

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32782/2524-0072/2024-69-27>

УДК 378.047

INTEGRATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES INTO THE ACTIVITIES OF UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES AS A TOOL FOR ENSURING THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

ІНТЕГРАЦІЯ ПРИНЦИПІВ СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ В ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ УКРАЇНИ ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ ЯКОСТІ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ

Kuzmak OlenaLutsk National Technical University
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0394-0981>**Кузьмак Олена Миколаївна**доктор економічних наук, професор,
Луцький національний технічний університет

The article analyzes the role of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in ensuring the quality of education in universities in Ukraine. The main ways of integrating the principles of sustainable development into the educational process are outlined. Special attention is paid to the need to develop sustainable development strategies in universities, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the SDGs, and cooperate with state bodies, businesses, and public organizations. The importance of forming sustainable development values among university students and teachers and training specialists capable of solving sustainable development problems at the local and global levels is emphasized. The importance of integrating the SDGs for improving the quality of education in the context of European integration and global changes towards sustainable development is highlighted. Directions for improving the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into Ukraine's universities' activities are proposed.

Keywords: ensuring the quality of higher education, sustainable development, sustainable development goals, universities of Ukraine, European integration.

У статті розглядається важливість імплементації цілей сталого розвитку (ЦСР) у системі забезпечення якості освіти в університетах України. Сьогодні, в умовах глобальних викликів, таких як зміни клімату, соціально-економічні трансформації та війна, питання сталого розвитку набувають особливої актуальності. Сталий розвиток вимагає інтеграції принципів економічної, екологічної та соціальної сталості у всі сфери діяльності, зокрема в освіті. У статті наголошено, що для успішної інтеграції ЦСР в освітню практику університетів України необхідно здійснити комплексний підхід, який включає як зміни на рівні навчальних програм, так і на інституційному рівні, так і в інфраструктурі навчальних закладів. Одним із важливих аспектів є введення міждисциплінарних навчальних програм, які зосереджуються на сталому розвитку і охоплюють питання екології, економіки, соціальних наук і технологій. Це дозволить формувати у студентів не тільки необхідні професійні навички, а й глибоке розуміння важливості сталого розвитку. Також, особливу увагу приділено необхідності створення стратегій сталого розвитку для кожного університету, які повинні охоплювати усі аспекти його діяльності, від навчальних програм до використання ресурсів і енергії. Розробка стратегій університетів щодо сталого розвитку дозволить не лише підвищити якість освіти, а й зменшити негативний вплив на навколишнє середовище. Крім того, в статті підкреслюється важливість створення систем моніторингу та оцінки, що дозволяють вимірювати прогрес у впровадженні ЦСР. Таким чином, імплементація ЦСР в освітню діяльність університетів має стати не лише одним із аспектів навчання, а й важливим елементом управління університетами. Важливим кроком до ефективної реалізації сталого розвитку є також співпраця університетів з державними органами, бізнесом та громадськими організаціями. Така співпраця дозволить не тільки забезпечити науково-практичне підґрунтя для реалізації сталого розвитку, але й підготувати фахівців, здатних вирішувати комплексні проблеми, що постають перед суспільством у контексті сталого розвитку. Отже, інтеграція цілей сталого розвитку в систему забезпечення якості освіти є необхідною для підготовки нового покоління фахівців, які здатні вирішувати актуальні глобальні проблеми, а також для підвищення якості освітнього процесу в Україні в умовах інтеграції до європейської та глобальної системи сталого розвитку.

Ключові слова: забезпечення якості вищої освіти, сталий розвиток, цілі сталого розвитку, університети України, європейська інтеграція.

Problem statement. Ukrainian higher education has faced enormous challenges due to the outbreak of war against our country. There is a significant outflow of human resources, including scientific and pedagogical workers and students and applicants to higher education institutions. However, higher education institutions continue to operate in Ukraine and continue to develop, as the system of quality assurance of higher education, both internal and external, continues to transform. Recent events regarding the adoption of the new Regulation on the accreditation of educational programs have introduced the need to assess the acquisition of competencies by higher education applicants aimed at achieving global sustainable development goals. That is the issue of integrating sustainable development goals, including into the educational activities of universities in Ukraine, has become urgent and relevant.

Analysis of recent research that has initiated a solution to the problem. The integration of sustainable development principles in the activities of Ukrainian universities is one of the current topics in light of Ukraine's integration into the EU. However, Chaykovska G. in her work notes that in Ukraine, the preparation of future specialists for the integration of sustainable development tasks faces problems with the content of curricula and teacher motivation and suggests transforming the educational environment to adapt programs to the needs of sustainable development [1]. Other authors have noted that the idea of creating "green offices" within universities supports sustainable development through environmental initiatives and involves students in resource management [2]. However, other authors note that the study of strategies of European universities has shown progress in implementing sustainable development through curricula, projects, and policies, despite barriers such as lack of resources and support at the state level [3]. The authors Stepura, T., & Kuzmak in their research emphasized that one of the goals of sustainable development is to overcome the digital inequalities of society, and it can be overcome only by improving the quality of higher education [4]. In another research work [5], the author investigated how ensuring the quality of higher education affects the sustainable development of society. Despite the publications on the above-mentioned issues, the issue of Ukraine's experience in war conditions and its impact on the banking system of Ukraine has not been sufficiently studied among scientists.

Purpose and objectives of the study. The article aims to research the state of integration of sustainable development principles by Ukrainian universities and their impact on ensuring the quality of higher education, in particular the quality of educational programs. The task is to investigate the qualitative changes being introduced to implement sustainable development goals in universities, and whether this has an impact on the system of ensuring the quality of higher education and the training of future specialists.

Highlighting previously unresolved parts of the overall problem. In the current conditions of the war in Ukraine, the chosen topic becomes complex and very relevant for research, causing significant interest among scientists. Since the beginning of the full-scale war, topics related to this issue have been actively discussed at scientific conferences, however, due to limited time, little in-depth theoretical research has been carried out. In practice, universities in Ukraine have today taken a significant number of practical steps towards integrating sustainable development goals into university activities and improving educational programs.

Presentation of the main material. In the modern world, the concept of sustainable development is gaining special importance, as it is aimed at ensuring a harmonious balance between economic growth, social justice, and environmental protection. Universities, as leading centers of knowledge and innovation, play a key role in shaping a sustainable society, especially in the face of global challenges such as climate change, social inequality, and economic crises. In Ukraine, the implementation of the principles of sustainable development in higher education is becoming not only relevant but also necessary to ensure the competitiveness of universities in the global educational space. This also contributes to the restoration and modernization of the education system in the context of the country's post-war reconstruction. However, the integration of these principles into the activities of universities faces several problems: the lack of a systematic approach to implementing the concept of sustainable development in the educational process and university management; insufficient training of teachers and students to apply the principles of sustainable development in practice; limited resources for the implementation of environmental and socially responsible initiatives; weak connection between universities, local communities and business in the context of jointly solving sustainable development problems.

At the same time, universities can become drivers of change in this direction, contributing to the formation of a new generation of specialists capable of solving complex tasks of sustainable development. Applying these principles in the activities of higher education institutions can not only improve the quality of educational services but also increase their reputation and contribute to the creation of an innovative educational environment. Not all universities in Ukraine have developed sustainable development strategies. In contrast, many European universities are actively implementing sustainable development strategies that include environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and economic efficiency. Ukrainian universities are actively integrated into world rankings that assess their contribution to sustainable development. In particular, in 2024, 17 Ukrainian higher education institutions were included in the QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025, which identifies universities with the best indicators in the field of environmental, social, and managerial sustainability [6]. QS World University Rankings: Sustainability assesses the effectiveness of universities in the field of environment, social responsibility, and governance (ESG). The rating is based on evidence of engagement (from the impact of graduates on science and technology for solving climate problems to the impact of research conducted within the framework of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals), which allows analyzing the contribution of academic institutions to building sustainable development. future. The world list includes almost 1,800 universities from over 100 countries around the world. In addition, 32 Ukrainian universities were represented in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2023, which evaluates universities by their impact on achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In 2023, 1,591 universities from 112 countries around the world were considered. 32 of them are Ukrainian. This is a record figure for Ukraine [7]. For example, compared to last year, the number of universities included in the ranking increased from 1,394 to almost 1,800. The University of Toronto took first place, ahead of ETH Zurich. The University of California at Berkeley (UCB) shares third place with Lund University in Sweden. The ranking includes 22 Polish universities, of which the highest ranking was given to the University of Warsaw (262nd place), Jagiellonian University (298th place), and the University of Gdańsk (302nd place). The Lodz University of Technology took 13th place in the

country (4th place among technical universities) [8]. That is, as we can see, many Ukrainian universities need to develop an understanding and culture of sustainable development. The integration of sustainable development principles into the activities of Ukrainian universities has a significant impact on ensuring the quality of higher education. It contributes to the renewal of educational programs that include disciplines with sustainable development themes that help students develop important competencies, such as environmental awareness, social responsibility, and critical thinking. This ensures that education meets modern requirements and global challenges, and also improves the overall quality of education. Modernization of university infrastructure, in particular, the ecological adaptation of campuses (energy efficiency, waste management, use of green energy), contributes to the creation of a more comfortable and healthy environment for learning and working. It also strengthens the environmental culture among students and university employees. An important component is the strengthening of international cooperation between Ukrainian universities participating in international projects, rankings, and initiatives on sustainable development. This not only allows for additional resources but also provides an opportunity for the exchange of experience, which improves the overall quality of education and scientific research. In Ukraine, there are several universities that offer educational programs related to sustainable development, although these programs are not yet widespread at all levels of education. Master's programs are open at the following universities: Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Lviv Polytechnic, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, University of the State Fiscal Service of Ukraine. There are significantly fewer bachelor's programs. In Germany, for example, there is the Eberswalde University of Sustainable Development (HNEE), which offers bachelor's and master's programs, in particular in the field of sustainable development of rural areas, sustainable production and use of natural products, as well as sustainable management of limited resources. In other universities in Europe, there is a significant number of educational programs that graduate specialists in sustainable development. However, there are still a large number of problems in implementing the goals of sustainable development of universities in Ukraine. Thus, according to the report of the

National Agency for Higher Education, several problems are identified that complicate the implementation of the internal quality assurance system in a higher education institution:

1) scientific and pedagogical workers and students prefer established requirements for the educational process and control, while the current situation in society and education requires flexibility;

2) the organizational and informational detachment of the student and teacher from the institution complicates quality monitoring;

3) there is a pressing need for fundamentally different training of scientific and pedagogical personnel for such work, which requires special attention to the pedagogical component of educational programs and modernization of the content of training in the field 01 Education/ Pedagogy (Goal 4.c By 2030, significantly increase the number of qualified teachers);

4) the health (physical and mental) of teachers and students is under threat, which is directly caused by both security and other external factors of the implementation of the educational process (Goal 3. Ensuring a healthy lifestyle and well-being of people of all ages);

5) the administration of a higher education institution has prioritized issues that require immediate response, for example, security, the very existence of a higher education institution, assistance to those who find themselves in an emergency situation, etc., while quality assurance issues have to some extent been pushed to the periphery of their attention;

6) the different weight and demand for specialties in the labor market, in contrast to the pre-war period, the loss of interest in once popular professions, an even greater shortage of unique specialists, the training of which requires time and resources. Thus, the implementation of Goal 8. Promoting continuous, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all is under threat);

7) the lack of connection between science and education during the war became critical, as in some places equipment was lost, access to laboratory and research resources became difficult;

8) the obsolescence and imperfection of educational and methodological support;

9) the lack of guaranteed electricity and communications, other components necessary for the high-quality implementation of the educational process (Goal 7. Ensuring access for all people to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy sources) [9; 10].

Conclusions. In the context of rapid changes caused by war and socio-economic transformation, ensuring sustainable development is key to training specialists capable of solving urgent problems at the national and global levels. For the successful integration of the principles of sustainable development into educational processes in Ukraine, several important steps need to be taken.

First, it is important to ensure the formation of sustainable development values among students, in particular through the introduction of specialized curricula and courses that include aspects of the economic, environmental, and social components of sustainable development. The development of interdisciplinary programs will allow students to understand the impact of their activities on the environment and society.

Second, to ensure the sustainable quality of education, it is necessary to implement monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that will include indicators reflecting the implementation of the SDGs. This will allow for a systematic assessment of progress in the implementation of sustainable development at all levels of education and university management.

Fourth, universities should actively cooperate with government agencies, business and public organizations to implement best practices for sustainable development. This includes partnerships for innovation development, implementation of sustainable development projects and training of specialists capable of solving sustainable development problems at the local, national and international levels.

That is, the integration of sustainable development goals into the system of ensuring the quality of education in Ukrainian universities will not only to improve the quality of the educational process but also to prepare a new generation of specialists ready for the challenges of sustainable development. This is an important element on the path to European integration and global changes towards sustainable development.

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