



## Development of vocational education in the context of globalisation and integration processes

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■ **Abstract.** The study aimed to explore the potential for adapting the best European practices in vocational education development for Ukraine amidst globalisation and integration processes. The research methodology encompassed the collection and analysis of legislative acts, statistical data, scholarly publications, and other information sources, alongside their comparison using quantitative and qualitative indicators. The key findings identified significant differences and shared characteristics between the vocational education systems of Ukraine and selected European Union countries – Germany, Finland, and Poland. Comparative analysis revealed that the German dual education system, Finland's innovative approach, and Poland's experience in educational reform represent promising models for study and partial adaptation within Ukraine's education system. The analysis was conducted to assess the effectiveness of various vocational education models and to determine their adaptability to the Ukrainian context. The results demonstrated considerable potential for incorporating European practices into Ukraine's vocational education system. It was established that integrating models from Germany, Finland, and Poland could enhance education effectiveness, particularly through the introduction of the dual system, the individualisation of learning, and legislative reform. The successful implementation of these changes requires consideration of cultural and economic differences, as well as active collaboration between educational institutions, the state, and businesses. Exploring the mechanisms for introducing European practices and their impact on Ukrainian education will facilitate more precise and effective reform implementation. The study's findings suggested that Ukraine can significantly enhance its vocational education system by adopting certain elements from the experiences of European countries. The introduction of the dual system could improve graduates' integration into the labour market, while Finnish approaches to individualised learning could raise education quality. Poland's experience with reforms could also prove beneficial for adapting Ukraine's legislative framework and education financing. Thus, the research provided specific recommendations for modernising vocational education in Ukraine, guided by the best European practices

■ **Keywords:** integration of educational processes; educational trends; foreign experience; education reform; vocational education; digitalisation of education; research integrity; dual education; individualisation of learning

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## ■ Introduction

The study of vocational education development is significant for several reasons. Vocational education plays a pivotal role in developing a skilled workforce, which is fundamental to economic growth and innovation. In rapidly evolving technological world, there is a constant need to update knowledge and skills to meet the demands of the labour market. Globalisation and integration processes create new challenges and opportunities that require educational systems to adapt to international standards. The development of vocational education is particularly significant in a context where national economies are becoming increasingly interconnected. It enhances the global competitiveness of the workforce and supports socio-economic stability. Moreover, modern vocational education helps reduce youth unemployment by facilitating their swift integration into the labour market. Examining this topic aids in designing effective education policies and programmes that address the needs of contemporary society and the economy. The importance of studying vocational education development is heightened by the rapid changes in the labour market driven by globalisation and technological advancement. Vocational education plays a crucial role in preparing a workforce capable of meeting the challenges faced by various economies. Businesses require employees with not only fundamental professional knowledge but also new competencies such as digital literacy, flexibility, and the ability to adapt quickly. This necessitates continuous improvement and innovation in educational systems, including curricula, teaching methods, and collaboration with employers.

The development of vocational education also holds significant social importance as it provides young people with the opportunity to acquire a qualification and find their place in society. This reduces unemployment rates, promotes social integration, and fosters stability. In rapidly changing world, where knowledge and skills quickly become obsolete, vocational education ensures lifelong learning, which is crucial for maintaining competitiveness in the labour market. Given these factors, the importance of researching vocational education development cannot be overstated. It underpins economic growth, innovation, and social stability. Consequently, this topic is now being actively explored by researchers worldwide, including P. Stoodley & G. Mason (2024) who determined that vocational education, within the context of globalisation, significantly influences workforce development, economic growth, and social mobility. One of the leading researchers in this field is S. Liu (2022), who analysed the impact of globalisation on vocational education in various countries. He noted that globalisation fosters interconnections between educational systems, leading to the standardisation of qualifications and requirements, as well as an increased role for international

organisations such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in developing educational policies. S. Vaskiv *et al.* (2023) emphasised that vocational education must adapt to the new challenges of globalisation by developing flexible curricula and implementing a competency-based approach.

Researchers such as M. Zhylin *et al.* (2024) have examined the specific development of vocational education in Ukraine within the context of globalisation processes. They emphasised the importance of integrating the Ukrainian vocational education system into the European educational space and implementing international educational standards. Researchers C. Regehr *et al.* (2024) focused on the need to develop academic mobility programs that contribute to increasing the level of education and professional training of students. Another significant contribution to this area of study was made by R. Raj *et al.* (2024). They investigated the role of vocational education in ensuring the success of national economies in a global context. They also highlighted that vocational education should play a key role in training a workforce capable of operating in a rapidly changing labour market. There is a need to introduce innovative technologies into the educational process and develop cooperation between educational institutions and businesses. The study by S.S.-Y. Ngai *et al.* (2021) focused on analysing the challenges faced by vocational education in a changing world. They highlighted that one of the primary challenges is ensuring access to quality education for all segments of the population, particularly in developing countries. The researchers examined the role of vocational education in developing human capital and promoting social integration, emphasising the importance of international cooperation in addressing these issues. H. Yang *et al.* (2024) and J.-H. Im & G.Y. Park (2024) analysed the changes occurring in vocational education systems. They noted that rapid digitalisation is driving the development of new forms of learning, such as online education and hybrid learning models, which have become increasingly popular due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They also emphasised the importance of preparing teachers to work in a globalised educational environment. The aim of this research was to assess the potential for implementing advanced European vocational education practices in Ukraine to enhance the effectiveness and competitiveness of the national education system.

## ■ Materials and Methods

The methodology of this research into the development of vocational education in Ukraine and European Union (EU) countries within the context of globalisation and integration processes was based on the application of comparative analysis as the primary method. This

approach allowed for a detailed examination of vocational education systems in different countries, identifying key trends, differences, and opportunities for improving Ukraine's national education system. Germany, Finland, and Poland were selected for comparative analysis. These countries have distinct vocational education models, enabling a comprehensive study. Germany is renowned for its dual education system, which successfully integrates theoretical learning with practical on-the-job training. Finland is distinguished by its innovative approach to education, focusing on individual student needs. Poland, as a neighbouring country that has undergone reforms and EU integration, serves as an interesting case for comparison with Ukraine in terms of adapting to European standards. The choice of these countries allowed for the exploration of various approaches and the identification of best practices for adaptation in Ukraine.

In the initial phase of the research, key criteria for comparison were identified. These include: legal regulation of vocational education, funding models, curriculum content, the quality of infrastructure and resources, teacher training, and the interaction between educational institutions and the labour market. The selection of these specific criteria is due to their significant impact on the effectiveness and quality of vocational education in the context of contemporary globalisation challenges. Data was collected from various sources. This included academic articles, statistical data from international organisations such as the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (n.d.), and Ukrainian legislation (Law of Ukraine No. 103/98-BP, 1998; Law of Ukraine No. 2145-VIII, 2017). Data collection aimed to gather as comprehensive information as possible on the various aspects of vocational education in the countries under study. The next stage involved conducting a comparative analysis. Based on the collected data, quantitative and qualitative assessments were made for each of the defined criteria. This allowed for the identification of key differences and similarities between Ukraine and EU countries, as well as an assessment of how globalisation and integration processes impact the development of vocational education. The final stage of the research involved interpreting the obtained results. Through this analysis, key factors contributing to the successful development of vocational education in EU countries were identified, and the possibilities of adapting them to the Ukrainian education system were evaluated. Additionally, the main challenges faced by Ukraine in modernising its vocational education system were identified, and recommendations were proposed for addressing these challenges based on the experience of EU countries. This approach allows not only for an assessment of the state of vocational education in Ukraine but also for the formulation of strategies for its further development, taking into account international experience and integration processes.

## ■ Results

Vocational education is a cornerstone in preparing a skilled workforce for any nation's economy. Globalisation, characterised by increasing interdependence between countries and peoples, significantly influences all aspects of society, including vocational education. In the context of globalisation, vocational education takes on new characteristics and functions, facilitating adaptation to changes in the global labour market and preparing a workforce capable of operating in rapidly changing environments. One of the primary features of vocational education in a globalised world is its focus on developing globally relevant competencies. This includes knowledge of international standards, proficiency in foreign languages, the ability to work in multicultural teams, and a readiness for continuous professional development. Globalisation also increases the demand for flexible and adaptable curricula that can quickly respond to changes in technology, economics, and societal needs. Another important characteristic is the growing role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in vocational education. ICT enables distance learning, which has become particularly relevant in the context of the pandemic when traditional forms of education often become inaccessible. Moreover, ICT allows students to access the latest knowledge and skills that meet the demands of the globalised labour market.

In the contemporary world, vocational education fulfils several key functions that define its significance in the context of globalisation. It contributes to the development of competitive professionals who can successfully function not only in the national but also in the international labour market. This is achieved through the implementation of international educational standards such as the ECTS credit system and preparation for international qualification exams. Vocational education in the context of globalisation serves the function of social integration and mobility. Through the development of academic mobility programs like Erasmus+ (n.d.), students and faculty have the opportunity to study and work abroad, fostering knowledge exchange, cultural enrichment, and increased educational attainment. Vocational education promotes innovation and technological progress. In many countries, vocational institutions actively collaborate with businesses and research institutions, enabling the integration of the latest scientific and technological advancements into the educational process and fostering the development of students' innovative potential.

Integration processes occurring worldwide, particularly within the EU, also influence the development of vocational education. One key aspect is the harmonisation of educational standards, enabling mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications across different countries. This, in turn, promotes labour mobility, a crucial factor in a globalised world. Integration

processes stimulate the development of new forms of cooperation between educational institutions in different countries. Joint educational programs, dual degrees, and international internships are becoming integral parts of vocational education, fostering the development of professionals with a global outlook who are prepared to work in multicultural environments. However, integration processes also present new challenges for vocational education. These include the need to consider the cultural and economic specificities of different countries, as well as ensuring equal access to quality education for all segments of the population, regardless of their social or economic status.

In Ukraine, vocational education plays a particularly crucial role in modernising the national economy and integrating into the global market. Vocational education fosters the development of competencies such as technical skills, the ability to adapt quickly to changing labour market conditions, and the formation of a professional culture and ethics. This promotes social mobility, allowing young people from all walks of life to access vocational training and employment. The importance of vocational education in Ukraine is also driven by the need to enhance the competitiveness of Ukrainian enterprises on the international stage. Globalisation demands a high level of professional knowledge and skills from workers, aligned with contemporary technological standards. This poses a challenge to the vocational education system to produce graduates capable of working effectively in a constantly evolving labour market.

Vocational education in Ukraine is undergoing a process of reform and adaptation to new economic and social conditions. A primary objective is to align educational standards with international requirements, which is being achieved through the implementation of new educational programs, modernisation of the material and technical base of higher education institutions, and the upskilling of teaching staff. In 2017, the Law of Ukraine No. 2145-VIII (2017) was adopted, outlining the fundamental principles and directions for the development of education, including vocational education. A significant step forward was the creation of a national qualifications' framework, designed to facilitate the integration of Ukrainian vocational education into the European Higher Education Area. This enables the improvement of education quality and ensures that qualifications obtained in Ukraine align with international standards.

Despite significant efforts by those involved in the educational process, the state of vocational education in Ukraine remains complex. There are challenges related to insufficient funding, outdated infrastructure, and a lack of integration of modern technologies into the learning process. These issues are particularly acute in regions where the level of vocational edu-

cation development often lags behind metropolitan standards. Furthermore, there is a need for closer cooperation between educational institutions and employers, which would enable a better understanding of labour market demands and the adaptation of curricula to contemporary requirements. In this context, dual education, which combines theoretical learning with practical experience in enterprises, plays a crucial role. In Ukraine, this approach is only beginning to develop, but it is already demonstrating positive results, contributing to the improvement of professional training.

Vocational education in Ukraine, like many other countries, faces numerous challenges driven by globalisation. These challenges impact all aspects of education, from curriculum content to teaching methods and assessment. In a globalised world, vocational education must adapt to the evolving demands of the labour market, technological advancements, and societal and cultural changes. One of the most significant challenges for vocational education is the rapid pace of technological development. In the world, robotics, automation, artificial intelligence, and digitalisation are transforming many professions. These changes necessitate the constant updating of curricula to ensure students acquire relevant knowledge and skills. Traditional occupations are being transformed or phased out, so it is essential to equip students with the competencies to be competitive in the job market. Digitalisation is also reshaping teaching methods. Online courses, distance learning, and the use of virtual reality and other technologies are becoming integral parts of the educational process. A key challenge is ensuring access to modern technologies for all participants in the educational process, especially in remote regions.

Globalisation has led to a shift in the demands for professional qualifications. The job market is becoming increasingly dynamic, requiring employees to be highly adaptable, able to work in interdisciplinary teams, and possess strong foreign language skills and cultural competence. These demands challenge vocational education to produce graduates capable of rapidly adapting to change, engaging in lifelong learning, and applying their knowledge in diverse contexts. This process also promotes the internationalisation of education, requiring educational institutions to align with international standards and practices. This necessitates the implementation of new accreditation approaches, the development of international cooperation, and the exchange of experiences among faculty and students. However, in the face of insufficient funding and limited resources, this presents a significant challenge for many educational institutions.

Funding for education in Ukraine remains a critical issue, particularly in the context of vocational education. Insufficient financial resources for education lead to a decline in the quality of education, a lack of

modern equipment, low teacher salaries, and limited opportunities for professional development. In a globalised world, where competition in the labour market is increasing and demands for the quality of education are rising, financial constraints pose a significant barrier to the development of vocational education. Vocational education must also account for the diversity of students, their cultural backgrounds, needs, and interests. Fostering tolerance, the ability to work in multicultural environments, and respect for diversity among students is essential. Globalisation necessitates the reform of the vocational education system in Ukraine to enhance its flexibility, relevance, and responsiveness to contemporary challenges. This includes developing new curricula, updating teaching methodologies, and implementing dual education, which combines theoretical learning with practical training in enterprises. However, the reform process requires time, resources, and effort, which also presents a significant challenge. One of the negative consequences of globalisation is the brain drain of skilled professionals. Graduates of vocational institutions often emigrate to other countries in search of better job opportunities and higher salaries. This leads to a shortage of qualified workers in certain sectors within the country and a decline in the development of the national economy. On the one hand, students have the opportunity to study abroad, gain international experience, and acquire new knowledge. On the other hand, this presents a challenge for Ukrainian educational institutions to create conditions that are attractive to foreign students and to retain talented students within Ukraine. Given the state of vocational education, Ukraine has significant potential for further development. Promising directions include the implementation of modern educational technologies, the development of dual education, and the intensification of international cooperation in the field of vocational training. It is also important to continue working on the integration of the Ukrainian vocational education system into the European Education Area,

which will ensure the recognition of Ukrainian qualifications internationally and contribute to improving the quality of specialist training.

Considering the experiences of Germany, Poland, and Finland when reforming the Ukrainian vocational education system is of paramount importance. Each of these countries has unique experiences that can be adapted to the Ukrainian context to improve the quality of specialist training and ensure that graduates meet the demands of the modern labour market. In particular, Germany is a leader in implementing a dual education system, which combines theoretical learning in educational institutions with practical experience in the workplace. This system allows students to acquire practical skills during their studies, significantly increasing their readiness for employment upon graduation. Thanks to this approach, the youth unemployment rate in Germany is one of the lowest in Europe. In turn, Poland has successfully adapted its vocational education system to the requirements of the European Union, which has allowed for a significant improvement in the quality of specialist training. Poland's journey from a post-Soviet system to European standards makes its experience particularly valuable for Ukraine, which is also on a path towards European integration. Polish reforms encompass aspects such as the modernisation of educational programs, the implementation of an independent quality assurance system for education, and the development of cooperation with employers. Finland, on the other hand, is renowned for its innovative approach to education, including vocational training. A key aspect of the Finnish system is its emphasis on individualised learning pathways, where education is tailored to the needs and abilities of each student. Additionally, Finland actively utilises modern technologies and innovative teaching methods, making its education system one of the most effective in the world. A more detailed analysis of the features of the aforementioned countries, with the aim of comparing them to Ukrainian vocational education, is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Comparative analysis of vocational education in Ukraine, Germany, Finland and Poland

Analysis indicators	Countries			
	Ukraine	German	Finland	Poland
<b>Education management system</b>				
Central management	The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine manages the entire education system	The Federal Ministry of Education and Research manages general policy, but responsibility for vocational education lies at the level of the Länder (federal states)	The Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland is responsible for education at the national level	The Ministry of Science and Higher Education is responsible for national education policy, including vocational education
Role of regional and local authorities	Regional education departments control and coordinate at the regional level. Local authorities have a limited role	The significant role of the Länder, which have their own laws and management system for vocational education	Regional and local authorities play an important role in implementing education policy, financing, and managing educational institutions	Local authorities are responsible for managing and financing vocational education institutions

Table 1. Continued

Analysis indicators	Countries			
	Ukraine	German	Finland	Poland
<b>Funding</b>				
Funding sources	Primary funding from the state budget, partially from private investments and international grants	State budget, Länder budgets, private sector (companies supporting vocational education)	State budget, local budgets, private investments, EU grants	State budget, local budgets, EU grants, private sector
Share of GDP Spent on Vocational Education	Approximately 1-2% of GDP is spent on vocational education	Approximately 2-3% of GDP is spent on vocational education	High funding level, around 4-5%	Approximately 3-4% of GDP is spent on vocational education
Funding for Students and Educational Institutions	Students are mainly funded by the state. Educational institutions are funded by the state budget and private investments	Companies are actively involved in financing students through the dual education system. Educational institutions are funded by the state and regional budgets	Students receive financial support from the state and local authorities. Educational institutions are funded by the state and private sector	Students and institutions receive funding from the state budget and through international grants (EU)
<b>Dual education system</b>				
Presence of a dual education system	No, developing within pilot projects and business collaboration programs	Yes, widely implemented	No, but elements of dual education exist in some programs	No, but dual elements appear in some programs
The ratio of theoretical to practical training	Approximately 70% theory, 30% practice	About 50% theory, 50% practice (depending on the program)	High focus on theory (70%), with practical elements (30%)	Theory approximately 60-70%, practice 30-40%
Percentage of students enrolled in this system	A small percentage (up to 5%) in pilot projects	About 50% of students	A small percentage (less than 10%)	A small percentage (up to 10%)
<b>Curriculum content</b>				
Program flexibility	Partially flexible, but depends on the reform of the system	Highly flexible, easily adaptable to market demands	High flexibility, especially in response to labour market needs	Moderate flexibility, adaptation to market demands take time
Compliance with international standards	Partially complies with international standards, further harmonisation needed	High compliance with international standards	Complies with international standards in most programmes	Increasing compliance with international standards due to reforms
Innovative teaching methods	Used but limited (ICT, project-based learning implemented gradually)	Extensive use of ICT, project-based learning, simulations	High level of innovation, including ICT and project-based learning	Gradual implementation of ICT and project-based learning
<b>Interaction with the labour market</b>				
Collaboration with employers	Limited collaboration, but growing interest from business. Employers are increasingly involved in programme development.	Widespread collaboration, employers are actively involved in programme development and assessing their effectiveness	Close collaboration with employers, especially in high-tech industries.	Moderate collaboration, but increasing due to reforms and European programmes
Internship and practical training system	Present but underdeveloped; internships are often limited or short-term	Highly developed system, almost every student undergoes a long internship in a company	Well-developed internship system, but not in all sectors	Moderately developed internship system, but there is increasing support from the state and business
Employment rate	Varies by industry, on average 60-70%	Very high (over 90%) due to close cooperation with employers and the dual education system	High, around 80-85%, especially in technical fields	Moderate (70-80%), but increasing due to active interaction with the labour market
<b>International Integration</b>				
Participation in international education programmes	Limited participation, but there is an increase within EU programmes (Erasmus+ and others)	Active participation in international programmes, such as Erasmus+, and other European initiatives	High level of participation in international programmes (Erasmus+, Nordic cooperation)	Moderate participation, growing due to EU programmes and active cooperation with European countries
Recognition of diplomas abroad	Partial recognition, depending on the specific country and speciality	Wide recognition of diplomas in the EU and other countries due to high education standards	High recognition of diplomas in EU countries and internationally	Recognition at the EU level, but there may be limitations in some countries outside the EU

**Source:** compiled by the authors based on research by O. Pasko et al. (2023), S. Johnston et al. (2024), M. Ryder & F. Browne (2024)

The analysed data clearly highlights the key differences and similarities between the vocational education systems of the countries under study, which is crucial for interpreting the results and formulating recommendations. Adapting effective approaches from Germany, Finland, and Poland can enhance the quality of vocational education in Ukraine, making it more responsive to labour market demands and increasing the competitiveness of Ukrainian graduates both nationally and internationally. For instance, the German dual education system, which combines theoretical learning in educational institutions with extended practical experience in companies, is worth considering. To adapt this, pilot projects in collaboration with large companies could be established to test this approach in various sectors. It is important to establish agreements between educational institutions and employers to provide students with stable placements for practical training. Ukrainian vocational education needs closer collaboration with employers, as seen in Germany and Finland. Involving employers in developing curricula to align with actual labour market needs is essential. Regular consultations with business representatives should be organised, and they should be involved in developing educational standards and programs. Regional councils could be established, comprising representatives from businesses, educational institutions, and government.

The flexibility of study programs, as seen in Finland, could be adopted by Ukraine, as the continuous adaptation of curricula to new labour market demands contributes to enhancing the competencies of learners. Mechanisms need to be developed for regular updates of these programs, particularly based on labour market research. This could involve introducing modular learning and allowing students to choose specialisations within programs. In Poland and Germany, the internship and practical training systems are successful and well-developed, serving as a mandatory component of studies and providing students with real-world experience. Therefore, for Ukrainian vocational education, mandatory internships in the later years of study should be introduced, with their outcomes assessed as part of final exams. To facilitate this, cooperation with employers must be established to provide students with suitable placements for practical training.

A more thoughtful approach to teacher training, similar to the German model, should be adopted. Germany has a high percentage of lecturers with practical experience in their respective fields. Programs should be developed to attract specialists to teach in vocational higher education institutions. This could include short-term professional development courses for such lecturers, enabling them to effectively transfer their practical knowledge to students. Following the examples of Poland and Finland, international integration should be enhanced. Active participation in international educational programs and initiatives raises the

level of education and ensures international recognition of diplomas. To achieve this, Ukrainian educational institutions should increase their participation in programs like Erasmus+ (n.d.), facilitating student and faculty exchanges. Aligning curricula with international standards will facilitate easier recognition of Ukrainian diplomas abroad.

Ukraine is facing the challenge of modernising its vocational education system to meet the demands of labour market. Based on the information presented above regarding the experiences of Germany, Poland, and Finland, recommendations have been developed for implementing these practices in Ukraine's vocational education system to enhance its alignment with contemporary labour market needs. Considering European standards in this field, a comprehensive set of recommendations should be implemented to improve the effectiveness of specialist training, their competitiveness, and their mobility in the global labour market. A key element of integrating European practices is the harmonisation of Ukraine's educational programs and qualification standards with European ones. This involves aligning national standards with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), ensuring transparency and recognition of Ukrainian diplomas in EU countries. To achieve this, an analysis of existing programs and their alignment with contemporary labour market demands is necessary, along with involving European experts in developing new educational programs. Dual education, which combines theoretical learning in educational institutions with practical training in enterprises, is one of the most successful European models for workforce development. Implementing this model in Ukraine would facilitate better adaptation of graduates to real-world work environments, reduce youth unemployment, and increase their professional mobility. To achieve this, a legislative framework is needed to encourage the active participation of employers in the educational process and provide incentives for businesses offering student placements.

The contemporary job market demands that professionals possess cutting-edge technological skills. Therefore, it is essential to integrate digital and innovative technologies into vocational education. This could involve creating learning platforms with access to European resources, developing distance learning, and utilising virtual reality to simulate production processes. It is necessary to provide teacher training to equip educators with the skills needed to work with modern technologies and develop their digital competencies. To enhance the quality of vocational education in Ukraine, it is crucial to expand international cooperation with European educational institutions. This could include student and faculty exchanges, joint research projects, and participation in European educational programs. Such cooperation would facilitate the exchange of expertise, the implementation of European quality

standards in the Ukrainian education system, and increase the mobility of students and faculty.

Soft skills, such as communication, critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork, are becoming increasingly important in the modern job market. European practices demonstrate that integrating the development of these skills into educational programs enhances graduates' competitiveness. Ukraine needs to develop methodologies and introduce courses aimed at fostering soft skills in vocational education students. Another crucial European practice is the creation of a system for independent quality assurance in education, allowing for an objective assessment of students' preparedness and the alignment of study programs with labour market demands. Ukraine should establish a similar system, including external examinations, accreditation of educational institutions by independent agencies, and ongoing quality monitoring by employers. Funding for vocational education is a key factor in its successful development. It is essential to ensure stable and adequate funding for the renewal of educational institutions' infrastructure, teacher training, and the implementation of new technologies.

## ■ Discussion

The research findings have shown that in the contemporary world, globalisation and integration processes influence all spheres of life, including education. In the context of ever-increasing international cooperation, technological progress, and economic interdependence, vocational education is undergoing significant changes. Globalisation demands that education systems comply with international standards while providing opportunities for the exchange of knowledge and experience between different countries.

One of the most noticeable impacts of globalisation on vocational education is its unification, as noted by many researchers. In particular, K. Yoon *et al.* (2023) highlighted that this process contributes to the standardisation of educational programs in various countries. This enables the creation of programs that meet the demands of the international labour market, making graduates competitive not only nationally but also globally. This aligns with the results of this study, which also indicate that educational programs in many countries are adapting to international standards, thereby enhancing the quality of education and specialist training. However, the unification of vocational education also has its drawbacks. R. Dobrovolska *et al.* (2023) emphasised that such unification can lead to a loss of national identity in education systems. They point out that adapting to international standards may require the exclusion of certain cultural and traditional elements from curricula. This is confirmed by the present study, which indicates that unification can diminish the uniqueness of national educational programs, potentially negatively impacting their ability to meet the specific needs of local labour markets.

The research findings have demonstrated that integration processes between different countries also significantly impact the development of vocational education. They facilitate the creation of international educational networks and programs, enabling students and faculty to participate in exchange programs and study abroad. This is supported by the research of M. Kanan *et al.* (2023) and M. Hnatyuk *et al.* (2024), who noted that international cooperation in education can enhance the quality of specialist training, as students have the opportunity to study advanced programs and gain access to the latest knowledge and technologies. In this context, the results of this study also highlighted the importance of integration processes for the development of vocational education. Cooperation between educational institutions from different countries promotes the exchange of experience and knowledge, which improves the quality of education. In particular, it was found that mutual activities between universities allow faculty to enhance their qualifications and students to obtain a higher quality education that meets the demands of the global labour market. The research has also identified certain challenges associated with integration. As noted by J. Li & X. Li (2024) and A. Mine-nok *et al.* (2024), integration processes can lead to the unification of educational programs, which may negatively impact their adaptability to local contexts. For example, programs developed in one country may not always be relevant in another due to differences in culture, economy, or level of technological development. This aligns with the findings of this study, which indicated that the integration of international standards should consider local specificities to avoid a decline in the quality of education.

The research findings highlighted the significance of technological advancements in shaping the development of vocational education within a globalised context. This is corroborated by studies conducted by A. Luthra *et al.* (2024), R.A. Elyashiv & K. Rozenberg (2024), and M. Estaji (2024). They found that integrating cutting-edge technologies into the learning process has become a necessity. The utilisation of digital technologies allows for more personalised and effective learning experiences, providing students with access to a wide range of resources and opportunities for self-directed study. This research further confirmed the importance of technological progress for the development of vocational education. It was discovered that the use of modern technologies, such as online platforms, virtual laboratories, and other digital tools, significantly enhances the quality of education. This enables not only the customisation of the learning process to meet the individual needs of students but also provides access to education for a broader range of individuals, including those living in remote regions or unable to attend classes in person. However, technological advancements also present new challenges for vocational education.

As noted by researchers such as P. Norris (2024) and M. Vičič Krabonja *et al.* (2024), the implementation of new technologies necessitates continuous updates to the knowledge and skills of educators, which can be a daunting task in resourceconstrained environments. This research also emphasised that educators often encounter difficulties when integrating new technologies into the learning process due to a lack of experience or inadequate technical support. This can lead to uneven technology adoption, reducing the overall effectiveness of learning.

Globalisation also has a significant impact on the cultural aspects of vocational education. The study by D. Moreira (2019) indicated that cultural differences can have a profound influence on the learning process, particularly on students' adaptation to new environments. This is especially relevant in the context of increasing international cooperation, where students from different countries face the need to adapt to new cultural settings. This aligns with the findings of this study, which revealed that cultural factors play a crucial role in the globalisation of vocational education. Specifically, it was noted that the integration of international standards should consider the cultural specificities of each country to ensure successful student adaptation and enhance the effectiveness of the learning process. This also corresponds with the results of the study by E. Abiltarova *et al.* (2022), who believe that globalisation can foster cultural exchange and mutual enrichment, allowing students to broaden their perspectives and be more open to new ideas and approaches.

It is important to note that not all researchers share a positive view of the cultural impact of globalisation. For instance, R. Burton *et al.* (2024) suggested that the cultural homogenisation that can arise from globalisation may lead to a loss of national identity and the uniqueness of educational systems. This is supported by this study, which highlighted the need to preserve cultural specificities during the process of adapting to global educational standards. Another challenge remains the need to ensure the accessibility of vocational education for all segments of the population. Globalisation often leads to a widening gap between rich and poor countries, which can negatively impact access to education. Research by M. Verkuyl *et al.* (2024) has shown that in many countries, particularly developing ones, access to quality education is limited due to economic, social, and infrastructural challenges. This issue was also addressed in this study, which noted that to ensure equitable access to education, strategies must be developed that address these challenges and propose ways to overcome them.

Despite the existing challenges, globalisation presents new opportunities for the development of vocational education. One such opportunity is the strengthening of international cooperation in education. As research has shown, collaboration between countries

allows for the exchange of best practices and the joint development of new educational programs and standards, contributing to the improvement of education quality on a global scale. This aligns with the work of researchers B. Hassan Beygi *et al.* (2023) and D. Tuohy *et al.* (2024), who emphasised the importance of international cooperation, particularly in the context of creating joint educational programs that allow students to obtain internationally recognised qualifications. Therefore, to successfully develop vocational education in a globalised world, it is necessary to strike a balance between unification and the preservation of national identity, considering the cultural and economic specificities of different countries, and actively integrating the latest technologies into the learning process. This will ensure high-quality education and the training of competitive professionals who are capable of working in a globalised world.

## ■ Conclusions

This research highlighted the potential for adapting best European practices to develop vocational education in Ukraine within the context of globalisation and integration processes. It was found that vocational education in Ukraine is a key factor in ensuring economic development and the country's competitiveness in the global market, but it faces numerous challenges in the era of globalisation. To overcome these challenges, comprehensive reforms are needed, aimed at improving the quality of education, developing international cooperation, adapting to new labour market demands, and technological changes. This requires efforts from the government, higher education institutions, employers, and other stakeholders. Only in this way can the competitiveness of Ukrainian professionals in the global labour market be ensured and the sustainable development of the national economy be promoted. Despite the existing problems, the vocational education system has the potential for successful development, provided that further reforms are implemented and there is active support from the state and international partners.

A comparative analysis of German, Finnish, and Polish education systems has revealed potential models and approaches that could be successfully implemented in the Ukrainian vocational education system. In particular, the introduction of a dual education system, typical of Germany, could increase graduate employment rates. Finland's innovative approaches to individualised learning have the potential to improve the quality of education, while Poland's experience in reforming its education system can help Ukraine adapt its legislation and education financing to modern requirements. It is also important to consider that the process of adapting European practices to the Ukrainian education system will require a balanced approach that includes a detailed analysis of local conditions and needs. Adaptation should not be merely a technical transfer of

practices but should also take into account sociocultural aspects such as pedagogical traditions, student and teacher motivation, and the specific characteristics of the Ukrainian labour market. Effective communication between all stakeholders, including educational institutions, government bodies, businesses, and civil society organisations, is essential. This will enable a smoother and faster implementation of changes and reduce the risk of unforeseen difficulties. Other important aspects include monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of implemented practices, which will help to adjust strategies and approaches in a timely manner. It is important to note some limitations of this study. The research is limited by the number of countries selected for comparison, which may affect the completeness of the conclusions. Taking into account the cultural and economic differences between Ukraine

and EU countries is also an important factor that can complicate the direct adaptation of European practices. Future research could include a deeper exploration of the specific mechanisms for implementing European models in Ukrainian vocational education, as well as an analysis of the practical results of such implementations. This would provide additional insights into possible approaches and pathways for adapting European models and offer a more detailed understanding of the successes and challenges faced by other countries during such transformations.

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### ■ Conflict of Interest

None.

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## Розвиток професійної освіти в умовах глобалізації та інтеграційних процесів

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■ **Анотація.** Метою дослідження було визначити можливості адаптації найкращих європейських практик розвитку професійної освіти для України в умовах глобалізації та інтеграційних процесів. Методологія дослідження включала збір і аналіз законодавчих актів, статистичних даних, наукових публікацій та інших джерел інформації, а також їх порівняння за кількісними та якісними показниками. Основними результатами стало виявлення ключових відмінностей і спільних рис між системами професійної освіти України та обраних для порівняння країн Європейського Союзу: Німеччини, Фінляндії та Польщі. Порівняльний аналіз показав, що німецька дуальна система освіти, фінський інноваційний підхід та польський досвід реформування освіти є перспективними моделями для вивчення та часткової адаптації в українську систему освіти. Порівняльний аналіз був проведений для оцінки ефективності різних моделей професійної освіти та визначення можливостей їх адаптації в Україні. Результати дослідження засвідчили значний потенціал адаптації європейських практик до системи професійної освіти в Україні. Було визначено, що інтеграція моделей з Німеччини, Фінляндії та Польщі може покращити ефективність освіти, зокрема шляхом запровадження дуальної системи, індивідуалізації навчання та реформування законодавства. Успішна реалізація цих змін потребує врахування культурних і економічних відмінностей, а також активної співпраці між освітніми установами, державою та бізнесом. Вивчення механізмів впровадження європейських практик та їх впливу на українську освіту сприятиме більш точному і ефективному запровадженню реформ. Висновки дослідження вказали на те, що Україна може значно покращити свою систему професійної освіти, запозичивши деякі елементи з досвіду європейських країн. Впровадження дуальної системи може сприяти кращій інтеграції випускників на ринок праці, а фінські підходи до індивідуалізації навчання допоможуть підвищити якість освіти. Польський досвід реформ також може бути корисним для адаптації законодавчої бази та фінансування освіти в Україні. Результати дослідження надали конкретні рекомендації щодо модернізації професійної освіти в Україні, орієнтуючись на найкращі європейські практики

■ **Ключові слова:** інтеграційні освітні процеси; освітні тренди; зарубіжний досвід; реформування освіти; професійна освіта; цифровізація освіти; дослідницька доброчесність; дуальна освіта; індивідуалізація навчання