professional program “Economic and Business Education”.

Among the most significant factors that influenced the students’ choice of speciality there are the following:

- the prestige of the profession in society (44.8%);
- the prospect of earning stable income (31%);
- the employment opportunities, demand in the labor market (31%);
- the social significance of the profession (27.6%).

A very important factor is a desire to teach (20.7%), which is a good indicator in terms of intentions to work in the field of education after graduation.

The criteria for choosing a higher education institution include high reputation and prestige of an institution (62.1%), interesting (34.5%) and easy (31%) learning, an opportunity to get a profession that you like (31%), as well as high quality of education provided by the institution (31%).

It is a sufficiently high level of the overall index of satisfaction with the university studies: 24.1% of respondents said that they were completely satisfied, and 62.1% were rather satisfied. The results of assessing the level of satisfaction with various training aspects

(Table 1) shows that among the problems that need to be improved – training methods, involvement of practitioners into training process and the availability of necessary information regarding the educational program and training organization. It should be taken into consideration that the received answers were in some way influenced by the quarantine measures and distance learning.

Table 1. *The results of assessing the level of students' satisfaction with various educational aspects, percentage of respondents*

Training aspects	completely satisfied	rather satisfied	rather unsatisfied	completely unsatisfied	difficult to answer
training content	20.7	51.7	17.2	10.3	0
training methods	24.1	34.5	31	6.9	3.4
availability of training materials	31	37.9	13.8	13.8	3.4
list of selective disciplines	17.2	37.9	20.7	13.8	10.3
readiness of teachers to answer questions, support during training	34.5	34.5	20.7	3.4	6.9
practical training	27.6	34.5	20.7	13.8	3.4
involvement of practitioners into training process	20.7	27.6	27.6	6.9	17.2
availability of necessary information regarding the educational program and training organization	31	20.7	31	10.3	6.9
availability and usability of training facilities and equipment	27.6	27.6	34.5	6.9	3.4
availability and usability of campus, student canteen, sports facilities	37.9	24.1	13.8	13.8	10.3
participation in international projects during training	31	31	20.7	3.4	13.8
organization of students' leisure time in extracurricular time	37.9	27.6	10.3	13.8	10.3

Regarding the teaching of disciplines, 68.9% of students said that the material was taught clearly and in an accessible for understanding way. The same number of students indicated that teachers were interested in students' achievement and development and motivated them to study the disciplines. 79.3% of students positively assessed the feedback of teachers to students. 62.1% of students noted that the training materials of different disciplines were not repeated, which indicates the necessity of more careful analysis of the disciplines' content aimed at eliminating duplication of training material. This conclusion was confirmed

by the results of a focused interview conducted with teachers of the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology.

Because of the importance of VET teachers' practical training, the survey explored the level of students' satisfaction with various aspects of the organization of practices (Table 2).

Table 2. *The results of assessing the level of students' satisfaction with various aspects of the organization of practices, percentage of respondents*

Types of practice / aspects of the organization of practice / internship	completely satisfied	rather satisfied	rather unsatisfied	completely unsatisfied	difficult to answer
Educational practice					
time frame	9.1	36.4	9.1	18.2	27.3
duration	9.1	36.4	18.2	9.1	27.3
content of practice	9.1	36.4	9.1	9.1	36.4
practice bases	0	27.3	9.1	27.3	36.4
advisement from higher education institution	9.1	36.4	18.2	18.2	18.2
advisement from practice base	9.1	45.5	0	18.2	27.3
Internship					
time frame	9.1	27.3	18.2	18.2	27.3
duration	9.1	27.3	18.2	18.2	27.3
content of internship	9.1	27.3	9.1	27.3	27.3
internship bases	18.2	27.3	9.1	18.2	27.3
advisement from higher education institution	18.2	27.3	18.2	9.1	27.3
advisement from internship base	9.1	27.3	9.1	18.2	36.4

As the data of Table 2 shows, students were more satisfied with the organization of the educational practice than the internship. In order to improve the organization of the practice it is necessary to pay attention to the selection of practice bases and the content of the internship. Students highly assessed the advisement of educational practice from the base of practice, which emphasizes the need to strengthen cooperation between institutions of higher education and institutions of professional pre-tertiary education² and vocational education in order to improve teacher training.

The students' readiness to conduct classes in vocational schools is quite high: 55.1% of students chose the options "very good" and "rather good". The plus point is the fact, that

² Professional (or vocational) pre-tertiary education is a type of education in Ukraine, which is situated between the vocational education and higher education. It was introduced in the newly amended Law on Education in 2017. Law on Professional Pre-tertiary education was approved in 2019. Formally, its institutions (usually colleges) provide a working qualification and can award the first degree of Junior Bachelor, which encompasses from 120 up to 180 ECTS, or a degree of Bachelor.

students highly assessed their teaching experience: 21.4% of students chose the answer “very good”, 57.1% – “rather good”, for the rest of students – it was difficult to choose the answer. Among the knowledge and skills that were lacked to students for conducting classes, the most significant were professional skills (27.3%) and pedagogical knowledge (22.7%). This should be taken into account during the teaching students (future VET teachers) in order to form the necessary competencies.

Students’ awareness of vocational education institutions where they can be employed after graduation is rather limited: only 17.2% of students said that they were fully informed, 37.9% – they were informed but it was limited, 44.8% of students were not informed. Among the most common sources of information about vocational education institutions: official websites of institutions (24.1%), information from teachers and other students (24.1%), job fairs (20.7%).

At the same time, students highly assessed the university’s cooperation with vocational education institutions: 75.9% of students chose the options “very good” and “rather good”. The directions for the development of such cooperation are given in Figure 1.



Figure 1. The directions for development of university’s cooperation with vocational education institutions, percentage of respondents

Regarding the reasonability of involving teachers from vocational education institutions in conducting practical classes, 41.4% of students considered that such cooperation was appropriate, 10.3% – gave a negative answer and for 48.3% of students it was difficult to choose an answer.

The survey also investigated the professional experience of students and their intentions for future employment. 41.4% of respondents constantly and 37.9% from time to time combined paid work with training. Among such students, 3.4% had a job that fully and 41.4% had a job that partially corresponded to their speciality/study program.

13.8% of students clearly and 17.2% rather viewed themselves as VET teachers. Among those who did not view themselves as VET teachers: 27.6% intended to engage in entrepreneurial activities in the field of educational services, 17.2% – to work in postgraduate education institutions or adult education centres (training companies, corporate training centres, etc.), 10.3% – in institutions of professional pre-tertiary education and 6.9% – in institutions of higher education. 34.5% of students mentioned that their work would not be related to training activities.

From this perspective, the results of the survey of students of speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)” showed that students are generally satisfied with their studies at the university and teaching disciplines. Respondents highly assessed their teaching experience during their educational practice and the practice advisement that emphasizes the need to strengthen cooperation between institutions of higher, vocational and professional pre-tertiary education in order to improve teacher training. At the same time, students’ awareness of vocational education institutions where they can be employed after graduation is rather limited. This primarily indicates a low motivation to teach, which confirmed their intentions for future employment. The results of the survey made it possible to identify areas for improving the training of VET teachers: involvement of practitioners into the teaching process, improving training methods, strengthening the practical orientation (professional skills and pedagogical knowledge), development of cooperation with institutions and organizations where students undertake the educational practice and internship.

RESULTS OF SURVEY OF TEACHERS INVOLVED IN TRAINING OF STUDENTS OF SPECIALITY “VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (ECONOMICS)”

Twelve teachers from the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology with scientific and pedagogical experience of more than 10 years took part in the survey. The majority of the respondents (66.7%) hold the position of associate professor, 16.7% are senior lecturer, one respondent is a professor and one respondent is the head of the department. 41.7% of the respondents teach pedagogical disciplines, the same number of the respondents instruct disciplines of special (professional) training and 16.7% teach courses in general training.

Among partners with whom the teachers of the higher education institution (HEI) cooperate are other higher education institutions, vocational and professional pre-tertiary education

institutions, enterprises and private entrepreneurs, training centres (offices) of vocational education, research institutions and institutions of postgraduate pedagogical education (Figure 2).

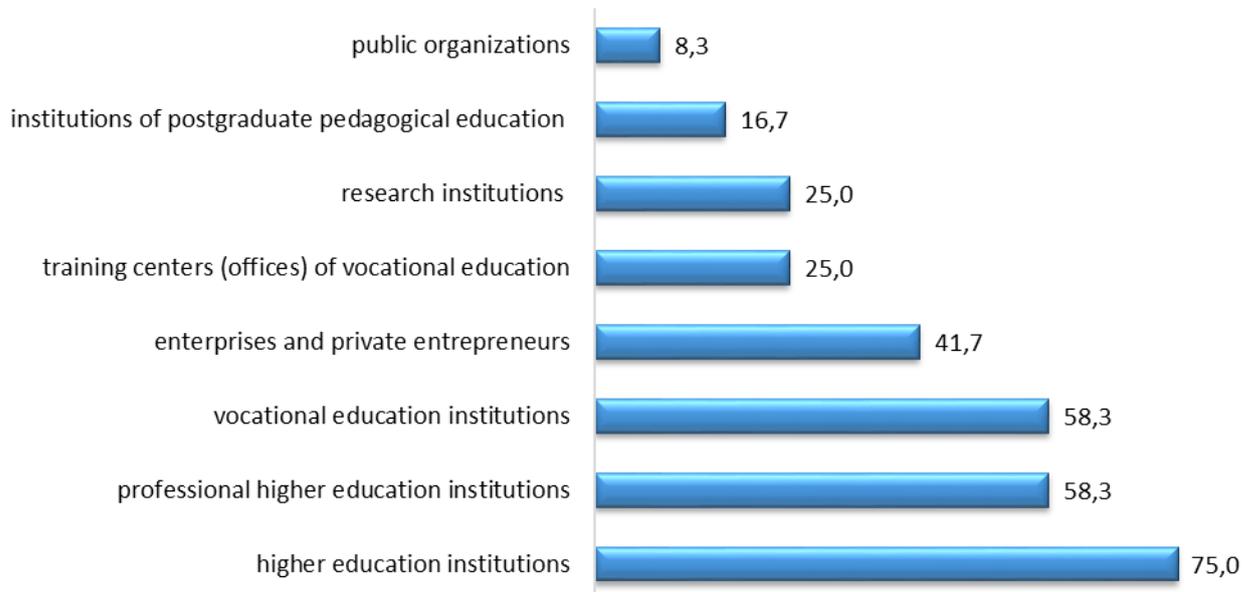


Figure 2. Partners with whom HEI teachers cooperate, percentage of respondents

The majority of the respondents (91.6%) positively assessed the cooperation of the university with vocational education institutions. The results of the respondents' assessment of various areas of such cooperation (Table 3) showed that the most problematic area is the employment of future VET teachers. At the same time, the surveyed HEI teachers highly assessed the necessity of developing cooperation between the university and vocational education institutions in all areas.

Regarding the reasonability of involving teachers from VET institutions in conducting practical classes, the answers were diverse: 41.7% of respondents gave a positive answer, 33.3% replied negatively, for the rest it was difficult to choose an answer. At the same time, the respondents unanimously supported the idea of involving HEI teachers in conducting classes at vocational education institutions.

The HEI teachers also unanimously stated that they feel the need for continuous development of their professional and pedagogical competencies.

Table 3. *The results of the respondents’ assessment of various areas of university’s cooperation with vocational education institutions, percentage of respondents*

Areas of cooperation	very well	rather well	rather bad	very bad	difficult to answer
developing content of the educational program and curricula	33.3	50	0	0	16.7
conducting classes on psychological and pedagogical disciplines	50	25	16.7	0	8.3
conducting classes on professional training	58.3	25	8.3	0	8.3
organizing and conducting educational practice	50	33.3	8.3	0	8.3
joint implementation of educational (training) projects	25	50	8.3	0	16.7
employment of future teachers	0	33.3	50	0	16,7
holding joint events	50	41.7	0	0	8.3
organization of teachers’ training and skill enhancement	33.3	50	8.3	0	8.3
career guidance	58.3	33.3	0	0	8.3

Only 41.7% of the respondents stated that they participated in events at VET institutions, which indicates the need to develop cooperation between university teachers and these institutions. Among the most common events in which the respondents participated are conferences (80%), round tables (60%), workshops and methodological seminars (40%), training courses (20%). At the same time, the teachers noted that they were satisfied with the results of participation in such events. In addition, the majority of respondents (75%) considered that participation in activities of vocational education institutions was appropriate for the development of their own professional competencies. 66.7% said that they had opportunities for constant communication on professional issues with colleagues (managers, teachers) from vocational education institutions (in the framework of conferences, job fairs, etc.). The HEI teachers highly assessed the idea of creating a specialized online platform for such professional communication.

From this perspective, the results of the survey of teachers involved in the training of students on speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)”, confirmed the necessity of development of cooperation between the university and vocational education institutions. The study identified problems in establishing such cooperation: employment of future teachers and the organization of joint activities with vocational education institutions including conferences, round tables, workshops, methodological seminars, etc.

ANALYSIS OF SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION AND ITS GOVERNANCE AT KNEU: RESULTS OF FOCUSED GROUP INTERVIEW

In order to obtain information on effective mechanisms of governance of the vocational teacher education at KNEU and to gain better understanding of problems and directions of improvement, the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology conducted a focused group interview with the teachers of the study program “Economic and Business Education” of speciality 015 “Vocational education (Economics)” on June 26, 2020.

A *focused group method* was chosen for the interview, which allowed participants to generate and discuss actively ideas about the range of questions asked by the moderator.

At the beginning of the interview, the moderator presented the Erasmus+ project “New mechanisms of partnership-based governance and standardization of vocational teacher education in Ukraine (PAGOSTE)”, explained the purpose of the interview and instructed on the rules and regulations of the interview.

The interview included a discussion of three blocks of questions:

- main tasks of vocational teacher education at KNEU;
- components of governance of vocational teacher education: objective, motivational, content, organizational, control and evaluation;
- mechanisms of partnership-based governance of vocational teacher education and training at KNEU.

The main results of the discussion

The weak point is the lack of a government order that affects the applicants’ motivation to enter the speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)”, despite the prestige and attractiveness of future work as business trainers. The motivation for teaching is much lower, which is due to the insufficient state support of teacher training for the vocational education system.

The main tasks of vocational teacher education and training at KNEU:

- vocational teacher education and training should be based on humanistic principles, partnership between teachers and students, the tutoring approach to learning is of particular importance;
- the practical component of learning, close connection with business;
- the dual, binary nature of the education and training (economic and psychological-pedagogical training of bachelors in vocational education in the field of economics);
- providing opportunities for graduates to engage in both teaching and economic activities, teaching can be implemented both in educational institutions and in educational and training centres of organizations.

Some aspects of the governance of vocational teacher education

1) objective component:

- the development of social competencies (soft-skills), i.e. the ability to work in a team, resolve conflicts, implement project activities, think critically, etc.;
- the educational component of education and training (both teaching of students and preparing them for teaching activities at VET and professional pre-tertiary institutions), inexpediency of teaching certain disciplines related to the theory and practice of teaching, instead of the need to introduce an educational component in all elements of the education and training;
- the necessity of developing professional culture and professional self-identity due to the fact that students see themselves first as businessmen rather than teachers. Examples of successful professional activity are important.

2) motivational component:

- the most important motives for student's learning are intellectual (cognitive), career and social motives;
- the role of curators in the first study year of study is especially important, when students' motivation for future professional activity is formed;
- the acquaintance with the successful teaching experience during the educational and teaching practices, and internships plays an important role in the formation of professional and pedagogical motivation of students.

3) content component:

- the necessity of carrying out the analysis and comparison of programs of academic disciplines in order to avoid duplication, adjust the content, ensure the formation of important general and special competencies, strengthen the practical orientation of learning;
- the necessity of taking into account the specifics of teacher education when teaching general and economics disciplines;
- taking into account the needs and interests of students during the formation of the selective component of study.

4) organizational component:

- the necessity of applying modern innovative teaching technologies;
- the introduction of a blended learning model during the quarantine restrictions caused by the spread of COVID-19, taking into account the limitations and benefits of online learning. There are some limitations such as difficulties in the implementation of training activity, interaction and communication, which are necessary for teacher training. There are also advantages such as new opportunities in the organization of

practice and acquaintance with professional activities, in particular virtual participation in classes at vocational education institutions, as well as in business training with the help of modern information technologies.

5) control and evaluation component:

- the need to introduce an attestation exam in accordance with the requirements of the approved educational standard of the speciality “Vocational education (by specializations)”;
- involvement of potential employers (pedagogical employees of vocational education institutions, representatives of vocational training centres, training companies, etc.) in providing the attestation exam;
- specifics of control of learning outcomes in the blended learning.

Mechanisms of partnership-based governance of vocational teacher education and training at KNEU:

- establishing cooperation with business organizations, employers’ organizations, training centres;
- involvement of students as assistants in training activities during the lessons in the training courses for teachers’ advanced training, school of young psychologist and business trainer, professional guidance events, scientific and practical seminars and masterclasses.

Based on the results of the focused group interview, ***some promising directions for improving the governance of teacher training in KNEU were identified:***

1) by the aspect of standardization:

- humanization and binary nature of the study;
- practice orientation of the study;
- focus on the development of social competencies of future VET teachers;
- realization of educational goals in all components of the study;
- development of professional culture and professional identity of students;
- differentiation and professional specialization of educational programs;
- effective implementation of the selective component of the study;
- implementation of modern innovative technologies of training;

2) by the aspect of partnership:

- increasing the state support of the system of vocational teacher education;
- introducing to students successful experience of teaching activity during educational and teaching practices and internships, in particular with the use of information technologies;

- establishing cooperation with business organizations, employers' organizations, training centres;
- involvement of potential employers in providing the attestation exam;
- involvement of students of the study program "Economic and business education" in training activities and participation in professional guidance events, master classes, scientific and practical seminars.

NEW MECHANISMS OF GOVERNING HIGHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN UKRAINE: ANALYSIS OF RESULTS OF FORESIGHT SESSION

With the purpose of analysing the state of higher education in Ukraine, in particular in the context of vocational teacher education, and the formation of mechanisms of governing its development a foresight session was held by the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology of KNEU on January 23, 2020.

The participants of the foresight session were teachers of the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology, scientific and pedagogical staff and students of advanced training courses of the Central Institute of Postgraduate Education (University of Education Management of NAPS, Ukraine).

As a result of the foresight session, the most significant trends in the higher education development were identified in relation to certain components of educational management:

1) content component:

- implementation of dual education;
- participation of employers in the teaching of professional disciplines;
- intensive study of foreign languages, in particular through the implementation of bilingual teaching of disciplines;

2) motivational component:

- adaptation to the requirements of the labour market;
- implementation of practice oriented study;
- strengthening career guidance activities;
- increasing the social significance of the teaching profession;
- increasing the significance and value of teaching;

3) organizational component:

- expansion of distance and blended learning;
- development of pedagogical logistics;
- improving cooperation with external stakeholders;

- use of cloud technologies in the training process;
- individualization of training;

4) *control component*:

- implementation of teacher certification;
- development of tools for increasing assessment objectivity;
- robotization of control during the study of technical disciplines.

From this perspective, according to the results of the foresight session, the current directions of higher education development were identified, in particular during the training of VET teachers: further informatization and digitization, professionalization and individualization of vocational teacher education. A promising direction is the implementation of dual education, modern innovation and information technology, increasing cooperation with potential employers – vocational schools, educational institutions and training centres of enterprises, training companies.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the system of VET teacher education and its governance at Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman leads to the following conclusions:

1. Today KNEU has introduced a modern and practice-oriented study program “Economic and Business Education” for future VET teachers, which summarizes the best European and Ukrainian training practices in this area.
2. It attracts students by providing the opportunity to study at a prestigious HEI and get a profession, which is in demand on the labour market and promises a well-paid job. They are generally satisfied with the study. However, they expect modern teaching methods to be used during the classes and practitioners to be involved in the teaching process. Students also expressed satisfaction with the organization of practical training and advisement of educational practice. They highly assessed their experience in conducting lessons during the practice, although they wished to improve the content and more careful selection of the bases (places) of internship, strengthening cooperation between HEIs and vocational education institutions. Students’ awareness of vocational education institutions where they can be employed after graduation is rather limited. This primarily indicates a low motivation to teach, which is confirmed by their intentions for future employment.
3. The results of the survey of HEI teachers involved in the training of students of speciality “Vocational Education (Economics)”, confirmed that it is necessary to develop cooperation between HEIs and vocational education institutions, especially in the direction of employment of future VET teachers and the organization of joint activities with vocational

education institutions including conferences, round tables, workshops, methodological seminars, etc.

4. The results of the focused group interview identified the promising directions for improving the governance of vocational teacher education at KNEU *by the aspect of standardization*: providing humanization, practice orientation of the study, development of social competencies of the future VET teachers, development of professional culture and professional identity, differentiation and professional specialization of educational programs, effective implementation of the selective component of the study, implementation of modern innovative technologies of training; *by the aspect of partnership*: increasing the state support of the system of vocational teacher education, introducing to the students successful experience of teaching, establishing cooperation with business organizations, employers' organizations, training centres, involvement of potential employers in providing the attestation exam, involvement of students in training activities and participation in professional guidance events, master classes, scientific and practical seminars.

5. Conducting the foresight session with HEI research and teaching staff identified the possible directions of improvement in governance of vocational teacher education: further informatization and digitization, professionalization and individualization of study, implementation of dual education, modern innovation and information technology, increasing cooperation with potential employers such as vocational schools, educational institutions and training centres of enterprises, training companies.